International teacher mobility and migration: The exploration of a global phenomenon

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents the findings of a study on the increasingly important phenomenon of international teacher mobility and migration, focusing on the process of professional adjustment for German migrant teachers in WA. The aim was to gain a better understanding of this global development and its wider implications. Collating both quantitative and qualitative forms of data, the research found that teacher mobility is a worldwide phenomenon with major ramifications at global, national, and individual levels. Presented in the form of five publications, its findings are especially valuable in light of the international relevance of this issue.

The first article (Bense, 2016) reviews the current international research base on the issue of internationally mobile teachers. It synthesises this large body of research and identifies gaps in the literature that warrant further research. The second section in this cumulative thesis discusses narrative inquiry as a methodology frequently used in educational research. The paper (Bense, 2012) outlines the development of narrative inquiry, links it to the epistemological position of this research and demonstrates its appropriateness for this topic of interest. The third article (Bense, 2015) reports the findings of a study which explored the situation of German migrant teachers in Australia. It presents the demographical data assembled on German born teachers in Australia and the results of a narrative study with ten German migrant teachers in Western Australia. The investigation highlights a number of challenges for the interviewed teachers in relation to their professional adjustment to the Australian context. A particular problem that emerged from this study related to the different value placed on languages in Germany and Australia. Hence, a specific emphasis was given to this issue in the fourth article. The publication (Bense, 2014) contrasts language education strategies in Germany and Australia to argue how these contextual circumstances impacted the professional adjustment of the study participants. The fifth paper, a manuscript currently under review, addresses the identified lack of targeted support strategies for migrant teachers and the overall neglect of their professional needs. It reports the findings of a second separate study on a state-run migrant teacher network in Germany, a phenomenological exploration of this novel concept of support.

The findings of this collective research highlighted the consequences of this development not only for teachers, but also recruiting and host countries. Consequently, the thesis closes by discussing the wider implications to theory, policy, and practice.
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

This thesis is structured as a Series of papers. It contains five publications, which have been prepared and published under sole authorship. The bibliographical details of each publication are outlined below.

Publications included in this thesis:

#1 Journal article:

#2 Refereed full conference paper:

#3 Journal article:

#4 Journal article:

#5 Manuscript:

Signature: _________________________ Date: 28 June 2016
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This thesis is in agreement with the Postgraduate and Research Scholarship Regulation 1.3.1.33 (1) of the University of Western Australia, Australia and is presented as a series of five research papers. Four papers in this cumulative thesis have already been published and the remaining one is currently under review. All of the work presented has resulted from research done towards this thesis. There are seven main sections in this thesis: a general Introduction, five individual research papers, and a general Discussion.

The Introduction covers the broad background for the overall work, situates the current research in the context of previous research in the field, establishes the research problem, and states the aims of the research project as a whole. This is to provide the rationale for this coherent body of work and to explain how the various parts of the research reported in the five papers are connected and how they contribute to the entire investigation.

The five papers are presented in the format of academic papers that can be read individually or as a part of the whole thesis. In accordance with standards in academic publishing, each paper includes the following sections: an introduction with a more focussed review of the literature, a methodology and results section, a discussion, and a list of references. Each paper is preceded by a short preface, which serves to link the paper to the broader narrative addressed by the thesis and explains how the work of the paper fits into the research project as a whole. This linking text also introduces the context and rationale for the work presented. Although attempts have been made to keep repetition to a minimum, this format results in some unavoidable iterations, especially in the literature, methodology, and reference section of individual papers.

Presented in a separate section is a Discussion of the findings of this research as a whole. This final section summarises and critically analyses the results of individual papers and their overall significance. It draws conclusions from the research overall and highlights the contributions of this research to its field of study.
INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, globalisation and the internationalisation of education have given rise to the emergence of a global teaching labour market and strong international competition for qualified educational professionals. As a result, international teacher mobility and migration have seen a dramatic increase and teachers have become one of the most mobile professions. In order for countries to compete for the most highly qualified teachers within this global labour market, to ensure the teacher supply for local education systems, and to manage international teacher movements, reliable information is essential. This thesis seeks to contribute to the growing body of research in the field of Sociology of Education by investigating a range of different aspects relating to the issue of internationally mobile teachers.

The aim of this collective research is to offer a better understanding of this global phenomenon. This is especially valuable against the background of the fact that the issue of international teacher mobility and migration is affecting practitioners and policymakers around the globe and carries wide-ranging ramifications for theory, policy, and practice in education. Questions addressed in this research include the main trends and flows in international teacher migration, the main characteristics of migrant teachers and their primary challenges, existing professional support practices as well as the methodological approaches in the research field of teacher mobility and migration. The research conducted in this investigation addressed these questions by gathering quantitative and qualitative forms of data. To provide the broad background for this collective research and situate the investigation in the context of previous research in the field, the following section offers a review of the relevant literature on this topic.

Review of the international literature on the topic

In line with the massive increase in international teacher movements, the issue is now becoming a growing area of empirical interest. With more than 100 documents published since 2010, almost half of the international body of work has been conducted within the past five years (see Appendix 1, Table 2). The majority of these studies was carried out in countries with large inflows or long histories of migration. Countries with significant bodies of work on teacher mobility and migration include Canada, the United States of America, Australia, Germany, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and Israel (see Appendix 1, Table
3). Thematically, this international research base is relatively broad, but the majority of studies falls into three main categories: the increasing international mobility and migration of teachers, the experiences of migrant teachers during their transition, and the impact of migrant teachers on education systems in host countries.

The first key theme in the literature is the growing trend of international teacher mobility. Research on this issue found large movements between countries with strong language, cultural, historical or educational links (Caravatti, McLeod Lederer, Lupico, & van Meter, 2014; Maylor, Hutchings, James, Menter, & Smart, 2006). Developed countries like the United Kingdom (McNamara, Lewis & Howson, 2007), the United States (Fee, 2011), and Australia (Sharplin, 2009) have also actively recruited teachers in the past. This led to massive teacher losses in small and developing countries, and in response strategies were put into place by major international organisations to manage global teacher recruitment (Omolewa, 2012).

Main drivers behind emigration from developing countries are the economic and professional opportunities available in destination countries (Appleton, Morgan & Sives, 2006; Manik, 2014), whereas teachers from developed countries predominantly move to gain new work or life experience (Reid & Collins, 2013).

Secondly, there is a significant body of research on migrant teachers and their experiences in accessing the teaching profession in another country. Although the social contexts vary in these studies, there are common themes that cut across the research in different countries. Some of the key themes include: difficult recognition processes (Fee, 2011 in the USA; Vandeyar, Vandeyar & Elufisan, 2014 in South Africa), mandatory requalification requirements (Beynon, Ilieva & Dichupa, 2004 in Canada; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), non-recognition of previous professional education and experience (Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Krüger-Potratz, 2013 in Germany; Michael, 2006 in Israel; Miller, 2008a in England), employment issues (Collins & Reid, 2012 in Australia; Maylor et al., 2006 in England; Remennick, 2002 in Israel; Walsh, Brigham & Wang, 2011 in Canada), assignment to unpopular schools (Bartlett, 2014 in the USA; Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Manik, 2014 in the UK; Remennick, 2002 in Israel; Sharplin, 2014 in Australia), difficulties with adjusting to an unfamiliar teaching context (Fee, 2010 in the USA; Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Maylor et al., 2006 in England; Reid & Collins, 2012 in Australia; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), issues with student behaviour and classroom management (Collins & Reid, 2012 in Australia; Fee, 2010 in the USA; Maylor et al., 2006 in England; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), language barriers (Sharplin, 2009 in Australia; Hutchison, 2006 in the USA; Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), encounters with discrimination (Collins & Reid, 2012 in Australia; Phillion, 2003 in Canada; Remennick, 2002 in Israel) and racism (Manik, 2014 in the UK), feelings of marginalisation (Fee, 2010 in the USA; Pollock, 2010 in Canada), as
well as an overall lack of professional support (Fee, 2010 in the USA; Peeler & Jane, 2005 and Sharplin, 2009 in Australia). This international research base indicates that teachers seeking to enter the teaching profession after moving from another country face considerable institutional, professional, and personal challenges. Consequently, numerous studies criticised the general absence of assistance for migrant teachers and called for the implementation and improvement of support policies (Caravatti et al., 2014; Fee, 2010; Hutchison, 2006; Maylor et al., 2006; Sharplin, 2009; Walsh et al., 2011).

A third main theme in the current body of knowledge refers to the impact that migrant teachers have on recruiting countries. Generally, migrant teachers have been seen as an additional source of labour (Bartlett, 2014; Fee, 2011; McNamara et al., 2007; Reid, 2005) and a considerable “gain” for receiving countries (Collins & Reid, 2012). There are also views that migrant teachers, because of their migration experience, possess certain social competences, which make them particularly suitable for working with students and parents with a migration background (Lee, 2015; Rhone, 2012; Virta, 2015). However, several studies highlighted that there is no empirical evidence and theoretical basis for such assumptions so far (Akbaba, Bräu & Zimmer, 2013; Bräu, Georgi, Karakaşoğlu & Rotter, 2013; Strasser & Steber, 2010). In view of the significant struggles with adjustment reported for migrant teachers, some researchers (Bartlett, 2014; Caravatti et al., 2014) asserted that the success of teacher migration and recruitment is strongly linked to migrant teachers’ introduction to the new system and their effectiveness in the classrooms.

**Definition of terminology**

Although the issue of migrant teachers has received increased international attention in the past few years, the terminology used in the literature is rather heterogeneous. There is no consensus in the use of conceptual structures across the field as a whole, and researchers differ in their use of terms and attributes. Participant groups might be defined as teachers who were ‘foreign-born’, ‘foreign-qualified’ (Guo & Singh, 2009; Santoro, Reid & Kamler, 2001), ‘foreign nationals’, or who have a personal and/or family history of migration (Bräu et al., 2013). An analysis of the titles published on the topic in the past showed that ‘Immigrant teachers’ and ‘Migrant teachers’ are the terms most often used (see Appendix 1, Table 1). A further examination of published titles also revealed some country-specific terminology. For example, the phrases ‘Internationally trained/educated teachers’ and ‘Foreign trained teachers’ can predominantly be found in Canadian literature. In contrast, combinations of the term ‘Overseas (born/trained/qualified/educated) teachers’ were prevalent in literature from the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. This diverse adaption of nomenclature is
closely connected with a variety in classifications and policies between countries, which relate to different processes of accreditation and obtaining work permits.

This research uses the phrase *Migrant teachers* in order to describe the specific research group under investigation. Migrant teachers are defined in this research by their foreign birth, foreign professional qualifications, and their movement into a new country. This term corresponds to a common understanding of migration as the movement of a larger population, and highlights the massive flows of teachers from one region to another in recent years. It also emphasises the varying length of stay of migrant teachers and their potential relocation to another country. Finally, the phrase reflects the large number of teachers relocating for professional reasons and the emergence of a global labour market for qualified migrant teachers.

**Theoretical framework**

The general overarching paradigm for the design of this research is that social reality is *constructed* in particular social, historical, and cultural contexts (Vygotsky, 1978, 1997, and 2004). It assumes that humans construct knowledge and meaning through their actions and thoughts and based on their experiences. From this theoretical perspective, knowledge is developed by means of social interaction and the *interpretations* of meaning. This view led to the application of a predominantly qualitative methodology in order to explore the social phenomenon of professional transitioning. The main technique of data collection in this research was narrative inquiry, but quantitative data were also gathered to inform the two qualitative studies. The specific instrument developed to collect qualitative data includes a set of questions that were used as a guide during the interviews. In addition, the research draws on a number of disciplines and theories to inform the design and analysis of the research. These theories are used as lenses to promote the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Key perspectives for this investigation are sociocultural theories of learning, including Vygotsky’s concept of *cultural mediation* and *internalisation* (1978, 1997, and 2004) and models of situated learning in communities of practice (Wenger & Lave, 1991), as well as theories of *globalisation* and the *internationalisation of education* (LeTendre, Baker, Akiba, Goesling & Wiseman, 2001, 2002).

Much of the framework for sociocultural theory was put forward by Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1997, and 2004), a social constructivist, who saw learning and psychological development as *culturally mediated*, historically developing, and the result of practical activity. From this perspective, learning occurs through experience and practical engagement in social interactions and culturally organised activities. As learners participate in a broad range of joint
activities, they acquire strategies and knowledge of the world and culture they live in and *internalise* these concepts to aid in future activities. Thus, individual mental functioning is seen as strongly related to cultural, institutional, and historical contexts, to the degree that “the environment determines the development of the [individual] through the experience of [sic] environment” (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 497).

Similarly, Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term *communities of practice* to describe situated learning through practice and social participation. A community of practice is a group of individuals who share a certain craft or profession. Through participation in a community, members establish norms and build collaborative relationships which bind the members as a social entity. Through social interactions, they continuously negotiate and create a shared understanding and repertoire of concepts, which are used as part of their practice. In this context, the individual as an active participant in the activities of a social community learns through social participation and constructs a professional identity through these groups.

Although often not explicitly specified and described, these sociocultural concepts of learning generally underlie the theoretical framework applied in research on migrant teachers. Studies using this notion argue that teachers are “accustomed to the teaching and learning cultures of their home country” (Caravatti et al., 2014, p. 114) and, when they make a “transition from one cultural setting to another” (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004, p. 388), they take with them some form of “cultural baggage” (Seah & Bishop, 2001, p. 1; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004, p. 404) consisting of attitudes, beliefs, and values towards education. For example, Maylor et al. (2006, p. 4) argued that “an emphasis on cultural identities in teaching and learning is [...] essential for eliciting a wider understanding of the experiences and praxis” of migrant teachers. Frequently, the issues encountered by migrant teachers during their professional transition into a new country are explained with internalised knowledge and strategies of schooling (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001). It is reasoned that, these difficulties are “the result of misunderstanding the language or the culture” (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004, p. 397) as migrant teachers “lack the culturally specific educational knowledge” (Peeler & Jane, 2005, p. 325) of the new schooling context. It is further argued that in order to teach effectively, migrant teachers have to learn the “codes of behaviour” (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004, p. 397) and need to adjust to the “cultural gap/way of doing things” (Collins & Reid, 2012, p. 50) in the host country. It is claimed that, this is a period of negotiation and adjustment for migrant teachers as they have to reconstruct their “professional identity” as teachers (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007, p. 111; see also Deters, 2006; Virta, 2015) and establish a “pedagogical place” (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007, p. 107; see also Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004) for themselves within the new setting.
However, contemporary forces of *globalisation* are deeply affecting historically developed and socio-culturally formed models of education. Technological advancements together with global political and economic developments are substantially influencing national, regional, and local school systems, and are the main forces behind an increasing *internationalisation of education*. For instance, Hörner, Döbert, Reuter and von Kopp (2015) highlighted the European unification as a political, economic, and social development that led to progressive transformation and integration processes in education. Furthermore, the possibilities of global knowledge transfer, international collaboration and mobility, but particularly the rise of transnational agencies (e.g. OECD, UNESCO, Global Bank) and the increase in international comparative studies (e.g. TIMMS, PISA, PIRLS), are changing educational policies, practices, and institutions around the world.

LeTendre, Baker, Akiba, Goesling and Wiseman (2001, 2002) were among the first researchers to draw attention to these dynamics towards transnational parallels in schooling. They used the terms ‘institutionalism’ or ‘institutional isomorphism’ to describe the “sweeping global institutional trends” in which organisations adopt a global model of schooling (LeTendre et al., 2002, p. 22). They argued that “the modern institution of school has penetrated most nations” and as a result “similar educational processes are repeated in varying degrees around the world, creating considerable international isomorphism in schooling” (LeTendre et al., 2001, p. 5). Commonly, general transnational similarities in administrative structures and school systems, as well as a fairly standardised curriculum across most nations in terms of content and intent are cited as examples for these equalising developments in education (Anderson-Levitt, 2002; LeTendre et al., 2001, 2002). This seems to be corroborated by a recent study by Hörner et al. (2015) that presented the comparison and analyses of the education systems of 50 European nations. Their work found “European commonalities” in education systems but at the same time reported some “retained national peculiarities” (Hörner et al., 2015, p. xix).

These seemingly contradictory findings appear to be in line with Anderson-Levitt (2002, p. 20), who argued that “schools around the world are similar in general but different in detail”. She disagreed with a theory of global institutionalism and argued that this notion “seriously underestimates national cultural differences” (2002, p. 19). In her response to LeTendre et al.’s (2001) article, she advocated instead a ‘hybrid’ model that recognises the “transnational in the local” but also the “local within the transnational”. Anderson-Levitt (2002, p. 20) reasoned that teachers tend to adapt global innovations in education to their local and personal circumstances.
In studies on global phenomena it is important to recognise both - internationalising trends as well as national idiosyncrasies. Accordingly, this research utilised a theoretical framework that reflects these global dynamics while at the same time acknowledging some national cultural differences in education. It builds upon a model of sociocultural learning as the theoretical framework for its investigation. Sociocultural theory seems particularly well suited (Dang & Marginson, 2010) to understanding issues arising from globalisation, as its emphasis on a contextual construction of knowledge and meaning allows for notions of adaptation to both, internal and external - even global - conditions. The main strength of a sociocultural model is that it provides a general overarching theory of where cultural-historical differences between education systems come from as well as for broad international trends in education. Hence, sociocultural theory forms the structure for the entire research and the organising model for the design and analysis of the research. It connects to the overall research problem as it offers a theoretical framework for understanding the difficulties associated with professional transition for migrant teachers. In addition, sociocultural theory relates to the purpose of this investigation as the findings will add to the current knowledge in the field of Sociology of Education. Finally, a framework of sociocultural knowledge and meanings reinforces the importance of this research as it backs the need for understanding the challenges and needs of teachers who move into a new and unfamiliar sociocultural context. The following section will outline the concepts underpinning this investigation. In contrast to theories that provide an overarching framework for explaining and predicting phenomena, concepts are seen here as more specific ideas and notions in a particular field or discipline.

**Conceptual framework**

Even though global changes seem to affect national educational policies, practices, and institutions (LeTendre et al., 2001, 2002), a vast number of previous international studies have demonstrated that migrant teachers experience considerable challenges during their professional transition into a new teaching context (Bartlett, 2014 in the USA; Vandeyar et al., 2014 in South Africa; Walsh et al., 2011 in Canada; Michael, 2006 in Israel; Krüger-Potratz, 2013 in Germany; Manik, 2014 in the UK; Collins & Reid, 2012 in Australia). These issues appear to be the consequence of cultural-historical differences between education systems and the teachers’ lack of knowledge about the new setting (Caravatti et al., 2014; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001).

This thesis builds on the existing theoretical literature and empirical evidence in both national and international studies. A key concept within this research is the process of professional
accluturation for migrant teachers. It refers to the period of adjustment and negotiation that migrant teachers have been reported to go through when they move into a new educational setting (Deters, 2006; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Virta, 2015). It is believed that teachers need to develop an understanding of the local theoretical and practical concepts of schooling (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Virta, 2015) and to negotiate these new concepts with previous expectations and practices in order to teach effectively within their new professional environments (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007). A key theoretical principle underpinning the conceptual framework of this research is the notion of socio-culturally developed knowledge and strategies of schooling. The primary assumption is that there is a relationship between sociocultural concepts of education and reported issues with professional adjustment for migrant teachers. In particular, this thesis assumes that the substantial difficulties experienced by migrant teachers (Bartlett, 2014; Collins & Reid, 2012; Krüger-Potratz, 2013; Manik, 2014; Michael, 2006; Vandeyar et al., 2014; Walsh et al., 2011) are to a certain extent the result of differences in educational knowledge and practices between countries and the teachers’ unfamiliarity with the new system.

It is recognised that some issues may in part be caused by other factors, including the teachers’ personal and professional background as well as the institutional circumstances prevalent in the host country. Personal conditions that might contribute to challenges for migrant teachers are insufficient communication skills in the language of instruction (Hutchison, 2006; Sharplin, 2009) and a lack of previous teaching experience (Maylor et al., 2006). On the other hand, complicated (re)qualification processes (Collins & Reid, 2012), the assignment to difficult schools (Janusch, 2015; Santoro et al., 2001a; Walsh et al., 2011), and a lack of professional support (Peeler & Jane, 2005; Sharplin, 2009) represent structural administrative circumstances that can aggravate the situation for migrant teachers. Nonetheless, some of the problems that migrant teachers have been found to encounter appear to arise from variances between education systems. Such differences pertain to educational values and expectations (Bense, 2014; Caravatti et al., 2014; Fee, 2010; Reid & Collins, 2012; Seah & Bishop, 2001), teacher status and professional roles (Bense, 2014; Fee, 2010; Maylor et al., 2006; Sharplin), curricula (Caravatti et al., 2014; Maylor et al., 2006; Sharplin, 2009), teaching practices (Fee, 2010), and classroom management strategies (Bense, 2014; Maylor et al., 2006). It is assumed that educational values and policies are the determinants of migrant teachers’ professional knowledge and teaching concepts (Stigler & Hiebert, 1998). Factors that influence migrant teachers’ understanding of teaching are past experiences and the professional training gained within the education system of their country of origin (Clandinin, 1987). It is believed that, in spite of progressive transformation processes
in education and universal commonalities in schooling (Anderson-Levitt, 2002; LeTendre et al., 2001, 2002), countries have maintained some national idiosyncrasies (Hörner et al., 2015). As the educational ethnographers Spindler and Spindler (1987) pointed out:

Though we view culture as the major process of human adaptation, and therefore responsive to environmental, demographic, and other conditions antecedent and external to culture, it is clear that in the short run of decades or even centuries, culture tends to have a kind of life of its own. It does not covary [sic] with other variables, such as technological development, in the predictable way we often assume. (Spindler & Spindler, 1987, p. 142)

**The research project**

This research addresses the issue of international teacher mobility and migration by investigating a range of different thematic aspects within this main topic area. The overall rationale for this investigation is the increasing international mobility of educational professionals and its global ramifications for policy and practice in education. Whilst each paper approaches different questions in relation to the main topic, these individual parts are connected by the common narrative and contribute to its comprehensive exploration. Also, although designed as a series of individually published papers, the organisation of this body of work broadly follows the structure of a traditional thesis. The first article provides a *Literature review* of the relevant research on the topic of international teacher mobility and migration. The second paper in this series discusses the *Methodology* of this research and justifies the application of narrative inquiry in this investigation. The third article is a *Results* paper and reports the findings of the main study in this research, an investigation of German migrant teachers in Australia. The fourth article presents the detailed and in-depth *Analysis* of a particular theme that emerged in this study. The final section, which builds on the major findings of the entire body of research and is designed as an *Outlook* for future research on this topic, reports the findings of a second study on a migrant teacher network in Germany. This overall approach allowed the exploration of the main topic on different levels: from the micro level of individual teachers to the macro level of selected countries. The rationale for the research of individual papers will be established more clearly in the following subsections. This also introduces the aim and structure of each individual work and the specific research questions addressed in the publication.
International teacher mobility and migration: A review and synthesis of the current empirical research and literature

The aim of the first article (Bense, 2016) in this collective thesis is to offer a comprehensive review of the current international knowledge base on internationally mobile educational professionals. International teacher mobility is increasing, with a continuous growth over the last two decades. Research investigating this phenomenon has accelerated over the last 15 years and the article synthesises this large amount of research. Questions addressed in the review include the main trends and flows in international teacher migration, the main characteristics of migrant teachers, their contribution to host countries, the impact of teacher migration on sending countries, the main challenges for migrant teachers, the personal and professional benefits of international migration, and existing professional support practices. All in all, the aim is to identify gaps and questions that have not been addressed so far, and which require empirical attention.

The article synthesises over 120 documents published on the issue and focuses on three broad thematic aspects within the literature. The first part reviews documents concerning the recent increase in international teacher mobility and collates the latest evidence base on global flows and trends of teacher migration. The second part of the literature review synthesises studies on the lived experiences of migrant teachers and the challenges they face while trying to re-establish a teaching career in another country. The final part of the article provides insights into current international debates in regard to the impact of migrant teachers on education systems in receiving countries and illuminates controversies and the lack of evidence in the literature. The article closes by suggesting areas that warrant further empirical attention.

Narrative inquiry: A methodology for studying German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australia

The purpose of the second publication (Bense, 2012) is to examine narrative inquiry as a methodology and its application in research exploring the experiences of internationally mobile teachers. Narrative inquiry has become a methodology that is frequently used in educational research. The article reviews studies that employed narratives in their investigation of migrant teachers, with a particular focus on studies conducted by researchers that are migrant teachers themselves. The rationale for this publication, which is designed as the methodology section of this thesis, is to establish the usefulness of narratives for this research.
The article begins by offering an introduction to narratives as a method of inquiry and a short historical outline of the movement to narrative inquiry in educational research. The paper also discusses the value and importance of stories researching diversity in teaching and learning. The second half of the paper uses extracts of the narratives collected in a study with ten German migrant teachers to demonstrate how this data collection strategy facilitates a particularly detailed exploration of the phenomenon. The paper also discusses the advantages and disadvantages of this methodology, particularly in regards to the role of the researcher and issues of interpretation and translation.

**German migrant teachers in Australia: Insights into the largest cohort of non-English speaking background teachers**

The third publication (Bense, 2015) reports the results of the main study in this research. This study investigated the situation of German born migrant teachers in Australia. It represents the narrative study of the lived experiences of German migrant teachers in Australia and their stories of professional transition into the Australian teaching context.

An interest in the issue of German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian schools was initiated by the researcher’s own background as a German migrant teacher and subsequent involvement within the German migrant teacher community in Western Australia. This personal involvement was the initial impetus to take on this topic and one of the main incentives for this investigation. However, further engagement with the topic revealed that, teachers from Germany comprise the third largest group of European born migrant teachers in Australia, after teachers from England and Scotland (see Appendix 2, Table 6). German born teachers also represent the largest cohort of migrant teachers in Australia, who do not speak English as a native language and who come from a country with an education system that is not based on the British model. Despite their significant presence and the increasing importance of understanding and responding to the professional needs of migrant teachers in Australia, currently exists no study on German migrant teachers in Australia and this research aims to address this gap. Finally, it is hoped that a study specifically on German teachers will offer a more differentiated description to the existing national evidence base.

The central question of this research is: How do German migrant teachers experience their professional transition into the Australian teaching context? The focus of the study is the exploration of the phenomenon of professional adjustment for migrant teachers into Australia from the perspective of German born teachers. In order to provide the context and background to this research, the following sub questions were addressed in the investigation: What are the numbers of German migrant teachers in Australia? What are their main
characteristics, including their usual place of residence, gender, age, occupation and employment sector, employment status, and professional qualifications? The answers to these sub questions were obtained through national census data as well as empirical data collected in the interviews. A further set of sub questions focused on the nature of the teachers’ transition in relation to their relationships with colleagues, engagement with the curriculum, and relationships with students. Questions included: What are the German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian schools and with Australian education authorities? What are the main challenges that German migrant teachers face during their professional transition into the Australian teaching context? And, finally, how do they respond to difficulties?

Although the original design of this study did not address questions in relation to the contribution of German migrant teachers and their professional support needs, these issues emerged as themes from the interview data. As a consequence, these two themes were incorporated into the analysis and discussion of the study results.

The current situation in Australia

Australia has a long history of employing migrant teachers and, in the past, migrants with professional qualifications and work experience in education have been given priority in immigration processes into Australia (Australian Government. Department of Employment, 2013). This was driven by a large demand for overseas trained and educated teachers due to consistent shortages in the Australian teaching labour market. The latest census data showed that in 2011 approximately 56,394 teachers, or 18% of all teachers, were born overseas (see Appendix 2, Table 4). These teachers came from various regions of the world and are characterised by significant cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity. Currently, the top ten birthplaces of migrant teachers in Australia are England, New Zealand, South Africa, India, United States of America, Scotland, Canada, Germany, China, and Italy (see Appendix 2, Table 6). This rise in numbers of migrant teachers within the Australian education system led to an increased interest in the topic and a growing focus in national empirical research.

The earliest study of migrant teachers in Australia was carried out by Inglis and Philps in 1995, in cooperation with the Australian Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research (Inglis & Philps, 1995). In the following years, several other studies directed their focus to this issue. For example, Kamler, Santoro, and Reid, J. (1998; Santoro, Reid & Kamler, 2001a; Santoro, Kamler & Reid, 2001b) conducted a demographic study of the overseas born and educated non-native English speaking teacher population in Victorian state secondary schools. In addition, they collected narrative interviews with eight overseas born teachers to gain an understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by these teachers. At the same
time, Seah and Bishop (2001; Seah, 2002) examined the negotiation of value conflicts by two migrant teachers of mathematics in Australia. They used observation and interviews to explore the nature of value differences experienced by these two teachers, one from Romania and the other from Fiji, and their responsive strategies to adjust professionally to the new school culture in Australia. The study highlighted that values can constitute pedagogical identities and how they can act as “hidden persuaders” of the way subjects are taught. Also in Victoria, Peeler (2002) explored the strategies and resources used by two migrant teachers, one from India and one from the Philippines, to reconstruct their professional identity within the new educational context. Based on these findings, Peeler and Jane (2005) investigated in a later study mentoring programs as a means of “bridging the gap” between migrant teachers’ former ways of knowing and local practices. In collaboration with Kostogriz, Peeler also explored how eight migrant teachers from India, Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Indonesia, and Armenia experienced their “struggle” for pedagogical space within the Victorian education system (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2004; 2007).

Guo and Singh (2009) surveyed 132 overseas trained teachers in New South Wales (NSW) in regard to their support needs in order to resume their teaching careers in Australia and the forms of assistance these teachers received from various channels. In the same year, Sharplin (2009) explored the experiences of six overseas-qualified teachers appointed to hard-to-staff schools in rural Western Australia. The teachers, who came from Zimbabwe, Burma, Singapore, India, the UK and New Zealand, described a number of difficulties. Including with their appointment process, the adjustment to a new teaching role and curriculum, plus working in a rural or remote location in an unfamiliar cultural context. Finally, Reid, C. conducted a number of studies on internationally mobile teachers (Reid & Collins, 2013). Her initial study (2005) interviewed six teachers from India, Fiji and Central Africa about their professional experiences as migrant teachers in New South Wales. Later, Collins and Reid (2012; Reid, Collins & Singh, 2014) used Australian census data from 2006 together with a questionnaire and focus group interviews to conduct a comprehensive national study of the teaching and living experiences of migrant teachers in Australia.

The current gap in research

While acknowledging the important contribution these previous studies have made to formative research on migrant teachers and their situation in Australian schools, an evaluation of the literature highlighted some issues and weaknesses in the existing body of work. Firstly, some of the data gathered in these studies (Kamler et al., 1998; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2004; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane; 2005; Santoro et al., 2001a; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Seah, 2002) and
the census data used (Collins & Reid, 2012) are outdated today. There is a need for up-to-date and reliable data on migrant teachers in Australia in order to develop evidence-based policies and practices for the management of teacher recruitment. Secondly, although there is an overall consistency across the national literature, the quantity of qualitative research in terms of number of studies and in particular in regards to sample size (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2004; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane; 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Seah, 2002) limit the general validity of the findings. Thirdly, the extent to which these findings can be transferred to other contexts is limited, as previous qualitative studies predominantly drew on participants from Asian backgrounds, including the work by Kamler et al. (1998), Santoro et al. (2001b), Peeler (2002), Kostogriz and Peeler (2004), and Sharplin (2009). This imbalance represents the main weakness in the existing national evidence base and needs to be addressed. It is evident that there are still gaps and unanswered questions in the existing research and that previous knowledge needs to be expanded. In times of increasing global teacher migration, an integral part of a successful national recruitment and retention strategy is a solid evidence base on migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian schools.

Migrant teachers represent a valuable resource for the Australian education system. Until 2011, secondary teachers with specialisations in certain subject areas were reported on the national skill shortage list (Australian Government. Department of Employment, 2015a), and were therefore given priority during immigration processes. However, Australia not only benefits from internationally mobile teachers as an additional source of teaching staff during labour shortages, but also from the cultural diversity these teachers bring with them (Caravatti et al., 2014; Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 2011). In Australia, classrooms are characterised by the rich diversity of a multicultural and multi-faith society. According to the latest figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2016), “the proportion of Australians who were born overseas has hit its highest point in over 120 years, with 28 per cent of Australia's population born overseas.” Although there is still controversy about the specific value migrant teachers are believed to contribute to the education of students in multicultural countries, there is a “drive to diversify the teaching profession” in Australia and other countries (Santoro, 2013; see also Cruickshank, 2004). One of the arguments in this debate is that in response to an increasing cultural diversity within student populations it is important to have a culturally diverse teaching cohort.

Currently, migrant teachers in Australia predominantly come from countries in Northern and Western Europe (see Appendix 2, Table 5). Owing to a lack of more up-to-date data (the next national census is planned for August 2016) this research relies on data from the last census held in 2011. This data (ABS, 2011) showed a noticeable increase in teachers from European
countries - from a reported percentage of 4% (excluding the UK and Ireland) in 2006 (Collins & Reid, 2012) to a percentage of 14% in 2011, respectively. Teachers from this region represent a significant portion of the migrant teacher cohort in this country and area an important component of the local education system. Still, teachers from European countries have been a neglected focus group in empirical inquiries so far and there is no specific information on these teachers’ circumstances and experiences in Australia available. The review of the existing national literature revealed that previous qualitative studies predominantly drew on participants from Asian backgrounds. However, the extent to which the findings can be generalised to the entire population of migrant teachers in Australia, including the situation of European teachers, is unclear and represents a major weakness in the current knowledge base. Even though the umbrella term ‘migrant teachers’ suggests a fairly homogenous population, teachers subsumed under this label are extremely diverse. Consequently, not all challenges reported in the national research may affect every single teacher or group of migrant teachers. Investigations with participants from other regions of the world will provide more differentiated descriptions of the situation of migrant teachers in Australia.

The purpose of this study

The aim of this study is to provide current and robust data on the situation of German migrant teachers in Australia. The immediate value of the research includes the gain in knowledge and understanding about German born teachers’ professional circumstances and their experiences in Australian schools. The research also adds to the body of existing work in the field, especially to the topic of European born teachers in Australia, an issue which is under researched to date. A further purpose of this study is to provide understanding that has relevance and impact beyond the group of German migrant teachers that participated in the project. The exploration of German migrant teachers’ situation, who represent a significant component of the local migrant teacher cohort, is an important measure in developing successful teacher recruitment and retention policies in Australia. This information is critical to a sound understanding of the contemporary migrant teacher experience in this country, and it needs to be gathered in order for researchers and policy makers to be able to design and implement effective policies and practices. In particular, it is hoped that the research will inform and add to the discussion of support strategies for internationally mobile teachers. A potential value and desired future benefit of this study is the improvement of support practices for migrant teachers, both in Australia and internationally. To this end, the study also discusses and suggests ways of improving existing policies and procedures.
The methodology of this study

Building on a constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology, which view knowledge and reality as actively and socially created, the research applies an inductive strategy of developing knowledge and theory based on data. It utilised a predominantly qualitative methodology in order to describe a ‘lived experience’ of the phenomenon under examination. To inform and deepen the description of the qualitative data in both studies other forms of data, such as statistical data and published documents, were also gathered.

A qualitative methodology was chosen for this investigation as it allows the exploration of the phenomenon in great depth and detail. Because the data obtained in qualitative research is based on human experience, it is often able to reveal subtleties and complexities about the topic and/or participants that other methods of inquiry cannot. The chosen data collection method in this investigation are narrative interviews, as they enable an understanding of the phenomenon based on the participants’ stories of lived experiences (Clandinin, 2007; Webster & Mertova, 2007). The specific instrument developed to collect data was a set of questions and issues to be explored, which was used as a guide during the interviews. Information was gathered through broad and open-ended questions as this allowed interviews to be guided/redirected by the researcher according to individual circumstances.

The collected qualitative data were analysed inductively, which allowed the analysis to follow the nature of the data itself and what it revealed about the participants’ experiences, practices, views, and meanings. Based on the assumption that meaning is socially mediated through interaction (Vygotsky, 1978), the researcher's interpretations of responses were constantly verified with the participants during the interviews. This provided a means of checking for inconsistencies, challenging the researchers' own assumptions, and ensuring analytical integrity. Thematic analysis was used to identify, analyse and report themes that emerged across the interview dataset.

The publication (Bense, 2015) reports the findings of this investigation. The first part of the article provides quantitative data compiled from the 2011 national Australian census data. These data were valuable in contextualising the research and providing an overview of the current demographics of the migrant teacher population in Australia in general and the demographic and professional profile of the German born teacher population in particular. The second part reports the results of the qualitative study with ten German migrant teachers in Western Australia conducted over a period from 2012 to 2014. The findings of this narrative study indicate issues related to the acculturation and professional transition of German migrant teachers into Australia. The study found that the main challenges for the participants...
in this study relate to different expectations and values of teaching and learning between Australia and Germany, difficult student behaviour, feelings of isolation, inadequate teaching resources for language education at some schools, a lack of local knowledge, minor language barriers, and a lack of professional support during the teachers’ transitional period. Thus, the paper closes by offering a number of suggestions for change.

“Languages aren’t as important here”: German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian language classes

The fourth article (Bense, 2014) presents the detailed analysis of interview data of two German migrant teachers interviewed in the larger main study. The aim of this article is to highlight the impact that sociocultural concepts of education can have at the classroom level. It addresses questions of the provision and uptake of foreign languages in Australia and Germany, educational goals and arrangements regarding language education in the two countries as well as national attitudes towards language learning.

The article draws on the stories of two participants to discuss present language education strategies in Australia and Germany and to illustrate some of the issues currently affecting language education in Australia. A patterned theme across the entire interview set of the first narrative study, which referred to a different sense of value of language education in the two countries, initiated an analytic interest in this particular topic. This key theme captured an important element of the way in which German migrant teachers experienced differences in expectations, attitudes, and values of teaching and learning between the two countries and depicted their process of professional orientation to the new concepts of their host country. The two teachers’ accounts illustrate how prevailing attitudes towards the study of languages in the general Australian public are impacting on teaching and learning in class. The article’s main argument is that new strategies and a change of thinking are essential to bring about a change in attitudes towards a recognition of the value, importance and benefits of foreign language proficiency and multilingualism.

“You realise, you’re not alone”: Migrant teachers finding peer support and belonging in an instituted professional learning community

The final article in this collective thesis is an unpublished manuscript. It reports the findings of a second narrative study on a state-funded migrant teacher network in Germany. The main goal of this paper is to give an introduction to instituted migrant teacher networks as a relatively new support strategy. The results collected in the research to this point had provided the impetus for this focused investigation. The review of the international literature had
highlighted the considerable challenges migrant teachers can face when they try to establish a new career in another country. The review also showed the general lack of support for migrant teachers across countries and the gap in the international knowledge base in regard to effective support measures. The findings of the narrative study of ten German migrant teachers in Western Australia and their detailed analysis brought similar results. A targeted search of the international literature yielded state-run migrant teacher networks, which have been recently implemented as a support strategy in various states of Germany. However, there is a gap in research on this type of support. So far, only one other study has examined the concept of state-funded migrant teacher networks.

In response, an original and phenomenological case study was designed. This study had the very broad aim of gaining an understanding of how state-funded migrant teacher networks can support teachers with a migration background. The study focussed on a network in Düsseldorf, the state capital of North Rhine-Westphalia, the first institute of this kind to be established in Germany. The research addressed questions in relation to the organisational structure, key activities and objectives of the network, the main challenges for teachers with a migration background in Germany, and the motives for participation in the network and the perceived benefits. The theoretical framework and concepts underpinning this research were similar to those that framed the study on German migrant teachers in Australia. Also, similar methodologies and strategies of analysis were employed in this study. The results of this study are reported in the fifth paper. It presents the findings of this spin-off research project and provides some suggestions for further research on the issue.

The thesis ends with a general Discussion. This framing end section summarises and critically analyses the results of the individual papers and discusses their significance in relation to previous national and international studies. It further synthesises the findings of the research as a whole, draws conclusions from the entire research, and highlights the contributions of this research to its field of study. The section brings this thesis to a close by proposing some implications of the findings for theory and practice.

References


**Web references**

The first publication in this series of papers reviews the international literature and cross-disciplinary work on the issue of teacher mobility and migration. The aim of this journal article was to offer a comprehensive and up-to-date synthesis of the current knowledge on internationally mobile educational professionals. It reviewed over 120 documents published on the issue within the last fifteen years in English and German and focuses on three broad thematic aspects within the literature. The first part of the article reviews documents concerning the recent increase in international mobility and migration of educational professionals. It brings together the current evidence base on global teacher migration flows and trends, the main source and destination countries as well as the motives behind teacher migration. It also illuminates the impact of teacher recruitment and emigration on small and developing countries. The second part of the literature review synthesises research addressing the lived experiences of migrant teachers during their transition into an unfamiliar teaching context. It compiles information about the profile of internationally mobile teachers and the challenges they face while trying to re-establish a teaching career in another country. It also discusses the issue of professional support for migrant teachers and pulls together international research offering suggestions for an improvement of present policies and practices. The final part provides insights into current international debates about the impact of migrant teachers on education systems in receiving countries. It synthesises the latest evidence base on the experiences of host countries with teacher migration and migrant teachers, and illuminates the current controversies and lack of evidence in the literature. The review closes by identifying gaps in the existing research base and by suggesting areas for inquiry that have not been addressed and warrant further research.

The earliest studies that were located in the online search for this review had been conducted in the 1970’s (Bancroft, 1974; Brand, 1972; Overberg, 1976; Rai, 1978). An interest in the issue of internationally mobile teachers appears to only have gained momentum over the past 15 years. With 105 found documents, almost half of the existing body of work published in English and German has been conducted within the past five years (see Appendix 1, Table 2). This heightened interest correlates with an accelerated increase in international movements over the last 15 years. A recent OECD report (2013) reported that the “global migrant stock” is
growing “twice as fast” than during previous decades, and particularly the proportion of highly educated migrants “is rising sharply”, showing an “unprecedented increase in the past decade (+70%)”. Not surprisingly, the large majority of studies on the issue of teacher mobility were conducted in countries with large inflows or long histories of migration (see Appendix 1, Table 3). An analysis of the found document showed that, the largest number of studies has been done in Canada, while other countries with large bodies of work include Germany, the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and Israel.

The following literature review was carried out and written over the year 2015 and represents the last article that has emerged from this research. Although a comprehensive review of the literature was conducted at the start of this research in 2010, the large amount of literature on the issue published within the last five years necessitated a new review. The article was prepared with the aim of publication in a high-quality journal in the subject area of Education & Educational Research, however there is only a limited number of journals that focus on literature reviews. The article was published early in 2016 in Educational Research Review, a top 20% journal in the subject category ranking #11/224 in 2014. The journal was chosen as the outlet for this review for its high impact and ranking, its international focus as well as its large coverage. However, publishing is always associated with a number of restrictions and requirements, not the least a certain word limit. Although the review already exceeds the general word limit (8,500) for articles published within the journal by more than 3,000 words, inevitably there had to be omissions in the literature reviewed. However, by giving a detailed description of the elimination process, the author recognises the limitations of this review and at the same time enables the reader to further review and synthesise the literature based on the information provided. Nonetheless, it is argued that the intellectual integrity of this review is assured by comprehensively reviewing over 240 documents published in English and German on the issue over the last 15 years.

References

International teacher mobility and migration: A review and synthesis of the current empirical research and literature

Introduction

Over the past two decades, there has been a tremendous increase in teacher mobility and migration, and the topic is now a growing field of research with numerous empirical studies and special editions emerging. These teacher movements are a reflection of the increased international mobility of highly-qualified workers in a growing global labour market. Alongside nurses, doctors, and engineers, teachers represent one of the “most mobile professions” (European Commission, n.d.) and play an important part in the global employment market these days (Reid & Collins, 2013). However, despite a heightened research interest in issues related to international teacher mobility and migration, reviews of the existing literature are scarce. Yet, reliable information is essential in order to develop evidence-based policies and practices for the management of teacher recruitment, mobility, and migration.

The present paper reviews the international literature and cross-disciplinary empirical work on the issue of internationally mobile educational professionals. The objective is to provide researchers and policymakers with a reliable and current assessment of what is known and not known about the issue of international teacher mobility and migration. What are the main trends and flows in international teacher migration? What are the main characteristics of migrant teachers? How do they contribute to the education system of their host countries, and what impact does teacher migration have on sending countries? What are the main challenges for migrant teachers during their professional transition, and what are the personal and professional benefits of international migration for teachers? Plus, are the existing support practices successful in helping migrant teachers during their professional acculturation? These and other basic questions must be answered in order to plan future policies for the management of international teacher migration. Ultimately, the aim of this review is to identify gaps and questions in the research base that have not been addressed so far, and which require further engagement.
Review Method

The research started with searching online databases such as ERIC, SAGE’s online database, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The following key terms were used in these searches: Immigrant teacher(s), Lehrer mit Migrationshintergrund, Migrant teacher(s), Teacher migration, Internationally trained/educated teacher(s), Overseas trained teacher(s), Foreign trained teacher(s), Minority immigrant teacher(s), Overseas teacher(s), Non-native teacher(s), Imported teacher(s), Global teacher(s), Teacher mobility, Lehrer mit Zuwanderungsgeschichte, and Overseas born teacher(s), plus combinations of these terms with alternative expressions, such as Educators and Professionals. This initial key word search located around 240 documents, including articles, monographs, reports, dissertations, and conference presentations.

This review exclusively searched documents published in English and German. As a result it may not exhaust the existing evidence base on teacher mobility and migration. Studies addressing local issues related to teacher migration are likely to be published in a country’s national language. For instance, the search located 22 documents on issues related to teacher migration in Germany that were published in German, yet no documents published in English. However, a search on the online database SCImago (2007) also showed that the countries with the most publications in the subject category of Education over the period from 1996 to 2013 comprised of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, China, and Germany. It is therefore hoped that the over 240 documents published in English and German, which were located in the initial key search for this review, represent a comprehensive overview of the current knowledge base.

Of the initially found 240 documents 45 could not be retrieved, trimming the list to about 195 documents. Following a closer look at the documents, any studies not addressing issues related to international teacher mobility and migration were excluded. This step proved rather difficult due to varying definitions between countries of what constitutes an Immigrant teacher/Migrant teacher. For example, Lehrer mit Migrationshintergrund (Teachers with a migration background) is a broad term generally used in German publications to describe teachers with a personal and/or family history of immigration. At the end, the review excluded any documents that were not focusing on issues related to internationally mobile teachers, which resulted in a further reduction to about 165 studies. Further, it is the goal of this review to provide an up-to-date synopsis of the current knowledge base on the issue. For that reason, documents published before the year 2000 (24 documents) were not included in this review. Finally, doctoral dissertations were excluded from the review (21 documents), however the
results of five theses were included in the form of published papers. This initial elimination process resulted in a list of over 120 documents.

Given this large sample size, priority was given to documents published in high-quality journals (41%) and articles in peer-reviewed and internationally recognised journals (24%). Compared to other topics, the evidence base for this review is relatively broad and from a variety of disciplines and fields of knowledge. Even though a categorisation is difficult since many studies are conducted and published interdisciplinary, an analysis showed that within the cited documents a majority of articles appeared in the subject category of Education and Educational Research, including Teaching and Teacher Education, Education Policy & Politics, Sociology of Education, and International and Comparative Education. This is followed by studies that can only be categorised very generally into the broad area of Social Sciences, while fewer articles addressed topics that fall into the subject categories of Demography, Cultural Studies, Language and Linguistics, Planning and Development, Sociology and Political Science, Anthropology, Urban Studies, and Social Work. As a consequence of this broad range of knowledge domains, there is a plethora of national and international journals. However, the major outlets for this literature (with three or more publications on the issue) are: Teaching and Teacher Education, the Australian Journal of Education, Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, the International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, Teaching Education, and Perspectives in Education. There also seems to exist a wide variety of methodologies in the studies reviewed, but the data collection strategies most frequently employed include narrative inquiry or life-stories (Abramova, 2013; Bense, 2014; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Fee, 2011; Janusch, 2015; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Phillion, 2003), interviews (Bartlett, 2014; Beynon, Ilieva & Dichupa, 2004; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Pollock, 2010; Reid, 2005; Remennick, 2002; Virta, 2015), and surveys (Michael, 2006; Miller, Ochs & Mulvaney, 2008; Santoro, Reid & Kamler, 2001; Sharma, 2013), while large scale studies often used a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodologies such as field work, surveys, and interviews (Appleton, Morgan & Sives, 2006; Caravatti, McLeod Lederer, Lupico & van Meter, 2014; Collins & Reid, 2012; Iredale, Voigt-Graf & Khoo, 2015). Finally, synthesising the current research base in terms of epistemologies, theoretical perspectives, and conceptual frameworks, is an almost impossible undertaking. This is not only due to the fact that in many studies the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings are not explicitly outlined, but also in view of the multitude of perspectives. Most studies are informed by an interdisciplinary theoretical framework, often drawing on notions of globalisation, migration, and education. Key points of reference include: labour market and migration theories (Appleton et al., 2006; Iredale et al., 2015; Manik, 2014; Sharma, 2012), sociocultural theories of knowledge and identity as developing within specific
social, cultural, and historical contexts (Bense, 2014; Beynon et al., 2004; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Phillion, 2003; Vandeyar, 2014), and theories of cultural and human capital (Beynon et al., 2004; Fee, 2011; Santoro, 2007; Sharma, 2012; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Further, the reviewed studies frequently applied concepts of acculturation and culture shock (Fee, 2011), transformational learning (Janusch, 2015; Miller et al., 2008), communities of practice (Peeler & Jane, 2005; Phillion, 2003), professional identity (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Virta, 2015), pedagogical space and place (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007), social networks (Manik, 2014), professional integration (Michael, 2006; Miller, 2008b), and feminist perspectives (Phillion, 2003; Walsh et al., 2011).

The goal of this review was to provide a rich description of the current knowledge base and to identify predominant or important themes in the literature. In a first instance, the content and methodology of the selected material were analysed. The thematic categories of this review were derived inductively and codes were generated with close reference to the terms and phrases used in the literature. In a second step, related categories were collated into subthemes as well as overarching main themes. Thematically the selected studies fall into three main categories: the increasing mobility and migration of educational professionals, the lived experiences of migrant teachers during their professional transition, and the impact of migrant teachers on education systems in host countries. Corresponding to these three major focal points, this review is organised into three thematic sections.

**International teacher mobility and migration**

This section focuses on documents that address the current worldwide increase in migration and mobility of educational professionals. However, outlining these present trends and flows in teacher migration is a difficult task as there is no international data collection on migrant teacher stocks available at the moment. Caravatti, McLeod Lederer, Lupico, & van Meter (2014) explained the reasons behind this general lack of comprehensive data:

Different government agencies, educational institutions, and research organisations collect information on migration, occupation, and education using multiple surveys and censuses. To the degree that these datasets are even complete, they use different definitions, and classification methods, and cover different time periods, so that the data is rarely compatible within a particular country, let alone internationally comparable. Moreover, government agencies that collect migration information rarely disaggregate data by occupations. (Caravatti et al., 2014, p. 18)
Consequently, researchers rely on few existing data sources, predominantly publicly available national census data from OECD countries. Based on such datasets, research can only offer estimates of the extent and nature of international teacher movements. For example, the European Commission maintains a website that provides statistics on migrating professionals in EU member states, EEA countries (European Economic Area) and Switzerland. This databank offers information on the number of teachers who apply for recognition in another country in order to practise there permanently or on a temporary basis. These numbers show that over the period from 2010 to 2014, approximately 26,615 secondary school teachers and 3,690 primary school teachers applied for recognition of their qualifications in another European country. An additional 700 secondary school teachers applied for permission to teach on a temporary and occasional basis in a country of the European Union (European Commission, n.d.).

A recent study by Caravatti et al. (2014) used such publicly available data sources together with research visits to source and destination countries plus a survey with 1,358 teachers from 53 countries to provide comprehensive information about the nature of global teacher migration. The report was commissioned by Education International, an international union of teacher associations and education employees across the globe. It represents the most extensive survey on migrant teachers so far and provides data compiled from census data collected in the United Kingdom (UK), Canada, the United States of America (US), and Australia over the year 2000. These datasets indicate large-scale teacher movements between Great Britain, Canada, and the United States at that time.

One clear reason for these massive teacher movements is the common language background of these countries. For example, Reid and Collins (2013, p. 277) found that “most Australian emigrant teachers still head for English speaking countries to gain overseas teaching experience”. An international study conducted by Caravatti et al. (2014, p. 19) noted that “migrants have tended to follow one another to countries where there is already an immigrant community from their country, or where there are long-standing historical ties”. Likewise, Sharma (2012) concluded that teacher migration is highly prevalent among countries with education systems that are based on English as the medium of instruction. Primarily countries of the Commonwealth union (Caravatti et al., 2014) and countries with strong language, cultural or educational similarities (Maylor, Hutchings, James, Menter & Smart, 2006) have experienced high levels of teacher movements in the past two decades.

Countries like the United Kingdom (McNamara, Lewis, & Howson, 2007), Australia (Sharplin, 2009), and the United States (Fee, 2011) have also actively recruited teachers over the past,
driven by a rising demand for qualified teachers. De Villiers and Books (2009) examined the marketing strategies and information practices of online teacher recruitment agencies, which supply the teacher labour market in the UK. Their review of 43 agency websites showed that the marketing strategies of these agencies promised recruiting schools low fees and a thorough assessment of candidates, whereas teachers were attracted with the prospect of better pay and an exciting life outside the classroom. Critical information regarding living in the UK, financial matters, the local education system, and available support programs for teachers, however, were often inadequate or incomplete, de Villiers and Books found (2009).

The impact of teacher migration and recruitment on developing countries

Attracted by such teacher supply agencies, particularly teachers from small and developing countries, such as South Africa, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Barbados, India, and Trinidad and Tobago, migrate to large and developed countries. These one-directional flows, however, eventually led to major teacher losses and started to have negative effects in these countries. Although much smaller in absolute numbers, the proportion of teacher emigration and its impact on these countries’ education systems have been significant. Not only is the exodus of qualified teachers depriving developing countries of their own human capital (Appleton, Morgan & Sives, 2006) but it is also affecting their foundation for future growth, ultimately resulting in a “double loss” for the countries (Sharma, 2012, p. 263). For instance, Miller, Ochs and Mulvaney (2008) found that half of their survey respondents had left during or between academic terms in order to teach in the UK, thus disrupting the continuity and potentially the quality of learning for the students in their home country.

The current empirical research base comprises 24 documents that address issues related to international teacher mobility and migration. The majority of these studies have been conducted in countries reported to experience high levels of teacher exodus, such as South Africa (Manik, 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2014); India (Sharma, 2012), Barbados (Rudder, 2012), Jamaica (Appleton et al., 2006), and the South Pacific Region (Iredale, Voigt-Graf, & Khoo, 2015; Voigt-Graf, Iredale, & Khoo, 2007). These studies were often designed as small sample studies using surveys/questionnaires (Sharma, 2012) and/or interviews (Manik, 2014; Rudder, 2012; Voigt-Graf et al., 2007) with teachers, principals or country officials. Their findings indicate that, while global teaching experiences and travel opportunities might be pull factors for some teachers (Manik, 2014), the major push factors behind emigration from developing countries is the teachers’ dissatisfaction with their home country’s education system and the economic and professional opportunities available in destination countries (Appleton et al., 2006; Manik, 2014). For example, Sharma (2012) reported that professional development,
better-living standards, family migration, and salary differentials were cited as main reasons by surveyed teachers from India to work in schools in the United States, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Malaysia.

Eventually, the issue of teacher losses in developing countries was raised by education officials at the Commonwealth conference in 1997. Particularly, the Caribbean region was identified as one of the areas mostly affected by teacher emigration as a result of targeted recruitment. In response, various initiatives by major international organisations, including the UNESCO, OECD, International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the Commonwealth Secretariat were developed to manage the international mobility, migration, and recruitment of teachers (Omolewa, 2012). For instance, the Commonwealth Secretariat initiated annual symposia, the development of The Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP), and the Commonwealth Advisory Council on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration as instruments to monitor teacher migration across Commonwealth countries (Commonwealth, 2011). The CTRP was established in 2004, trying to balance the rights of source countries against those of recruiting countries and teachers’ rights of free movement. Although not a regulatory document, countries can use this protocol as an instrument to monitor their national teacher migration, including its extent as well as time of departure, gender ratio or subject area of teachers.

As a small developing country that was losing a significant number of teachers through the targeted recruitment by countries such as the United States, Barbados has taken on a leading role in developing effective strategies to manage teacher migration and recruitment. Since 2001, the government in Barbados is guided by a policy framework that was implemented following a period of large-scale teacher emigration. This framework consists of a number of strategies, including the direct engagement between the Ministry of Education and the recruiting governments, the promotion of high standards and provision of incentives for local teachers, the co-operation with teacher unions as well as the institutionalisation of the policy framework through legislation. Rudder (2012), an education official in Barbados, used interviews with senior officials and teachers to describe the countries’ experiences during the implementation of the framework. He reported an enhanced management of teacher demand and supply and the successful protection of the country’s investment in teacher education as a result of the policy reform.

Another region that has experienced high levels of teacher emigration over the past is South Africa. This literature review found 15 documents addressing the issue of teacher migration and recruitment in the country. One of the first researchers to draw attention to this problem
was Manik (2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2014), who examined the nature of South African teachers’ emigration to the UK. Central focus of her research is the period between 2001 and 2008, the height of teacher recruitment from South Africa to the UK, particularly to England, necessitated by a massive teacher shortage in these countries. Manik (2014) reported that during this time an estimate of 4,000 teachers from South Africa left for the UK each year, following changes to visa and employment regulations and strategic marketing programs by recruitment agencies in the UK.

Another research project examining the impact of international teacher mobility on developing countries includes the work by Appleton et al. (2006). They collected survey data in two sending countries – South Africa and Jamaica – and two recruiting countries – England and Botswana in order to gain insights into the extent of teacher mobility in those four countries. They found evidence of significant international mobility of teachers in the countries under research, primarily driven by the prospect of income gains. As migrant teachers generally repatriate some of their earnings in the form of remittances to their home countries, Appleton et al. (2006) reasoned that teacher migration also positively contributes to sending countries’ economy. Another key argument in the discussion about teacher recruitment is the loss of human capital and its impact on the education systems of developing countries. However, Appleton et al. (2006) found no overall shortages of teachers in the two sending countries. Negative effects of teacher mobility on sending countries are rather qualitative than quantitative, they concluded, following reports by head teachers in South Africa and Jamaica that teachers lost to recruitment were generally above average effective teachers. Appleton et al. (2006, p. 785) closed by recommending source countries to see international teacher recruitment rather as an “opportunity for their people and to manage the process as efficiently as possible”.

Whereas the mainly financial and professional reasons behind teacher emigration from developing countries are well documented (Appleton et al., 2006; Voigt-Graf et al., 2007; Manik, 2014; Sharma, 2012), research into teacher mobility from developed countries is limited. An exception is the study by Reid & Collins (2013), which investigated the experiences of teachers from Australia who temporarily worked abroad. They found that most of the 70 teachers surveyed went overseas to gain new work and/or life experience or for personal reasons. Only few teachers went for career opportunities or because of difficulties in the Australian education sector, and a very small number of teachers went to volunteer in a third world country or because of spousal work. Further, Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) illustrated with her interview study of migrant teachers in Israel that ideology can be another motivation behind teachers’ decision to move.
This section brought together the latest evidence base on global teacher migration flows and trends. It provided insights into the main source and destination countries as well as the motives behind teacher migration. Still, the review also highlighted the current knowledge gap and limited number of sources on the global migrant teacher stock. Due to the lack of an international database, the reviewed documents compiled information based on incomplete evidence. As a result, the reported estimates of international teacher flows and trends need to be treated with some caution. Recently, the international organisation *Education International* launched a new web portal called *Migrant Teachers’ Rights* (n.d.). Besides providing important information about employment opportunities and visa requirements, the webpage also features an online questionnaire for teachers. This online survey represents the first global data collection on teacher migration and mobility and might eventually provide the much-needed international evidence-base. Particularly, changes in flows and trends of teacher migration following the introduction of the teacher recruitment protocol and stricter visa requirements in some recruiting countries require further attention. How do these new policies influence migrant teachers’ decision to move? What destination countries do teachers choose following these changes? And what implications do these initiatives have for recruiting countries and their teacher supply? For instance, data collected in the online survey (*Migrant Teachers’ Rights*, n.d.) indicate that North America (942), the Middle East (302), Europe (252), and Asia (120) are the main regions that migrant teachers currently go to, and that migrant teachers at present mainly come from Europe (300), South America (257), Oceania (236), and Asia (189). Also, research highlighted the need for broad reforms in developing countries in order to retain qualified teachers within the local school system. What incentives encourage motivated teachers to remain within the education system of their home country? And what are the best practices to manage teacher recruitment and emigration? These are some of the questions future research on international teacher mobility and migration will need to address.

**Migrant teachers and their situation in host countries**

This section reviews research that investigated the circumstances and experiences of teachers moving to another country. However, information regarding the profile of internationally mobile educational professionals is scarce. Based on the few existing studies, migrant teachers appear to be predominantly female. For example, Caravatti et al. (2014) reported that the global migrant teacher stock consists of 61% female and 39% male teachers. Also, Reid et al. (2014) reported an increasing feminization of global migration among professionals. However, teaching generally tends to be a profession that is dominated by women. The majority of
migrant teachers is reportedly between 31 and 40 years old (40%), followed by teachers aged 41 to 50 years (32%) (Caravatti et al., 2014). Research also indicates that migrant teachers often have “accumulated a substantial amount of human capital in the form of teaching qualifications” and experiences (Collins & Reid, 2012, p. 45) before they move to another country. For instance, Caravatti et al. (2014) reported that most of the teachers surveyed in their large-scale international study had a Master (49%) or Bachelor degree (43%). Further, the large majority of survey respondents (85%) were working as teachers in their home country, when they decided to work abroad (Caravatti et al., 2014). Of those, 37% had 1 - 5 years of work experience and 30% between 6 - 10 years before they moved to another country. Collins and Reid (2012), who surveyed over 260 migrant teachers in Australia, reported similar results.

Experiences during professional transition

There is a significant body of research about migrant teachers and their experiences of adjustment to a new educational context. The large majority of these studies were carried out in countries with high levels of teacher inflows or long histories of migration, with the largest number of studies conducted in Canada (50 documents). Further countries with large bodies of work include the United States of America (29), Australia (26), Germany (22), New Zealand (15), South Africa (15), the United Kingdom (14), and Israel (12). Although the social contexts in these studies vary, there are common themes that cut across the existing research. First, there are issues that universally challenge migrants, such as the search for housing (Fee, 2011) and separation from the family (Caravatti et al., 2014; Manik, 2014). Yet, the international research base also identified significant professional and institutional obstacles for migrant teachers (Vandeyar, Vandeyar, & Elufisan, 2014; Walsh, Brigham, & Wang, 2011).

One major issue described in empirical research is the process of recognition of previous professional qualifications and experiences (Reid & Collins, 2013; Vandeyar et al., 2014). Collins and Reid (2012) stated that problems with Australian bureaucracy was the most common answer in their survey of 269 migrant teachers. Walsh et al. (2011, p. 662) reported that the 24 participants in their arts-based study described the accreditation process with Canadian authorities as a “maze of regulations” that left the teachers “feeling exhausted, disheartened, angry, and sometimes powerless”. The process of (re)certification can be a lengthy and costly procedure (Collins & Reid, 2012), particularly when translations and authentications of certificates are needed, as Fee (2011) highlighted. In addition, teachers are often required to pass a language proficiency test (Collins & Reid, 2012; Janusch, 2015), if the country’s primary language of instruction is not their native language.
In many countries the regulation of professions, including access and its exercise, is subject to the possession of specific professional qualifications. These “gatekeeping mechanisms” (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007, p. 111) are meant to protect and serve the common interest of the society. In the European Union (EU), for instance, school teachers applying to teach in another European country are often required to pass a mandatory aptitude test and an adaptation period before they are appointed a position (European Commission, n.d.; Krüger-Potratz, 2013). Several studies (Beynon, Ilieva & Dichupa, 2004; Collins & Reid, 2012; Fee, 2011; Remennick, 2002) have documented migrant teachers’ experiences with the mandatory requalification process, which often involves additional course work and/or teaching practica. Fee (2010), for example, described the difficulties the migrant teachers in her study experienced balancing these academic requirements with work and family responsibilities. Research also highlighted the frequent “degrading, devaluing and discounting” (Miller, 2008a) of professional and qualifications acquired by migrant teachers in their home countries (see also Janusch, 2015; Michael, 2006). Walsh et al. (2011, p. 660) argued that this “de-skilling” of migrant teachers occurs in a competitive labour market, where it also “serves” the skilling of others. Krüger-Potratz (2013) reported that qualifications from outside the EU are rarely recognised in Germany, often not even as entry requirement for additional qualifications. Likewise, Voigt-Graf et al. (2007) found that many of the teachers from the South Pacific area in their study either had to upgrade their qualifications or find employment in other fields due to a lack of recognition of their teaching qualifications in other countries.

For those, who manage to overcome these hurdles, the path to employment in teaching is still difficult. In several studies employment issues were identified as another major obstacle for migrant teachers (Collins & Reid, 2012; Manik, 2014; Remennick, 2002; Walsh et al., 2011). For example, Vandeyar et al. (2014) reported that the temporary working visa issued by the South African Department of Immigration prevented the five migrant teachers in their study from securing permanent appointments. As the result of employment difficulties, many migrant teachers work in fixed-term contracts (Remennick, 2002; Maylor et al., 2006; Santoro, Reid, J., & Kamler, 2001), as supply/relief teachers (Collins & Reid, C., 2012; Janusch, 2015; Manik, 2014; Maylor et al., 2006; Pollock, 2010; Walsh et al., 2011) or take on positions in the private teaching sector (Manik, 2014), research revealed. Pollock (2010) and Phillion (2003) also documented how participants engaged in a considerable amount of unpaid and volunteer work at schools in the hope to secure a teaching position. Other studies (Remennick, 2002; Voigt-Graf et al., 2007) reported that participants gave up pursuing a teaching career in their host country as the result of employment issues.
Migrant teachers who find a position, research further showed, are often recruited to schools that are hard to staff (Bartlett, 2014), such as in low socio-economic areas where discipline is poor (Fee, 2010; Janusch, 2015; Manik, 2014; Maylor et al., 2006; Remennick, 2002), or schools in unpopular geographical regions (Collins & Reid, 2012; Santoro et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2011). For instance, Sharplin (2014) identified overseas-educated teachers as one group frequently recruited to fill vacancies in rural and remote schools in Western Australia. Another study on migrant teachers in Australia, by Santoro et al. (2001, p. 71), found that migrant teachers are “more likely to teach the year levels, which require greater class management strategies and which are often regarded as the less prestigious year levels to teach”. Research also documented how migrant teachers were appointed to teach year levels (Michael, 2006) and in subject areas (Janusch, 2015; Maylor et al., 2006) they were not qualified to teach. For example, Santoro et al. (2001) reported that native speakers of foreign languages were often asked to teach these specialist subjects in Australian schools, irrespective of whether they had the necessary language teaching qualifications.

Given these work conditions, it is not surprising that numerous studies reported challenges for migrant teachers once they start working in the host country. Common themes that appear across migrant teachers’ stories of enculturation into a new school culture include issues related to administrative regulations (Reid & Collins, 2012), teaching practices (Fee, 2010), adjustment to a new curriculum (Caravatti et al., 2014; Maylor et al., 2006), differences in values and expectations (Bense, 2014; Caravatti et al., 2014; Reid & Collins, 2012), teacher status (Bense, 2014; Maylor et al., 2006), classroom management (Bense, 2014; Caravatti et al., 2014; Fee, 2010; Maylor et al., 2006; Remennick, 2002), and interaction with local parents (Caravatti et al., 2014; Fee, 2010; Janusch, 2015). For example, the 31 interviewed Spanish-speaking migrant teachers from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Columbia, and Spain in Fee’s (2010) study described their professional challenges when teaching bilingual education in American schools. These teachers were challenged by the new wealth of teaching materials and access to technology, as well as different teaching practices, such as independent classroom centres and the need to differentiate instruction. Differing parental expectations, student behaviour, a lower teacher status, a lack of a national curriculum, and the amount of standardized tests also exacerbated the professional adjustment for the surveyed teachers.

Student behaviour and issues with classroom management appear to be a particular challenge for migrant teachers as a number of studies suggest (Bense, 2014; Caravatti et al., 2014; Collins & Reid, 2012; Fee, 2010; Remennick, 2002). For instance, Manik (2014, p. 162) reported there was a host of disciplinary issues that confronted the South African migrant teachers in her study while teaching in English classrooms, including “the emotional and physical abuse of
teachers, incidents of promiscuous behaviour by pupils during lessons, and episodes of pupils’
racism and discrimination”. Also, Maylor et al. (2006) focussed in their study on migrant
teachers’ experiences with classroom management issues in schools in the UK. They reported
that poor student behaviour caused the overseas–trained teachers in their study the most
“angst” (Maylor et al., 2006, p. 4). They concluded that these issues were in parts the result of
the teachers’ inexperience in teaching in general and their unfamiliarity with the local teaching
context, such as a lack of awareness of discipline techniques used in English schools.

These challenges are often further exacerbated by communication issues (Hutchison, 2006;
Sharplin, 2009), when teachers move to a country where the language of instruction is not
their native language. For example, despite being regularly required to pass a mandatory
language proficiency test, Reid and Collins (2012) reported that 12% of migrant teachers in
Australia experienced some level of language barriers. Such difficulties can range from
unfamiliarity with local educational terms (Maylor et al., 2006), not feeling as articulate
(Bense, 2014), having an accent and not understanding cultural meanings (Abramova, 2013) to
the general ability of self-expression (Janusch, 2015; Remennick, 2002) and comprehension
(Fee, 2010). In her study with Russian migrant teachers in Israel, Remennick (2002, p. 108)
found that in a “language-dependent” profession as teaching, the teachers’ command of
Hebrew was a “key factor of their success”. Participants with the highest level of self-rated
language proficiency, not only reported greater satisfaction with their own professional
performance but also better work achievements in regards to tenure and salary. Similarly,
migrant teachers from the former Soviet Union in Abramova’s narrative inquiry (2013)
reported of struggles to find jobs and retain their professional status within the American
education system because of their language issues.

Other studies reported cases of discrimination (Collins & Reid, 2012; Remennick, 2002) and
racism against migrant teachers (Manik, 2014). For example, Caravatti et al. (2014) reported
based on their large-scale survey involving more than a thousand migrant teachers around the
world that persistent discrimination was a major to moderate challenge for 43% of the
respondents. Incidents described in research included regulatory and financial discrimination
(Krüger-Potratz, 2013), such as the downgrading of qualifications, certain visa restrictions
(Vandeyar et al., 2014), restricted employment contracts (Krüger-Potratz, 2013; Vandeyar et
al., 2014), and lower salary levels (Caravatti et al., 2014). For instance, Krüger-Potratz (2013)
reported that in Germany migrant teachers with foreign citizenship and/or international
teaching qualifications were in the past often ranked lower in terms of career opportunities
and salary level compared to local teachers. However, in reference to significant regulatory
changes in 2012 regarding the recognition of international qualifications, Krüger-Potratz (2013)
anticipated an improvement of the situation - at least for teachers from EU and EEA countries and Switzerland. Also, a study with Russian migrant teachers in Israel by Michael (2006) found systemic barriers that prevented the teachers from taking key positions at school and from participating in major-decision making processes. She argued that these mechanisms serve to “filter” (Michael, 2006, p. 176) the opportunities of migrant teachers and to effectively limit their professional influence. Other research documented experiences of social discrimination by administrators and colleagues (Janusch, 2015), such as Phillion’s study in Canada (2003), in which participants recounted encounters in the staff room where colleagues would not talk to them.

That such work conditions can lead to the marginalisation (Pollock, 2010) of migrant teachers has also been documented in research. For instance, Kostogriz and Peeler (2007) reported that the delineation between permanent and casual employment can be visible in how staffrooms in Australia are arranged. Similarly, participants in Fee’s (2010) study described a separation, and sometimes disregard, between the bilingual classrooms of the Spanish-speaking background teachers in her study and the monolingual classrooms of the other teachers in American schools. This issue of “professional isolation” for specialist teachers (Santoro et al., 2001, p. 71) has also been highlighted for migrant teachers working in foreign language education in Australia (Bense, 2014), as well as for native-language support teachers in Finland (Virta, 2015).

Finally, an overall lack of professional support seems to be making an already testing time for migrant teachers even more challenging (Bense, 2014; Fee, 2010; Miller, 2008b; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Reid et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009). Despite the sporadic provision of professional support, most programs have been found to be too brief and too generic for the specific needs of migrant teachers. For instance, based on their study with migrant teachers in England, Maylor et al. (2006, p.7) pointed out that a “two-day induction cannot by itself eliminate differences in perception and expectations of teaching and learning derived from different educational systems.” In Australia, Reid and Collins (2012) reported that fewer than half (31%) of the migrant teachers (83%) who participated in an induction found that the program was useful to them. Likewise, Walsh et al. (2011) criticised the limited number of programs in Canada that offer specific practices for migrant teachers. They found that migrant teachers were, in rather “ad hoc ways”, included in other regular programs instead (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 663).

Currently, none of the teacher education programs in this region of [Canada] has specific long-term practices in place that acknowledge [migrant teachers’] unique needs in terms of language programs and practica that recognize their previous teaching experiences.
and also provide opportunities for becoming familiar with the Canadian teaching context. (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 663)

Miller (2008b) reported that in interviews with country officials in England, responsibility for the social and professional integration of migrant teachers was passed on between policy makers and local authorities. Further, it was claimed during the interviews that the great homogeneity of migrant teachers in terms of background, qualifications, and teaching experience would make the development of cultural adaptation or integration programs difficult.

Consequently, several studies compared migrant teachers’ process of professional adjustment with a fight for “survival” (Maylor et al., 2006; Nakahara & Black, 2007) that only the “fittest” manage to overcome (Remennick, 2002). Often, the challenges encountered by migrant teachers are explained with internalised knowledge and strategies of teaching and schooling (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001). Although often not explicitly specified, underlying this argument is a sociocultural perspective on teaching that views teachers as members of a community of practice. From this perspective, teachers learn the norms and expectations of their professional role through the interaction with others, including educators, colleagues, and students. Over time, they become competent in these normative practices and are acculturated into their professional community. Studies using this framework argue that, teachers are “accustomed to the teaching and learning cultures of their home country” (Caravatti et al., 2014, p. 114), and when moving to another country, they take with them this form of “cultural baggage of attitudes, beliefs, and values” (Seah & Bishop, 2001, p. 1). For instance, Maylor et al. (2006, p. 4) argued that “an emphasis on cultural identities in teaching and learning is [...] essential for eliciting a wider understanding of the experiences and praxis” of migrant teachers.

Research demonstrated how differences between education systems and migrant teachers’ lack of knowledge about the new system can lead to difficulties and misunderstandings for some teachers. Florence (2011, p. ix) described how her own “classroom expectations”, developed in her country of origin Kenya, were perceived as “extremely alien and overly demanding” in her American school. Some study participants (Fee, 2010; Maylor et al., 2006) and researchers (Manik, 2014) described such encounters as a “culture shock”, “cultural clash” (Epstein & Kheimets, 2000) or an “ocean of difference” (Rhone, 2012). For example, Maylor et al. (2006) concluded that their respondents’ experiences were a “clash” of education systems,
in which the migrant teachers’ expectations, teaching values, and practices differed from the approaches in their host country, the UK.

Inevitably, migrant teachers go through a process of professional acculturation (Peeler & Jane, 2005), in which previous expectations and practices need to be negotiated with new concepts (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007). In order to teach effectively, migrant teachers need to gain the “culturally specific educational knowledge” (Peeler & Jane, 2005, p. 325) and develop an understanding of the theoretical and practical concepts of teaching and learning in their host country (see also Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Virta, 2015). This is a period of negotiation and adjustment, as migrant teachers have to reconstruct their professional identity as teachers (Deters, 2006; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Virta, 2015).

Learning the codes of behavior of the school culture is something that all new teachers must do, but for teachers who have not been schooled in the culture this process is doubly complicated and inevitably more self-conscious. (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004, p. 397)

In view of such massive personal, academic, and professional challenges, and with teaching becoming a global labour market, it is obvious that the policies and practices currently offered to migrant teachers “require more thought and further development” (Reid & Collins, 2012, p. 278). Michael (2006, p. 167) stressed that support for migrant teachers is “crucial” in order to “aid them in growing accustomed to the formal structure of the school in accordance with their personal and professional qualities.” Even more so, Miller (2008b, p.1) emphasised that a “failure to integrate [migrant teachers] in the norms, customs and nuances” of the local system and its teaching context is “tantamount to professional neglect”.

The large number of studies on migrant teachers over the past has also provided various recommendations for improving current support strategies. For instance, Michael (2006) warned against seeing the difficulties of migrant teachers, who often have previous teaching experience, as identical to beginning students. Similarly, researchers like Peeler and Jane (2005, p. 325) highlighted that support practices have to acknowledge the “unique histories” and previous experiences of migrant teachers (see also Rhone, 2012; Walsh et al., 2011). Several researchers, including Fee (2010) and Walsh et al. (2011) have therefore suggested classes, which are tailored to the specific needs of migrant teachers. Such classes, Hutchison (2006) recommended, should discuss general educational expectations, the local educational system, job expectations, assessment practices, as well as student characteristics. He also suggested to address pedagogical issues relevant to migrant teachers’ specific subject areas. Such orientation, Hutchison (2006) argued, would have better prepared the migrant teachers in his American study and “optimized” their instructional skills for their areas of discipline.
Likewise, Maylor et al. (2006, p. 7) reported that the participants in their study would have liked information regarding educational expectations, assessment practices, and the educational system in England as well as “what to expect from a typical day”. Walsh et al. (2011), Janusch (2015), and Fee (2010) emphasised that support practices have to provide practical opportunities in order to successfully prepare migrant teachers for the new teaching context.

Further, there seems to be agreement among researchers that approaches to professional support for migrant teachers have to be designed as long-term strategies (Caravatti et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009; Walsh et al., 2011). In Australia, Peeler and Jane (2005) investigated mentoring as a way of supporting migrant teachers’ professional transition. They observed that such arrangements have great potential to “bridge the gap” between old and new professional practices for migrant teachers. They concluded:

> Contact with others in the profession can help [migrant teachers] orient themselves to the theoretical and practical concepts of teaching and inform them of specific contextual orientations. (Peeler & Jane, 2005, p. 325)

Fee (2010, pp. 402) reported how the Latino migrant teachers in her study found their cohort in a special training program the “most helpful”, as it brought them together and offered support by sharing of experiences. Fee (2010, p. 403) concluded that such support groups are a “critical need” for migrant teachers, and recommended to create a “similar sharing group” when other forms of support are unavailable. Other studies also reported that participants had formed networks of their own and cooperated among themselves (Virta, 2015; Guo & Singh, 2009). Guo and Singh (2009) found that these peer networks played an important role in providing support, information and a safe environment for sharing experiences for the interviewed teachers. Hence, they concluded that migrant teachers need such networks to assist each other through difficulties and to access professional support from more knowledgeable and experienced migrant teachers.

**Benefits of teaching abroad**

Apart from reported financial benefits for some teachers (Appleton et al., 2006; Manik, 2014; Miller et al., 2008), there is very limited research on the actual advantages of teacher migration and overseas work experience. Survey respondents in Caravatti et al.’s study (2014) mainly reported a broadened world view and increased cultural competence from their overseas experiences. Other benefits included insights into a foreign educational system and culture, the development of a range of professional skills, the learning of new instructional
methods, approaches, tools and materials, an enhanced content expertise as well as improved foreign language skills. A large majority of participants also stated that their experience abroad met or exceeded their expectations. Similarly, Reid and Collins (2013) reported that Australian teachers who temporarily had worked abroad, brought back with them valuable experience of different pedagogies, institutional approaches, and cultures. However, the study also found that the teachers were unable to make use of these skills and knowledge once they returned home, because their work experiences were not recognised in Australia in terms of salary level and career opportunities.

This second section synthesised the current literature on migrant teachers and their experiences while working abroad. Some of the reviewed studies employed narrative inquiry (Janusch, 2015; Phillion, 2003) or interviews (Abramova, 2013; Sharpin, 2009) with very small numbers of participants in order to gain insights into migrant teachers’ experiences. Although this is limiting the general validity of the findings and their transferability to other contexts, these studies provide detailed information about migrant teachers’ situation. Yet, they also proved to be valid as they mirror the findings of other empirical research. So is there an overall consistency identifiable across the large body of research on the issue. Especially, the methodological diversity of the data, including large-scale surveys (Caravatti et al., 2014; Michael, 2006), large interview studies (Pollock, 2010; Remennick, 2002; Vandeyar et al., 2014), mixed-method studies (Beynon et al., 2004; Maylor et al., 2006; Reid & Collins, 2012), arts-based studies (Walsh et al., 2011), ethnographic research (Manik, 2014), and focus group sessions (Fee, 2010) provide a strong evidence base. This current state of knowledge suggests substantial challenges for teachers that leave their countries of origin and endeavour to re-establish their teaching career in another country. Moreover, given that multiple studies provide converging evidence across countries, it seems justified to say that these issues are “more universal” and “part of the global teacher experience” (Reid & Collins, 2013, p. 278).

However, the reported challenges for migrant teachers also illustrate the need for further research on this topic. First of all, receiving and recruiting countries need to critically assess their current policies and practices regarding migrant teachers. As this literature review aimed to provide a broad overview of the current body of literature, general validity of all reported issues cannot be drawn to every country’s situation. Therefore, an important first step would be to review the current state of knowledge on the topic within each country. What is known about the challenges for migrant teachers within the local system and what questions require further engagement? Further, what policies and practices are provided to assist migrant teachers’ professional transition into the local system? And most importantly, are these strategies successful in preparing and supporting migrant teachers’ transition?
The reviewed literature illustrated that in most countries provision of support practices for migrant teachers is often rather sporadic, improvised and most of all inadequate. However, the reviewed literature also provided some models and elements that showed to be essential as well as effective in scaffolding migrant teachers’ adjustment process. A second important point on the research agenda therefore is to conduct further basic and applied research on specialised support programs for migrant teachers. Small-scale pilot projects seem particularly suitable here for testing and evaluating new models of support. A particular focus should be placed on strategies that are able to provide the ongoing and practical support the literature showed migrant teachers crucially need. Especially, the model of migrant teacher networks, and their potential formal implementation, deserves further empirical engagement. Moreover, as international teacher migration and mobility are increasing and issues of professional support for migrant teachers are affecting all receiving countries, internationally collaborative and interdisciplinary research on the topic is mandatory.

Further, the challenges reported in the literature cannot be generalised to the entire population of migrant teachers. Although the umbrella term Migrant teachers suggests a fairly homogenous group, teachers subsumed under this broad label are largely differentiated by country of origin, gender, ethnicity, class, age, teacher training and teaching experience. Thus, not all challenges reported in research may affect every single teacher or group of migrant teachers. Investigations with more homogenous participant groups, for instance migrant teachers born and educated in the same country of origin, would provide more differentiated descriptions. Also, some of the findings may only be subject-specific, such as the issue of isolation for language and native-language support teachers. Investigating issues relevant to specific subject areas is essential in order to design support practices that are able to prepare migrant teachers for the challenges associated with their discipline area. Finally, the professional benefits of international work experience for teachers require further investigation. So far, the existing evidence relies entirely on the self-assessment of participants. In particular, a better understanding of how teachers’ instructional and content knowledge is transformed by overseas teaching experience is important.

The impact of teacher migration and recruitment on receiving countries

This final section provides insights into research that explores the impact of migrant teachers and teacher migration on receiving countries. In the past, migrant teachers have represented an additional source of labour during shortages (Bartlett, 2014; Fee, 2011; McNamara, Lewis, & Howson, 2007; Reid, 2005) and have been actively recruited by developed countries (de Villiers & Books, 2009). Particularly in view of previous professional qualifications and teaching
experience, migrant teachers have been seen as a considerable “brain gain” for receiving countries (Collins & Reid, 2012, p. 45).

There is now increasing interest in the complex qualities that migrant teachers can offer host countries. Whilst the research base on migrant teachers’ value for receiving countries is very limited and there are only few empirically sound studies, the following studies are introduced in order to illuminate some of the current views and debates on the topic. For instance, Reid and Collins, (2012) explored the subjective assessment of the strengths that Australian migrant teachers thought they would bring to the education system of another country. Half of the participants referred to their communication skills and teaching strategies, which was followed by their curriculum knowledge, their flexibility and adaptability, their English language skills, and their general experience. A large majority of the surveyed teachers also reported that these qualities were valued in the overseas schools they taught in. Lee (2015) reported that the three interviewed migrant teachers in her study utilised culturally responsive teaching approaches towards their students in American schools and functioned as role models for their colleagues in terms of work ethic, leadership, tenacity, and passion for teaching. However, both these studies (Reid & Collins, 2012; Lee, 2015) solely relied on teachers’ self-reports for their findings.

Further, there are claims that migrant teachers have a particular commitment to the education of students who, like themselves, are new to or “outsiders” (Santoro, 2007) of mainstream society. For example, Virta (2015) interviewed seven foreign-born teachers working as native-language support teachers for students from migrant backgrounds in Finland. These teachers expressed a strong commitment to their students’ learning and motivation. Virta found (2015, p. 87) that this “advocacy” represented an important feature of the participants’ professional ethos and teacher identity. Further, Epstein and Kheimets (2000) cited the Mofet system in Israel, an organisation with more than 20 supplementary evening schools and five day-schools founded by a group of migrant teachers in the early 1990’s, as an example for the positive impact that migrant teachers can have on local education systems. However, the study failed to provide any empirical evidence to support these claims.

Other research asserted that migrant teachers because of their migration experience have specific intercultural competences (Rhone, 2012) and are “more sensitive” (Bailey, 2013) to the diverse and complex issues of minority groups. This is based on the notion of migrant teachers as “cultural mediators” in their communities (Virta, 2015). For instance, a great debate has emerged in Germany in recent years about teachers with a migration background and their part within the German education system. This literature review located 22
documents addressing issues in relation to Teachers with a migration background, a broad term generally used to describe teachers with a personal and/or family history of immigration. A central argument in the discussion is that teachers because of their migration background possess specific linguistic and intercultural competences.

For example, based on their analysis of 25 documents on federal politics and debate in Germany in relation to teachers with a migration background, Akbaba, Bräu and Zimmer (2013) found that these teachers were ascribed specific positive qualities with regard to students, parents, and colleagues. Teachers with a migration background are in particular seen as “helpful” regarding students with a migration background. These students’ academic struggles and issues with language barriers, motivation, and cultural integration form the main focus in these debates, Akbaba et al. (2013) reported. The researchers generated seven specific roles ascribed to teachers with a migration background in German policy debates, including: “role models” for students with a migration background, a “confidant”, “motivator”, and “assistant of integration” for students and parents with a migration background, a “mediator” and “translator” between the various parties, as well as a facilitator of “intercultural learning” (p. 46). However, Akbaba et al. (2013, p. 38) pointed out that many of these attributions have “hardly been explored” and for that reason questioned a “quasi naturally presumed positive effect” of teachers with a migration background. Other studies (Bräu, Georgi, Karakaşoğlu & Rotter, 2013; Strasser & Steber, 2010) also stressed that there is so far no empirical evidence and theoretical basis for the assumption that teachers purely because of their migration background possess specific intercultural competences. Moreover, researchers warned against the “exclusive” role (Fabel-Lamla & Klomfaß, 2014) and prescribed position as cultural translator, as this bears the risk of defining these teachers as the “others” and not belonging to the main society (Rotter, 2015). Virta (2015, p. 91) also highlighted how this role can put teachers into an “ambiguous” and “awkward position” between the school community and migrant families.

One important study, that was able to provide evidence of the potential that teachers with a migration background can offer, is Rotter’s (2015) investigation. She interviewed Year 9 students at two schools in Germany in small focus group sessions, consisting of students with and without a migration background about their perception of teachers’ migration background. The study explored whether the migration background of teachers was relevant to the students, and whether there were any differences between the two groups of students. What Rotter (2015) found was that, migration background was not a primarily relevant attribute for the general prescription of teachers, but represented an important element for some students. In particular, students with language issues in German and a strong
identification with their culture of origin, described the multilingualism and understanding of
teachers with a migration background as an important element of support. However, for
students with a migration background who were fluent German speakers, the migration
background of teachers proved to be less important. Also for interviewed students without a
migration background, the migration background of teachers was of little value. Even more so,
some students without a migration background described the multilingualism of teachers with
migration background as a rather differentiating element and the accent of some teachers as a
professional shortcoming that affected their instructional competence.

Other researchers also reported some “cultural disconnections” (Florence, 2011) and
“dissonances” (Bailey, 2013) between the surveyed migrant teachers and their students.
Bartlett (2014), therefore, challenged the general presumption of migrant teachers as an
overall gain for receiving country. She highlighted the fact that there is very little research on
the experiences of receiving schools and nations with migrant teachers. Based on her
interviews with migrant teachers in the US, Bartlett (2014, p. 8) concluded that migrant
teachers represent “no guaranteed win or loss” for industrialised nations. She argued that the
success of teacher migration for receiving countries is rather “dependent on teachers’
reception into the labor market and their effectiveness” within the new system (Bartlett, 2014,
p. 8).

This final section brought together the latest evidence base on receiving countries’ experiences
with teacher migration and migrant teachers. It provided insights into the current research and
debates about migrant teachers and their impact on host countries. However, the review also
highlighted the existing controversies and lack of evidence in the literature, which is why the
aforementioned studies have to be viewed and interpreted cautiously. Particularly, the value
of migrant teachers for host countries requires further attention as the existing data are
inadequate to answer this question. This is especially important in view of reported challenges
for migrant teachers, including issues with adjustment to the new curriculum, classroom
management, language barriers, and differences in approaches to teaching and learning. How
are these difficulties affecting migrant teachers’ effectiveness within the classroom and
beyond? And, apart from filling positions during acute labour shortages, in what other ways do
migrant teachers contribute to the education system of receiving countries? In particular, a
better understanding of the role of migrant teachers in relation to migrant students and their
parents is important. Research also highlighted that the success of teacher migration for
receiving countries is closely related to migrant teachers’ effectiveness in school. This once
more underlines the importance of effective professional support programs in order to ensure
a successful outcome for both, migrant teachers as well as the receiving countries. And finally,
how are the diverse expectations regarding migrant teachers’ function within the school environment affecting the teachers’ self-concept and self-perception? These are some of the questions that need to be addressed in future research in order to gain a better understanding of migrant teachers’ role as well as their value and potential for the education systems of receiving countries.

Conclusions

This article attempted to review all relevant literature on the topic of internationally mobile educational professionals published in English and German, including international literature and cross-disciplinary work. The review seeks to inform questions important to the issue of teacher mobility and migration, and which are affecting our national and global societies. It is hoped for the review to make a significant contribution to knowledge by offering a comprehensive synthesis of the current evidence base and by identifying gaps in the research. Several areas of inquiry have been found to be unresolved, and which require further empirical attention. Firstly, there is a need for more detailed and reliable data about the global migrant teacher stock, including its numbers, flows, characteristics, and circumstances. Secondly, the review showed that issues regarding the professional transition of migrant teachers have been documented across multiple and largely diverse educational contexts, research methods, and participant groups. Efforts in empirical research should now be directed towards providing more differentiated and detailed descriptions of migrant teachers’ situation. Future research should, therefore, be focussed on the experiences of migrant teachers in relation to their specific circumstances, such as their country of origin, subject area, gender, age, previous teaching experience, or level of support. Such specific information is important in order to develop evidence-based policies and practices for migrant teachers. Thirdly, there are still unresolved questions and inconsistent findings regarding migrant teachers’ contribution to receiving countries. This is an area of inquiry that will need further investigation. Finally, the development and implementation of adequate support programs for migrant teachers are an urgent need. Further empirical and cross-disciplinary engagement on the issue of professional support for migrant teachers is mandatory. Even more so, the growing trend of international teacher mobility and migration make this an issue of international significance, which eventually will require the transnational collaboration of educational researchers and policymakers.

References


Web references


METHODOLOGY

The previous article, a comprehensive review of the literature on the issue of international teacher mobility, revealed the wide variety of methodologies used in this research area. However, the review also revealed that the most frequent methods used in research on this issue, particularly in small scale studies, are narrative inquiry or live-story interviews. The following second publication presented in this thesis, therefore, discusses narratives as a methodology of inquiry in studies of migrant teachers’ experiences and justifies their application in an investigation of German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australia.

The publication begins with offering an introduction to narratives as method of inquiry and a short historical outline of the movement to narrative inquiry in educational research. It continues with discussing the value and importance of stories in research of diversity in teaching and learning, as narratives enable a rich and contextualised understanding of lived experiences. The objective of the present paper is to establish the appropriateness and potential of narratives as method of inquiry in research on migrant teachers, particularly in studies in which the researcher is also a migrant teacher.

The second half of the paper presents the analysis and discussion of excerpts from the narrative interviews with ten German teachers in Western Australia. The teachers’ narratives revealed difficulties with adjustment to the Australian school context, which related to the language transition, diversity in teacher roles, issues with classroom management, and a lack of professional support. The aim is to demonstrate that the use of narrative inquiry as data collection strategy enabled a particularly detailed exploration of these problem areas, as the method facilitated the capturing of rich and in-depth insights into the teachers’ experiences of professional transitioning. It is argued that the methodology was especially successful due to the researchers’ own background as German migrant teacher. This insightful involvement not only helped during recruitment of participants for this study and the collection of data, but also allowed for a level of understanding and analysis that is not available to all researchers.

The following paper was the first publication that has arisen from this investigation. The paper was prepared in 2011 as a full paper for the annual conference of the Australian Australian Association for Research in Education in Sydney. AARE is a large, national, member-run

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organisation for educational researchers and educators. The AARE conference in Sydney was chosen as the first outlet for the preliminary findings of this study for its international and national audience, its proximity, the broad focus on educational issues, and the possibility of networking.

The paper, which was presented in December 2011, was published in the conference proceedings early in 2012 following a blind peer-review process. Yet, any paper submitted for publication in a scholarly outlet must meet a number of requirements. Submissions of full papers to the AARE are restricted to a certain format and labelling as well as a maximum word count of 4,000-6,000 words, which necessarily limits the depth of discussion and background information in the accepted paper (6,000 words). To address this issue, some of the information related to the methodology of this study is discussed in other articles or the linking sections. It is also important to note that due to the year of preparation in 2011, the paper contains a small number of references that would be considered as outdated today. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by including the following paper into this thesis, the reader becomes a sense of growth of this researcher as a scholar over the course of the entire research.
Introduction

Over the past three decades there has been an increased interest in teaching as teachers themselves see and experience it. Carter and Doyle (1995, p. 162) note a “virtual explosion” of studies of teachers’ “practical knowledge” (Clandinin, 1985), their lives and experiences within the classroom. This marks a significant shift away from the former predominantly theoretical concepts of learning, teaching and curriculum. Traditionally, educational research focused on the development of teaching methods that promised high scores for students in standardised academic tests (Carter & Doyle, 1995). By this means, researchers observed classroom practices in large scale studies and compared these with students’ test scores in order to predict the effectiveness of particular teaching practices. The results of the research were to inform teacher training programs.

This focus shifted in the late 1980s, influenced by the use of life stories in psychology and later on in other disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, history, and philosophy (Atkinson, 2007; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007). At this time, an awareness of the narrative approach and the use of life stories and personal narratives as new ways of understanding began to develop in education. Clandinin’s pioneering work (1985) is evidence for this new interest. While not strictly narrative in design, her longitudinal interview study with two teachers can be seen as a template for the developing methodology of narrative inquiry in education (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007).

In her study, Clandinin (1985) conceptualised a teacher’s knowledge as composed of a theoretical knowledge in the form of concepts and theories of schooling acquired through professional teacher training plus a practical knowledge, “in the sense of knowing children” (Clandinin, 1985, p. 361), which are merged by the teacher’s personal background and experiences.

“Personal practical knowledge” is knowledge which is imbued with all the experiences that make up a person’s being. Its meaning is derived from, and understood in terms of, a person’s experiential history, both professional and personal. (Clandinin, 1985, p. 362)
With its focus on teachers’ personal experiences, this was a novel perspective in educational research, which called for the application of new methods of inquiry. Understanding teachers’ actions as the expression of their personal practical knowledge, Clandinin (1985) used classroom observations in conjunction with narratives of experiences in order to give meaning to observed practices. By doing so, she drew attention to the personal nature of teachers’ classroom actions and highlighted the importance of experiences for an understanding of teaching practices.

Since these beginnings, recognition of narrative and its “contribution to educational research” (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007, p. 361) has developed. Scholars such as Webster and Mertova (2007, p. 14) underscored the advantages of narrative inquiry, when they argued that narratives are able to “highlight those understandings often not revealed by traditional modes of inquiry”. This makes narratives “ideally suited to address issues of complexity and human-centredness”, Webster and Mertova debated (2007, p. 14). Similarly, Elbaz-Luwisch (2007, p. 359) emphasised the need to “pay attention to teachers both as individuals and as a group, listening to their voices and stories they tell about their work and lives”, in order to understand teaching.

Today, a growing body of narrative research and literature on the methodology of narrative inquiry is available. Clandinin’s *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry* (2007), which is also directed at disciplines other than educational research, is one example. There, narrative inquiry is defined as qualitative research that asks participants to tell their personal accounts of events. Because the emphasis in narrative inquiry is on understanding the circumstances and perspectives of the participants, researcher and the researched develop a unique relationship over the study. Typified by its equal and collaborative character (Carter & Doyle, 1995), this partnership allows both parties to learn from the encounter. For that reason, Clandinin (2007, p. ix) argued, narrative can be understood as both, the “process” of telling the story, and the narrative “product” itself.

**Narratives of diversity in teaching**

In narrative studies of teaching and teacher education, a broad range of themes and concepts has been explored. Yet, particularly in the context of cultural diversity working with narratives offers unique possibilities (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007). Studies in multicultural classrooms, for example, consistently reported cross-cultural issues. Research has shown that differences in beliefs and perceptions toward authority, discipline, and appropriate classroom behaviour can lead to potential misunderstandings between teachers and students with different ethnic and

**Stories of migrant teachers in Australia**

Despite this significant input of migrant teachers in Australian classrooms, there is only limited research about migrant teachers’ experiences of professional transition into the Australian context. The few studies which are available reported difficulties with cultural adaptation for migrant teachers. Challenges faced by these teachers are generally related to pedagogy, language proficiency and classroom management (Kato, 1998; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009). For example, after interviewing and observing eight teachers with Japanese backgrounds working as Japanese language educators in Australian schools, Kato (1998) reported that these teachers often face problems dealing with their students.

For NESB [non-English speaking background] teachers who received their education overseas, adapting to local school culture is a major task, and their quest for constructing their “identity as a teacher” involves cross-cultural issues. (Kato, 1998, p. 1)

Kato (1998) identified two areas which exacerbated difficulties with classroom communication for the interviewed teachers. Based on the Japanese teachers’ stories, Kato found that linguistic and pedagogical factors contributed to the problems the teachers experienced in Australian classrooms. The linguistic difficulties (appropriateness of classroom language, assertiveness, self-expression, and explaining logically) can be explained with the non-English speaking background of the teachers. Pedagogical problems (teaching approaches, standard of discipline, teacher-student relationship and teacher status, and credibility as a teacher), Kato concluded, are the result of differences in school culture between the two countries Australia and Japan.

Not having experienced schooling in Australia, it was naturally difficult for the JNS [Japanese native speakers] to grasp the nature of Australian schools, students and classroom culture. Such “culture” includes: teaching approaches, standard of discipline, teacher-student relationship and teacher status. (Kato, 1998, p. 9)

Likewise, Seah and Bishop (2001, p. 1) emphasised the “cultural baggage” migrant teachers bring with them. Using interviews together with observation, they explored the negotiation of value conflicts of two migrant teachers during their process of professional socialisation. They found that attitudes, beliefs and values of these teachers regarding teaching and mathematics education varied from the corresponding concepts in Australia. Therefore, the teachers encountered value differences and conflicts when they stepped into Australian mathematics classrooms, Seah and Bishop reported (2001).
In order to teach effectively, familiar ways of knowing need to be negotiated with current work practices. Peeler (2002, p. 2) described this process as articulating “points of intersection” while common ground is discovered. This includes gaining the necessary sociocultural knowledge, understanding the local perspective and the development of a new teacher identity (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Peeler, 2002). That this can be a difficult time for migrant teachers was highlighted by Peeler (2002). She drew attention to the tension migrant teachers’ experience, when they navigate between their former ways of knowing and local practices. Using narrative interview methodology, Peeler (2002) explored shifts in the two migrant teachers’ self-perceptions and understandings.

Migrant teachers who work in local educational contexts face vague, abstract, and culturally laden concepts often unfamiliar to them. Such knowledge embraces intuition, sentiments and values that are innate and unspoken within educational communities, and for migrant teachers new to this system of education it is unfamiliar, unknown and mysterious. (Peeler, 2002)

Learning that workplace tensions have the potential to alienate migrant teachers from their school community and the teaching profession, Peeler and Jane (2005) investigated in a later study the benefits of mentoring programs. Based on migrant teachers narratives of “bridging” their professional practices, Peeler and Jane (2005) underlined the advantages of mentoring relationships for overseas born teachers and assert the development of strategies for assistance.

Sharplin (2009), who investigated the experiences of six “imported and overseas-qualified teachers” appointed to rural and remote schools in Western Australia, similarly found that migrant teachers’ difficulties with cultural adaptation can let them turn away from their profession. Using interviews, she learned that teachers particularly from non-Anglo-Saxon backgrounds were challenged with the language transition and adjustment to Australian school culture. In Sharplin’s (2009) study, this resulted in two of the six participants resigning earlier from the teaching program. In order to ease migrant teachers’ transition and to retain them in Australian classrooms, Sharplin (2009) advocated effective induction and high levels of collegial and administrative support.

These studies highlight the need for more extensive knowledge about the experiences of migrant teachers in Australian classrooms. With continuing demand for migrant teachers, more needs to be known about their process of “professional socialisation” (Seah & Bishop, 2001) to Australian school culture. However, existing research in Australia has mainly investigated experiences of teachers from Asian backgrounds (Kato, 1998; Peeler & Jane, 2005;
Sharplin, 2009), while teachers from Western European countries have thus far been underresearched. Yet, labour agreements (Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, 2004) between Australia and a number of Western European countries (the Netherlands, Malta, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway) call for research into the experiences of teachers from these backgrounds. The large number of teachers from Germany, which also form the biggest group of non-English speaking background teachers in Australia, demanded an intensive empirical investigation of this cohort and their circumstances.

**Study of German migrant teachers’ narratives**

Personal experiences as a German migrant teacher in diverse Australian secondary schools initiated this research. Further, anecdotal evidence of classroom management issues and study reports of problematic student behaviour in Australian German language classes (Jung & Boman, 2003) necessitated investigation of this issue. In the following, narrative research as a method of inquiry for studying German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australia and the analysis and discussion of survey data is presented. The aim of the study is to shed light on the experiences of teachers from German backgrounds in Australian classrooms. Based on problem areas identified in previous research on teachers from non-Anglo-Saxon backgrounds, this study is concerned with questions regarding issues of cultural diversity in teaching methods and classroom management, as well as problems of language transition. The analysis of the narratives, recently collected from ten German migrant teachers, will identify unfamiliar aspects and, at times, problematic experiences of German migrant teachers in Australia.

**Methodology**

This study used narrative inquiry in order to gain insights into German migrant teachers’ experiences within the Australian school system. This methodology was particularly suitable due to the researcher’s own background as German migrant teacher. As researcher and the participants develop a unique relationship over the course of the study, the researcher’s own personality, interaction skills and access to particular community groups critically influence the research. For instance, Elbaz-Luwisch (2007, p. 372) argued that in narrative studies with migrant teachers, the researcher’s “reflective involvement”, whether or not the researcher is a migrant, is crucial to the investigation.

Narrative research depends heavily on the establishment of good rapport and trust between researcher and participants – trust that may [...] be easier to establish with
participants who are like oneself, who come from the same social and cultural context as the researcher. (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007, p. 371)

Studies on migrant teachers that were motivated and shaped by the researchers’ own personal and professional background include work by Abramova (2013, Elbaz-Luwisch (2004), Florence (2011), and Lee (2015).

In this study, my involvement in the Western Australian community of German teachers and my native German language skills have significantly facilitated and influenced the research, including the recruitment and interview process, the analysis of data as well the reporting of findings. Firstly, most participants were found through existing network contacts, from which further participant contacts followed in a “snowball” pattern (Goodman, 1961). Secondly, the majority of participants were contacted while attending a meeting of the Teacher Association of German, Western Australia (TAGWA) in February 2012. Here, the teachers’ decision to participate in the study was probably influenced by the researcher’s existing association with the group. Thirdly, all interviews were conducted and analysed in the participants’ first language German and translated into English by the researcher for reporting and publishing purposes.

**Limitations and biases**

Yet, this insider research also created a unique position and raised questions on the influence of the researcher’s role and perspective on both, the rigour of the research process and the validity of the findings.

For each of the ways that being an insider researcher enhances the depth and breadth of understanding a population that may not be accessible to a nonnative scientist, questions about objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity of a research project are raised because perhaps one knows too much or is too close to the project and may be too similar to those being studied. (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 57).

For instance, shared characteristics by the researcher and the participants in this study in regards to gender, ethnicity, cultural and socioeconomic background, education, and work experience might have acted as “blinders” (Williamson, Choi, Charchuk, Rempel, Pitre et al., 2011, p. 383), preventing the researcher from probing certain topics and/or limiting the depth and detail of the interview data, analysis, and research report. Another potential risk is the researcher’s connection within the same professional community as the study participants, as this might have inhibited the participants’ openness during the interviews (Williamson et al., 2011). However it is contended that, although not without some biases and limitations, this
“in-betweenness” (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007) was also an advantage for this study as member-researchers are perceived as more credible and trustworthy by participants (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009), which facilitates the development of close relationships (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007) and the participants’ comfort with the interview situation (Williamson et al., 2011).

Also, previous research in Australia has shown that teachers of non-English speaking backgrounds can struggle with the language transition to English (Kato, 1998; Sharplin, 2009). By letting the German teachers tell their stories in their native language, the research was able to capture rich and natural interview data. Although the method of inquiry in narrative research is to listen to the voices of participants and the stories they tell about personal experiences, little attention thus far has been paid to issues of language and translation in cross-cultural narrative research. Yet, Temple and Young (2004, p. 5) emphasised the “importance of language in constructing as well as describing our social world”. An early “domestication” of the research into English, they argued, can be to the disadvantage of people whose primary language is not English and the purpose of narrative research itself. An alternative is to let the participants tell their accounts in their primary language, especially when the researcher is also proficient in this language, or with the assistance of a professional translator or interpreter. While this allows exactly for the unmediated and rich data desired in narrative inquiry, it raises questions of translation and interpretation (Williamson et al., 2011).

However, any process of analysis and understanding involves a process of translation and change of point of view, which is why Temple and Young (2004) question the notion of a ‘correct’ interpretation. Hence it is asserted that, despite its limitations, the researcher-facilitated interviews in the participant’s native language allowed for specification and a level of analysis in this study that might not be accessible in cross-language interviews facilitated by an interpreter or translator.

Finally, the long-standing involvement of the researcher in the same professional association as the participants has influenced the practice for reporting the findings of this investigation. As close interpersonal relationships had been established, I felt a strong need to protect the participants’ privacy and respect their openness during the interviews. Further, due to the recruitment of all participants through links within the German speaking community in WA, a small population of around 100 well-connected members, there was a high potential for recognition of individual study participants. Given these special circumstances, only limited identifiable information is given to ensure the participants’ privacy. Whilst it would be desirable to provide individual participant profiles to better contextualise the research, the desire to maintain anonymity requires that any further description of the participants is withheld so as not to reveal individual identities (Reid, 2005). Hence, the conscious decision
has been made to not use pseudonyms despite the minimal risk of difficulties with comprehension.

Participants

A total of ten German migrant teachers with work experience in German language education in Western Australian primary and secondary schools have participated in the study. Rather than conducting the interviews in the teachers’ school, all participants were interviewed in the privacy of their home. Within these natural and undisturbed environments, all teachers intensively engaged in the interviews, which lasted between two to four hours. These prolonged sessions allowed for exceptionally extensive data collection of the teachers’ personal accounts of experience. While the interviews were semi-structured and followed the teachers’ narrative thread, their stories addressed issues of adaptation and cross-cultural observations during their working lives in Australia. The questions raised in the conversation addressed the teachers’ experiences regarding language transition, classroom management, and teaching methods.

All teachers interviewed in this study attended school in Germany and were native German speakers. All participants were female and ranged in age from 30 to 64, with the majority 40 years and older. While this selection was unintentional, it represents the norm in language education in Australia. Statistics show that in this specialist area, female teachers outnumber male teachers, particularly in the senior secondary years, and foreign languages teachers are often 41 years and older (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relation, 1999). All participants had work experience in the curriculum area of languages as German teachers of LOTE at primary and secondary schools in both the government and independent school sector, with nine of the participants currently teaching. The teachers had work experience in Australia between a few months and 26 years.

Results

The themes that emerged from these conversations in terms of a three-pronged exploration included some minor problems with language transition and issues with classroom management and student behaviour. While teaching methods, a third focus area in this investigation, were described as fairly similar in Australia and Germany, the interviewees reported some cultural differences in regards to professional teacher roles. Finally, another dominant theme that became apparent during the interviews was the lack of support that the teachers experienced during their professional adjustment. These four themes will be discussed in more detail in the following four subsections.
Contrary to previous research findings (Kato, 1998; Sharplin, 2009), the transition to English as the language of instruction was not perceived as a big challenge by the German migrant teachers. This can be explained by a number of factors.

Firstly, foreign languages and their acquisition are held in high regard in German education. In Germany, foreign language education starts from a very young age. Many day-care centres today, offer bilingual programs with native speakers as care takers for children only a few months old. This is followed by language programs from Year 1 to Year 5 in many primary schools and the compulsory study of one or two foreign languages at secondary level up to Year 10 or 12. Additionally, many schools offer bilingual learning programs, with subjects such as Biology, Geography or Arts taught in English or French. As a result, the majority of the German migrant teachers were adequately trained in the English language prior to their arrival in Australia.

Secondly, it seems that in contrast to other subjects, Australian students value the advantage of having a native speaker in foreign language education. Minor linguistic mistakes are used by some teachers as examples of their own language learning. Thirdly, particularly teachers who don’t feel as fluent and articulate in English use German as their preferred language of instruction, which eventually can be an advantage for the students.

I have always tried to speak German. My English will never be perfect. They often had a lot of fun when I made a mistake. That was actually never a problem. [...] That often was the cause for laughter. (Participant B2)

However, some teachers and surprisingly the teachers with a teaching degree and work experience in English language education voiced that they feel limited when expressing their authority. Particularly when managing a class, knowledge of the adequate classroom language and an understanding of acceptable levels of language assertiveness are essential skills. The feeling of insufficient language proficiency led to feelings of uncertainty for some of the teachers and eventually affected their classroom management.

Sometimes, when I was telling the students what to do [...] I didn’t know what the teacher authority language is. [...] I can see that [Australian] teachers sometimes express themselves differently, and I wouldn’t have known that and still wouldn’t know. [...] They have different expressions, for example this assertiveness, and say special phrases a normal person would not use but what is a specific teacher language. And if you didn’t
learn this during your practical teacher training, than you simply don’t know. (Participant F1)

One is not as glib, as in German. That is a matter of practice. When I started last year in term 3 it was difficult. And I generally find it more difficult, no matter in which situation, to express myself adequately in English. Even though I have studied English and taught English [in Germany], German as my native language is easier for me. I would say quick-wittedness is a matter of familiarity. It is an art, particularly in behaviour management, to address a student in a way that it doesn’t escalate and you can put something right in a humorous way. (Participant E1)

A large number of participants, particularly teachers with previous teaching experience in foreign language education in Germany, also expressed their astonishment about how low foreign languages as a subject rate in the Australian curriculum.

I think overall foreign languages have a higher significance in Germany compared to here in Australia. (Participant B1)

I have to say, this was a new experience for me to have students who weren’t interested in my subject. In Germany, I was a teacher of English as a foreign language, which grades determine the graduation to the next year level at the end of the school year. […] Now, I teach a subject that […] has approximately the same cultural value as wood works, music or arts in Germany, but is not a major subject and not important. (Participant E1)

\textit{Classroom Management}

Several of the German migrant teachers had completed an \textit{Entry and Orientation Program} with the Department of Education in Western Australia. This two-day program is offered to returning and overseas-trained teachers to familiarise them with current practice in Western Australian public schools. Topics of the course include classroom management strategies together with curriculum resources and directions, and employment with the Department. Two of the interviewed teachers had received their teaching qualification in Australia.

However, many teachers experienced difficulties when they finally stepped into Australian classrooms. Managing the students, particularly those with little interest in German, was often a challenge for the teachers. This was perceived as especially difficult by teachers with teaching experience in foreign language education in Germany. Also, at the beginning the teachers were unsure about the standard of discipline in Australian schools and local
management strategies. Many teachers felt insecure and left alone, which impacted on their practice.

I had no penalties. [...] When my normal authority doesn’t work, I don’t have anything to assert myself. [...] If I had known, what I am allowed, I would have been more assertive. (Participant F1)

Discipline was a real challenge for me. [...] I didn’t have much support from the school administration. I had to deal with all this on my own, what is incredibly difficult for a beginning teacher. (Participant A1)

Also, cultural differences in perceptions regarding authority, discipline, and appropriate classroom behaviour can cause misunderstandings between teachers and students (Milner & Tenore, 2010; Simkin, 1991; van Tartwijk, den Brok, Veldman, & Wubbels, 2009; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004).

My expectations regarding discipline, and what I expected from the students how they should behave, [...] certainly was very German. That certainly was influenced by my experiences at school [in Germany]. That is why I think, at times, I made it a bit harder for myself because I thought this is how it should be. (Participant A1)

Two participants with teaching experience as foreign language teachers in Germany also voiced how the allocation of less hours and the value of foreign languages in general impact on the students’ perception of the subject and their classroom behaviour,

One has a significantly lower status compared to the classroom teacher, who is with the class all day. That was noticeable that I had to ask [the students] three times, before they listened and did what I asked them to do. Whereas the classroom teacher just asks once and the students do what they are told. I explain this with the fact that I only see them once a week. (Participant B1)

For me it was the biggest shock here to start teaching, and [to realise] well, this student doesn’t want to do German at all, so what do I do with him. He just a totally refused to engage. And, when you have one of those in your class, and I had four of them in one class, that is where I really had difficulties [...]. (Participant E1)

A German teacher, who had lived in Australia for more than 30 years, reports similar observations:

Because languages aren’t as important here, I find it very difficult for us as language teachers. (Participant C1)
How this different sense of worth and value of foreign languages influences teaching practices, was articulated by one former teacher of English. She explained how in Germany marks offer the necessary incentive for appropriate student behaviour, whereas in Australia:

One has to motivate the students more intrinsically, because the extrinsic incentive doesn’t work. The subject is not relevant. [...] In Germany, I never had to threaten the students with bad marks, [...] because they just knew. (Participant E1)

Due to the lower importance of foreign language study in the Australian curriculum fewer periods per week are allocated to foreign languages in student timetables.

I also saw my students more often during the week [in Germany], which made teaching more easy. When you see a Year 8 class only once a week [as in Australia] it is only until the end of the term that you can develop a relationship with the students. It was much easier in Germany to establish a good relationship with the students because you saw them more often. (Participant B1)

Teacher roles

The ways in which classroom management strategies are influenced by cultural expectations and teacher status within the country is narrated by two teachers.

In Germany, a behaviour management plan doesn’t really exist at the schools. There it was somehow absolutely my decision what to do. On the other hand, there I was the classroom teacher. That means when I had the impression that it was getting difficult with one student, then I was the one who called for a teacher meeting and then it was me who organised that all colleagues came together and discussed what to do with the one student. Here it is more structured, [there are rules that] say when this happens than [the student] goes outside, and if [the student] still doesn’t behave than he has to go to the deputy principal. It is all written down more detailed and set out more concrete in writing than it was in Germany. (Participant B1)

The continuous study of one or two foreign languages up to Year 10 or 12 is compulsory at German secondary schools. As previously reported by Participant E1, marks in these subjects “determine the graduation to the next year level at the end of the school year”. However, this also seem to serve as an external incentive system for student behaviour and in the end determinant of teacher roles, as the same participant further elaborated:
In Germany, I think it is not that customary that you always have to assert yourself. Here [in Australia] you always have to refer to [some rules]. Whereas in Germany, you expect that you are the authority and the students have to accept this. (Participant E1)

**Lack of support**

Three participants were offered a mentoring program within their school, which helped them orientate themselves and assisted their adaptation. However, some teachers talked about their difficulties, particularly when no other foreign language teacher or German teacher was employed by the school, as they felt there was no one they could ask for advice.

Being a teacher is a very lonely job. You are so lonely in the classroom. You have no time to consult with someone. You don’t have anybody, except when you do your teacher training, and someone comes to your class. [...] That was the hardest for me that I didn’t have anyone to confer with. (Participant A1)

At [that] school, there was no one who really looked after me. And I eventually had to find out everything on my own [...] I think that was also a reason why I didn’t like it there, there I felt absolutely left alone. [...] At one point I simply gave up. I then realised I don’t like it here and obviously no one takes interest in me and looks after me, and then I thought, well that is only a fixed appointment for one term and I do it until the end of the school year but next year I don’t want to work here. (Participant B1)

Some of the participants said they were hesitant to ask for assistance and often embarrassed, as one teacher explains:

I didn’t want to show any weakness. Because then I thought I might lose my job or don’t seem competent. And often it was just little things, and I didn’t want to ask for help. (Participant F1)

Also, some teachers encountered a lack of understanding from colleagues and administration, when they asked for advice.

When I went to the principal and said there is a student who doesn’t do anything, then it was my incompetence or [I was told] one has to ask [the student] again. (Participant A1)

That lack of support has the potential to alienate migrant teachers from their school community and the teaching profession was shown in previous research (Peeler & Jane, 2005; Sharplin, 2009). One teacher in this study described a similar experience.
I only went reluctantly [to that school]. And [...] now that I don’t have to do it anymore, sometimes in the morning I think, Aww ... I have to go there and then I realise, no you don’t have to, and then I can relax. (Participant B1)

However, despite the portrayed difficulties, the large majority of German migrant teachers enjoyed their work as German language teachers in Australian classrooms and described their professional life as a positive experience.

Conclusions

Using narrative inquiry to investigate German migrant teachers’ experiences in the Australian classroom was an exceptionally successful data collection strategy. Particularly the researcher’s own background as German migrant teacher facilitated the collection of rich information. Although not without some limitations and biases arising from the specific role of the researcher in this investigation, which raises questions about the objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity of the research, it is contended that interviews facilitated by a member researcher in the participants’ native language represent an effective and low-cost alternative to other data collection strategies. For instance, remarks such as “you know that yourself” (Participant A1) or “you can probably say that better” (Participant B1), which were made by the teachers during the interviews and referred to my own practical work experiences in Australia, show how comfortable the teachers felt to talk about their experiences with the researcher.

The study shows that language transition is not a major challenge for German migrant teachers, although when it comes to asserting one’s authority verbally as well as colloquial aspects of the language, many teachers felt not as articulate and quick-witted as a native-speaker naturally would. These feelings of insufficient language proficiency and a sense of unawareness concerning acceptable levels of language assertiveness can influence German migrant teachers’ classroom presence and management. Also, a lack of local knowledge of appropriate student behaviour, common discipline strategies, and behavior management plans at school often aggravated classroom management for the interviewed teachers. Furthermore, teaching a non-compulsory and low-esteemed subject required a much greater focus on classroom management. This was evidenced by many German migrant teachers voicing that the low value of foreign languages in the Australian curriculum influenced the students’ behaviour towards the subject and to them personally, as the teacher. In addition, cultural differences in teacher role expectations and status led to misunderstandings for some teachers. Here, the necessary sociocultural knowledge needed to be acquired, what was experienced as a difficult process by some teachers. In this situation assistance from the school
administration and colleagues, for example through mentoring programs, benefitted the adaptation process as some teachers described. However, eight teachers reported a lack of support within their school community and often felt deserted in this situation. A specialised support strategy implemented in the Western Australian teacher education system might be an ideal strategy to ease the initiation process for migrant teachers.

Despite their significant input in foreign language education and Australian classrooms in general, there is a lack of knowledge about German migrant teachers’ experiences. This study highlighted the need for more extensive knowledge about the experiences of migrant teachers in Australian classrooms, and further research will emerge from these findings. This research has shown some very real problems for migrant teachers in Australia, but also identified some low-cost solutions. Adequate support programs offering the necessary local knowledge and much needed assistance have great potential to ease migrant teachers’ transition and to retain them in Australian classrooms.

References


**Web references**


RESULTS

The first article in this series of papers, a literature review on the issue of teacher mobility, identified several areas of inquiry that warrant further empirical attention. Among others, the review revealed a need for more differentiated descriptions of migrant teachers’ experiences in relation to their specific circumstances, such as their country of origin, subject area, gender, age, previous teaching experience, or level of support. Such detailed information is important in order to develop evidence-based policies and practices for migrant teachers.

The present publication reports the findings of a study on German migrant teachers in Australia. The aim of this investigation was to better understand the circumstances and experiences of these teachers as they represent the largest group of non-English speaking background teachers in the Australian education system. The study consisted of two parts and gathered quantitative and qualitative forms of data. The first part of this article provides statistical data about the German born teacher population in Australia compiled from the 2011 national Australian census data. It offers insights into the demographic and professional profile of German born teachers in Australia, including their numbers, place of residence, gender, age, occupation and employment sector, employment status and professional qualifications. By doing so the research is able to illustrate the profile of Australia’s diverse overseas born and educated teacher population.

The second part of this article presents the results of a narrative study with ten German migrant teachers in Western Australia conducted in 2012. The teachers’ stories of professional adjustment illuminate the experiences of German migrant teachers negotiating their entry into the Australian education system. The findings of this narrative study indicate issues related to the acculturation and professional transition of German migrant teachers into Australia. Difficulties described by the teachers during the interviews relate to different expectations and values of teaching and learning between Australia and Germany, a lack of support and feelings of isolation during the teachers’ professional transition, difficult student behaviour, inadequate teaching resources for language education at some schools, a lack of local knowledge, as well as minor language barriers. The article closes by considering the wider implications of these findings for theory, policy and practice in Australia. In particular, the
urgent need for professional support for migrant teachers in Australia and potential models of assistance are discussed.

The following article was prepared with the aim of publishing the main findings of this study. It represents the third publication from this research, which was published in December 2015 in *Issues In Educational Research*, an academic research journal founded by the *Western Australian Institute for Educational Research* and jointly published by Australia's *Institutes for Educational Research* in New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia. *IIER*, a double blind peer-reviewed online and open access journal, was considered the most suitable outlet for the results of this study. A main criterion for the selection was the international and national perspective of the journal and the relevance of the study’s findings for the target audience of this publication. Restrictions and requirements imposed on articles published in *IIER* include a word limit of 7,500 words and a recommended length for titles of 10 – 12 words. As a consequence, the main text needed condensing and tables had to be removed from the manuscript. For completeness of information, omitted data is therefore included in the appendices of this thesis.
German migrant teachers in Australia: Insights into the largest cohort of non-English speaking background teachers

Introduction

Australia has a long tradition as a country of immigration, with migrants comprising a greater proportion of the total population than in most other Western nations (27.7% in 2013) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). In recent years, migrants with professional qualifications and experience in areas such as education have been given priority (Australian Government. Department of Employment, 2013), driven by a demand for overseas trained and educated teachers as an additional source of teaching staff for the Australian teaching labour market (Collins & Reid, 2012; Reid, Collins, & Singh, 2014; Santoro, Reid & Kamler, 2001; Sharplin, 2009).

In 2011, there were approximately 319,462 school teachers (primary, middle, secondary and special education teachers) working in Australia (ABS, 2011). Of those, 56,394 (18%) teachers were born overseas (see Appendix 2, Table 4). This migrant teacher cohort comprises of teachers from various regions of the world and is characterised by large “cultural, linguistic and religious diversity” (Collins & Reid, 2012, p. 42). The top ten birthplaces of migrant teachers in Australia are England, New Zealand, South Africa, India, United States of America, Scotland, Canada, Germany, China, and Italy (ABS, 2011). As such, migrant teachers in Australia are predominantly drawn from countries in which English is the first language for the majority of the population or countries with a substantial adoption of English. Ranking eighth on the list are migrant teachers from Germany (1,346), representing the largest cohort of teachers from non-native English speaking background in Australia (see Appendix 2, Table 6).

Research on migrant teachers in Australia

Over the last two decades, migrant teachers and their experiences in the Australian education system have become a research topic. For example, Santoro et al. (2001) conducted a study in Victoria on the experiences of teachers who were born and educated overseas, and non-native speakers of English. Their research used a questionnaire to provide demographic data about the teachers’ location, qualifications, backgrounds, and the nature of their teaching experiences. A recent national study by Collins and Reid (2012) used Australian census data
from 2006 together with a questionnaire and focus group interviews to offer comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data about the birthplace, ancestry, qualifications as well as the teaching and living experiences of migrant teachers in Australia.

With increasing interest in teachers’ circumstances and experiences (Clandinin, 2007), a number of qualitative studies have been conducted using interviews (Santoro et al., 2001; Sharplin, 2009; Reid et al., 2014) and narratives (Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005) in order to understand more about migrant teachers’ work and lives in Australia. The few existing studies present insights into the teachers’ experiences of professional transition into an unfamiliar environment and the difficulties they face during this process. For example, after interviewing and observing eight Japanese born teachers, who were working as Japanese language educators in Australia, Kato (1998) reported difficulties for these teachers that were caused by differences in terms of teaching professions and education systems as well as issues with classroom communication caused by language barriers. Similarly, Seah and Bishop’s study (2001) with two migrant teachers from Romania and Fiji documented these teachers’ negotiation of value conflicts in regards to mathematics education and their adjustment to the Australian school environment. Peeler’s (2002) study with two teachers from India and the Philippines highlighted how the process of negotiation between familiar ways of teaching and new practices can be a difficult time for migrant teachers. Based on these findings, Peeler and Jane (2005) investigated in a later study the benefits of mentoring programs for migrant teachers in order to help them ‘bridge’ their professional transition. Sharplin (2009) reported in her interview study with six migrant teachers assigned to rural and remote schools in Western Australia that particularly the participants from non-English speaking backgrounds were challenged with the language transition and adjustment to Australian school culture. In response, she advocated effective induction and high levels of collegial and administrative support for all migrant teachers, but particularly for teachers from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The majority of these studies reported difficulties for migrant teachers in Australia in areas related to the bureaucratic system/process (Reid et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009), the recognition of professional qualifications (Collins & Reid, 2012), employment difficulties (Collins & Reid, 2012; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Reid et al., 2014), language barriers (Kato, 1998; Sharplin, 2009), differing expectations and values towards teaching (Kato, 1998; Reid et al., 2014; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009), discrimination/racism (Collins & Reid, 2012; Reid et al., 2014), marginalisation/isolation (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Santoro et al., 2001) and a lack of administrative and collegial support (Collins & Reid, 2012; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Reid et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009). While these studies provided significant knowledge about
migrant teachers in Australia and their process of professional adjustment to the Australian school culture, the research has predominantly drawn on participants of Asian backgrounds (Kato, 1998; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009). Yet, currently the majority of migrant teachers in Australia come from countries in North-West Europe (21,308 teachers, 36%) as recent census data (ABS, 2011) showed. Although teachers from this region represent an important component of the Australian education system, their circumstances and experiences in Australia have so far been a neglected area of research.

German born teachers form the largest group of non-English speaking background teachers from Europe (ABS, 2011) and an investigation of their situation in Australia seems therefore imperative. This study addresses this lack in knowledge and aims to fill the gap. The research was interested in whether the circumstances of teachers from Germany as a Western European country would mirror former findings with other language background groups. To provide a comprehensive elaboration of these teachers’ circumstances and experiences in Australia, this study utilised a combination of both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Narrative interviews with ten German born and educated teachers in Western Australia were conducted to gain an understanding of the participants’ experiences and views of their circumstances. In addition, national Australian census data collected in 2011 were used to contextualise the qualitative data and to deepen the description. The following first section presents the demographic data about the German born teacher cohort in Australia compiled in the quantitative study.

**Demographic study of German born teachers in Australia**

In 2011, 108,002 people of Australia’s resident population, or one in 200 people, were born in Germany (ABS, 2011). Of those, 2,599 were working as educational professionals, including 1,346 school teachers. This number is equivalent to 2.4% of all teachers born overseas and 0.4% of the whole teaching force. Compared to the whole German born population living in Australia (0.5%), German born teachers are well presented within the Australian teaching force. Moreover, records of 1,480 German born school teachers from the previous census in 2006 (ABS, 2006) suggest a stable source of skilled migrants for the Australian education system. In the following section, demographic and professional characteristics of the German born teacher population in Australia compiled from 2011 national census data are presented. Yet, it is important to note that the *Australian Bureau of Statistics* (ABS) randomly adjusts numbers to avoid the release of confidential data, as such no reliance can be placed on very small numbers (ABS, 23/11/2011). The terms used in this section represent the labels applied in the ABS data collection.
Demographic profile

German born teachers are present across all states and territories in Australia, with the largest numbers living in the two highest populated states of New South Wales (NSW, 29%) and Victoria (VIC, 27%) (see Appendix 3, Table 7). Lower numbers of German born teachers reside in Queensland (QLD, 17%), South Australia (SA, 11%), and Western Australia (WA, 11%), whereas only very small numbers can be found in Tasmania (TAS, 2%), the Northern Territory (NT, 1%), and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT, 2%). These percentages are largely consistent with the total school teacher population in Australia, which has the largest numbers of teachers registered in NSW and VIC, and fewer in the other states and territories (ABS, 2011).

Of the 1,346 German born school teachers recorded in the 2011 national census, 74% were female and 26% were male, which is similar to the general Australian teacher cohort (see Appendix 3, Table 8). For instance, Reid et al. (2014) reported a predominantly female teacher cohort in Australia and other countries along with an increasing feminisation of global migration trends among professionals. There are very few German born teachers in the age range between 20 and 39 years (Table 1). One reason might be that initial teacher education in Germany is the longest in Europe (OECD, 2004), lasting for at least six years for secondary teachers and five years for primary teachers. Therefore teacher education students in Germany aged 20 – 29 years are often still in the process of completing their teaching qualifications. The majority of German born teachers are 40 years and older, with a very large number of teachers being 60 years and older. It is possible that these older German born teachers represent an earlier period of migration, perhaps even from the 1950s. These numbers are also consistent with previous findings of Santoro et al. (2001), who reported that the majority of overseas born teachers in their study were aged 40 years and older.

Table 1 Age of German born teachers in comparison to the total Australian teacher population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29 years</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39 years</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49 years</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 59 years</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69 years</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,344</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Professional profile**

Teachers from Germany can be found across all levels of the Australian education system (Table 2), with most teachers working in secondary education (48%) and primary education (30%). Smaller numbers work in special education, early childhood education (pre-primary), and middle school education. What is noticeable, is the large number of German born teachers working in secondary education, while the majority of teachers in Australia work as primary school teachers. These findings compare with reports by Santoro et al., (2001, p. 71), who found that the overseas born and educated non-native English speaking teachers in their study predominantly taught Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 students, and were “more likely to teach the year levels which require greater class management strategies and which are often regarded as the less prestigious year levels to teach”. Correspondingly, national (Reid et al., 2014) and international research (Caravatti, McLeod Lederer, Lupico, & van Meter, 2014) reported that most migrant teachers surveyed had qualifications to teach in secondary education, followed by primary and early childhood education. Another reason why many migrant teachers in Australia work in secondary schools is that up until 2011, secondary teachers with specialisations in certain subject areas, including LOTE, were reported on the national skill shortage list (Australian Government. Department of Employment, 2015a) and were given priority in immigration processes. The labour market for primary teachers, on the other hand, has experienced “no shortages since 2007”and the “level of demand [...] has not exceeded supply for several years”, as a national survey found (Australian Government. Department of Employment, 2015b, pp.1).

**Table 2 Occupation sector of German born teachers in comparison to the total Australian teacher population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation sector</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early childhood teachers</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teachers</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school teachers</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education teachers</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School teachers (nfd)</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2011, 690 German born teachers (51%) were working in government schools and 651 (49%) in the private school sector, which is consistent with numbers of the Australian school teacher population as a whole, with 52% and 48% recorded respectively (ABS, 2011) (see Appendix 3, Table 12). Only half of the German born teacher population was working full-time (52%) at the time of the 2011 census (Table 3), while 41% were working in part-time positions. These
numbers indicate a higher number of German born teachers in part-time employment and fewer in full-time employment, compared to the whole Australian teacher population.

**Table 3 Employment status of German born teachers in comparison to the total Australian teacher population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed, worked full time</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>199,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, worked part-time</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>101,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, away from work</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>14,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, hours not stated</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>319,465</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further data compiled (Table 4) shows that most German born teachers have qualifications equivalent to a bachelor degree (51%), followed by a graduate Diploma (19%), a masters degree (14%) and an advanced diploma (13%) (ABS, 2011). A small number of teachers have a doctorate (2%) or are recorded to have a certificate (1%) (ABS, 2011). These numbers compare well with the general Australian teaching population and with previous findings on overseas born teachers (Santoro et al., 2001; Collins & Reid, 2012). Yet, the percentage of German born teachers reported to have a graduate diploma, a masters, a doctorate or an equal German qualification is higher compared to the whole Australian teacher population. This is illustrating the “accumulated substantial amount of human capital in the form of teaching qualifications” that Collins and Reid (2012, p. 45) found migrant teachers bring into the Australian teaching labour market. Given the extensive teacher education in Germany (OECD, 2004), these data substantiate the ‘brain gain’ Collins and Reid (2012, p. 8) saw in migrant teachers for Australia.

**Table 4 Qualifications of German born teachers in comparison to the total Australian teacher population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Degree Level</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Degree Level</td>
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<td>28,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma Level</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>46,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree Level</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>196,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Diploma Level</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>31,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate Level</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2,775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,269</td>
<td>307,373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This first section has provided some quantitative insights into the demographic and professional characteristics of German born teachers in Australia. Based on data compiled from the 2011 national Australian census, German born teachers represent an important and stable source of highly qualified teachers for the Australian education system. They are present across all states and territories in Australia, with larger numbers in the more densely populated states. German migrant teachers are more likely to be female, 40 years and older,
and predominantly work as secondary teachers in Australian schools. As such, German born teachers are typical for migrant teachers in Australia and their characteristics reflect the profile of the overall overseas born and educated teacher cohort in Australia (Collins & Reid, 2012; Santoro et al., 2001). Yet, variances seem to exist between German born teachers and the total Australian teacher population in terms of age, occupation sector, employment status, and qualifications. While this section offered some statistical information about the German born teacher cohort in Australia as a whole, the following second part offers data from a narrative study with ten German born teachers in Western Australia to offer a more defined description of German migrant teachers’ situation.

**Narrative study with German migrant teachers in Western Australia**

This study was initiated by the researcher’s personal experiences as a German born and educated teacher in Australia. Having to learn the local professional language (Deters, 2006) and to negotiate familiar ways of teaching with new practices (Peeler, 2005), when establishing a professional career as a LOTE (German) teacher in Western Australia, prompted an interest in the issue of migrant teachers in Australia. Given that German migrant teachers’ views on the topic are largely unknown, the research followed an interpretivist/constructivist paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The aim was to learn more about German migrant teachers and their experiences within the Australian education system.

A study was designed using narratives as the method of inquiry (Bense, 2012). Narrative inquiry is a qualitative research methodology that asks participants to tell their personal accounts of events in order to understand their circumstances and perspectives (Clandinin, 2007). This approach was particularly suitable thanks to the researcher’s own background (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007), language skills (Temple & Young, 2004) and access to a particular community group. For instance, professional affiliation to the *Teacher Association of German, Western Australia* (TAGWA) has significantly facilitated the recruitment of participants for the study, as the majority of participants were contacted during a TAGWA meeting in February 2012. Plus, the researcher’s own experiences as a German born and educated teacher in Australia undoubtedly helped to create uniquely trusted relationships with the participants. This, together with letting the German migrant teachers tell their accounts in their native language, enabled the capturing of natural and rich data desired in narrative research.

The interviews were conducted over a period of two years from 2012 to 2014. The conversations were guided by a number of questions or issues to be explored, but neither the exact wording nor the order of questions was determined prior to the meetings. All interviews were audiotaped. The collected interview data were analysed following an inductive way of
identifying, analysing, and reporting themes. Thus, the coding was done without a pre-existing analytical frame and was predominantly data-driven. The research used an approach, which aimed to describe the experiences, meanings and reality of the participants of the study. Themes generated across the whole data set include: different expectations/values regarding teaching and learning, a lack of support and feelings of isolation, difficult student behaviour, a lack of teaching resources, a lack of local educational knowledge, and minor language barriers.

However, it is important to recognise the impact of the researcher’s own background and experiences on the research. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) acknowledged this ambiguity in qualitative research methodologies, and argued:

What may appear as an objective tape recording of a structured interview is already an interpretive and contextualized text: it is interpretive because it is shaped by the interpretive processes of researcher and participant and their relationship, and it is contextualized because of the particular circumstances of the interviewer’s origin and setting. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 94)

Thus, the study recognises this active role of the researcher not only during data collection but also the analysis of the data. In order to address this issues, efforts were made to reduce biases in the interpretation of the findings. Measures taken included participant checking and fixed participant selection criteria. In addition, reported interview extracts have undergone a blind peer-review process at the researchers’ institution to ensure the accuracy of the researcher-facilitated translations and interpretations. Yet at the same time it is argued that, the researcher’s background enabled a level of analysis and interpretation that is not available to monolingual scholars (Temple & Young, 2004) or researchers without experience as migrant teachers (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007).

Census data show that in 2011, 147 German born teachers were living in Western Australia, with the large majority recorded in the Greater Perth region (112 teachers). Only small numbers of German born teachers were recorded for the rural Bunbury area (13), and the remote Outback (12) and Wheat Belt areas (10). (The census data do not provide any further classification regarding places of residence. Terms used in this section represent labels applied in the ABS data collection.) Still, locating and recruiting these teachers as participants for the study proved rather difficult since the Department of Education & Training (DET) is obliged to maintain anonymity of their employees. Other formal avenues of participant recruitment, such as information letters to principals of schools indicated by the DET to offer LOTE German as part of the curriculum, were largely unsuccessful. Eventually, all participants were recruited through the researcher’s network of German language teachers in Western Australia (TAGWA).
As a result, all ten teachers surveyed in this study were teaching in the key learning area of LOTE German in schools in Western Australia at the time of the study. Although this selection was not initially intended, this sample is highly representative for this focus group in Australia. For example, Santoro et al. (2001) reported that the majority of overseas born teachers in their study were working as teachers of LOTE (36.3%) in Australia. Similarly, a recent large-scale international survey found that, with 43%, most migrant teachers were hired to teach in the subject area of Foreign Languages in their host country (Caravatti et al., 2014).

**Characteristics of surveyed German migrant teachers in Western Australia**

All participants of this study lived in the greater region of Perth. Further, all interviewees were female and ranged in age from 29 to 66 years, with six of the ten teachers being 40 years and older (see Appendix 4, Table 14). Again, this selection was unintentional, but is fairly consistent with the demographic data about German born teachers in Australia and previous study reports on migrant teachers in Australia (Reid et al., 2014; Santoro et al., 2001). Moreover, statistics show that in the specialist area of LOTE, female teachers outnumber male teachers, particularly in the senior secondary years, and teachers are often 41 years and older (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relation, 1999). All teachers interviewed in this study were born in Germany and attended school there. Finally, all participants were German native speakers.

Similar to the total population of German born teachers in Australia (Table 2), the ten interviewed teachers worked across all levels of schooling (see Appendix 4, Table 15). Four teachers were working in secondary education, another three in primary education, one teacher was working across both levels, one in adult education and secondary education, and one participant was working in adult education only. What is noticeable is that, at the time of the interviews, five of the participants were working at independent schools, with four teachers employed at Waldorf or Montessori schools, and only three at government schools. Since all participants worked as teachers of German in Western Australia, employment depends on the number of positions available in schools offering German as part of their curriculum. Consequently, one teacher was working in casual employment and one was teaching German in adult education. Seven teachers were employed as school teachers at the time of the study and another one was employed but temporarily away from work.

All teachers interviewed had acquired significant professional qualifications and teaching experiences before and after arriving in Australia (see Appendix 4, Table 16), which is consistent with previous findings on overseas born teachers (Collins & Reid, 2012) and ABS data on German born teachers in Australia (see Table 4). Five of the teachers had completed
three to five years of initial teacher education in Germany (*Staatsexamen I*) plus two years of preparatory training in German schools (*Staatsexamen II*). Two teachers had a Bachelor of Education from Australia and two teachers had completed a Master of Education, one in England and one in Germany, following recent changes in teacher education in some federal states of Germany. Also, one German migrant teacher had obtained qualifications in early childhood as well as Waldorf education in Germany.

Due to a shortage of permanent positions in the specialist area of LOTE (German), most teachers in this study had experience teaching German across the various levels of education in Australia, including primary, secondary, and adult education plus across the diverse educational sectors, such as public and private education, as well as other (see Appendix 4, Table 17). For example, one teacher had worked in Perth as a teacher of German for over 25 years and during that time had worked in primary, secondary, and in adult education, such as TAFE and for the *Goethe Society WA* (n.d.). Similarly, two teachers, who were only in the process of establishing a teaching career in Western Australia, had already worked across all levels and sectors of schooling within the short period of two and four years. These findings vividly illustrate the difficulties of securing a permanent position as a teacher of LOTE (German) in the Perth metropolitan area regardless of qualifications, teaching experiences, and relevant language skills.

All ten German migrant teachers interviewed in this study had gained broad teaching experience in schools in Western Australia, with four participants having between 0-4 years of teaching experience, another four with 5-9 years, one participant with 15 years, and another teacher with more than 25 years of work experience in Australia. In the following section, these experiences are explored in greater detail drawing on the collected narratives. Although it is the overall aim of narrative research to give a voice to participants and their experiences, in this article the findings of the study are summarised and reported in quantitative form. Presented are the results of the analyses of the data corpus as a whole, whereas specific aspects of the stories, which the teachers shared during the interviews, formed the focus of more detailed and nuanced analyses in other publications (Bense, 2012; Bense, 2014).

**Experiences of German migrant teachers in Western Australian schools**

Five of the participants described their start in Australian classrooms as a ‘difficult’ and ‘stressful’ time. Two teachers revealed during the interviews how they thought about giving up their teaching career because of the obstacles they faced. Four interviewees said they ‘didn’t feel well prepared’ for teaching in Australia. For instance, only one teacher reported that she was offered an orientation program at an independent school, but received no form of
The most common issue, described by nine of the ten German migrant teachers, was negotiating familiar educational values and expectations with local practices. (Table 5 illustrates the incidents/patterns of various difficulties as reported by the ten individual teachers.) The interviewees narrated how they initially had “different expectations” regarding student behaviour, learning and teaching styles, their teacher status as well as their professional role, both as teacher and as a member of staff. For example, eight of the participants described differences in learning style between students from the two countries that referred to a more independent work style and sense of responsibility of German students. Five of the teachers discussed the “different value” of foreign languages in the two countries (Bense, 2014). The participants described how they translated their previous expectations regarding language teaching and learning to the Australian context and the challenges they encountered as a result of this, including issues with student behaviour, a lower teacher status, and a lack of teaching resources.

The second most common problem for the interviewed teachers was a lack of support and feelings of isolation, which were articulated by eight of the interviewed teachers. Five of the participants described how they felt ‘lonely’ as they had ‘no other teachers to talk to’ and converse with. Five of the teachers communicated a lack of administrative support at their school and a lack of understanding from colleagues. Only two teachers said that they had some form of a mentor, but not at the first schools they were appointed to.

**Table 5 Difficulties experienced by interviewed German migrant teachers in Western Australia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulties</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Different expectations/values</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support/isolation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student behaviour</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate teaching resources</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of local knowledge</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language barriers</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other difficulties narrated by the German migrant teachers in this study included student behaviour, inadequate teaching resources, and a lack of local knowledge. For instance, their lack of knowledge regarding ‘the standard of discipline’, local classroom management practices, and the overall behaviour management plan at their school, led to ‘insecurities’ and problems with student behaviour for five teachers. Other teachers bemoaned a lack of resources in their teaching area at school, such as language books for students and teaching materials, and narrated how preparation for class was difficult and time consuming as a result of this. Finally, language barriers were mentioned by four teachers, however, these were only
described as minor issues, such as not being as articulate and ‘quick-witted’ as they would have liked, and were primarily voiced by teachers who were new to Australia (Number 6, 8 and 9).

What was noticeable is that, participant 4, 5, 7 and 10 reported the least number of problems. One possible explanation is that knowledge of local educational practices and values seem to have better prepared these teachers for Australian classrooms, as teachers who had lived and/or taught in Australia for a long time (Number 10 and 4) and teachers who had completed teacher qualifications in either Australia or the United Kingdom (Number 1 and 10) described fewer problems (see Table 5). Also, teachers (Number 2, 4, 5, and 7) working at Montessori or Waldorf schools described fewer difficulties. It is possible that the alternative educational approach at these schools facilitated an easier professional transition for these four teachers.

In contrast, teachers who had completed teacher education in Germany and who were just in the process of establishing a teaching career in Australia (Number 3, 6, 8, and 9), reported the most difficulties. One reason for this might be that, these experiences were only recent and fresh in the teachers’ mind. A lack of local knowledge, such as administrative procedures and socio-culturally based expectations and values regarding teaching led to misunderstandings and problems for these teachers. Insufficient institutional and collegial support further aggravated the situation and led to feelings of isolation and marginalisation for the teachers.

**Relation to previous research**

Overall, the difficulties described by the German migrant teachers in this study are consistent with existing research on overseas born teachers in Australia. Therefore, it can be assumed that a lack of support, differing expectations and values, a lack of local knowledge and difficulties with student behaviour are general problems for migrant teachers settling into Australian school culture. On the other hand, previously reported difficulties for migrant teachers in Australia with a rigid employment process (Reid et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009) or experiences of racism and discrimination (Reid et al., 2014) were not voiced by the ten teachers in this study. In this point, their experiences clearly differed from those of other overseas born and educated teachers in previous studies (Reid et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009), and the reasons for those variances in findings have to be explored in further research. Finally, language barriers appear not to be such a big challenge as reported in other research (Kato, 1998; Reid & Collins, 2012; Sharplin, 2009), and were predominantly voiced by teachers who were still dealing with the language transition. Possible reasons for fewer reported communication issues include considerable English language skills, a general appreciation for
native speakers in foreign language education, and the use of German as dominant language of instruction in class.

All ten participants in this study were working as teachers of LOTE (German). As such, the described experiences must be seen as specific to the participants and the particular context of this subject area. For instance, ‘professional isolation’ (Santoro et al., 2001) has been highlighted in previous research as a particular problem for migrant teachers working in LOTE education in Australia. This situation is created by the circumstance that LOTE teachers often work as the only specialist teacher at their school, and is further “amplified by perceptions that their subject area [LOTE] is of little value”, Kostogriz and Peeler (2007, p. 113) reported. It is possible that these conditions aggravated the situation for the interviewed German migrant teachers, as eight of ten teachers described feelings of isolation and a sense of marginalisation in their narratives. This was the case despite the participants’ membership in a professional association and perhaps one of the reasons for that involvement. Although the members of TAGWA come together for professional development training at an annual conference, the findings suggest that this on-off event is not able to provide sufficient support for German migrant teachers to transition successfully into language classes in Western Australia. Also, socio-culturally based and value laden concepts (Seah & Bishop, 2001) towards language education (e.g. teacher status, teaching resources, student learning behaviour and time allocation) needed to be negotiated with local strategies by the German migrant teachers (Bense, 2014). It is to be hoped that the latest initiatives, including the development of a national curriculum, bring about a change in language education and attitudes towards foreign languages that also enhances the work conditions for teachers working in this subject area.

Further, all participants were working in the metropolitan Perth area. Hence, the experiences described by the interviewees must be understood within the context of the specific location in Perth. Currently, the local Department of Education (DET) offers an Entry and Orientation Program designed to support overseas-trained teachers “by familiarising them with current best practice in Western Australian public schools” (Department of Education. Institute of Professional Learning, n.d.). This two-day program is offered to a broader audience, including returning and interstate-trained teachers. It appears, however, that this very brief and generic workshop does not provide sufficient support for migrant teachers settling into Western Australian schools. Although three teachers discussed the orientation program with the DET (n.d.) during the interviews and described the course as helpful, they still felt left alone with their challenges. Many teachers expressed that they would have liked some form of mentoring and more support from the DET during the difficult phase of negotiating and finding their way. This is consistent with findings by Reid, Collins and Singh (2010), who found that an increased
professional support for migrant teachers in Australia was the most common request by the 51 survey respondents from WA. While they also found that the experiences of migrant teachers surveyed in their study varied between states because of differing processes in NSW, WA, and SA, including varying induction procedures, a request for more support for migrant teachers was still the third most common answer across the board, after changes to assessment policies and “student related issues” (Reid et al., 2010, p. 161).

**Conclusion and implications of the findings**

This study provides some valuable information about the circumstances and experiences of German migrant teachers in Australia. Especially, the qualitative study of this research revealed some crucial aspects of the challenges the teachers faced while settling into Australia. The results showed some differences in frequency and significance of difficulties compared to previous research, which predominantly had drawn on participants from Asian backgrounds. Differences in experiences related to fewer reported issues with employment processes, racism/discrimination, and language barriers for German migrant teachers. Here, the findings offer a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the overseas born and educated teacher population in Australia, even though the small size and homogeneity of the sample are limiting the study’s potential for generalisability.

Yet overall, the findings resemble in many aspects the results of previous studies on migrant teachers in Australia. As German born teachers represent the largest non-native English speaking teacher cohort in Australia and their demographics, in many ways, reflect the profile of Australia’s overseas born and educated teacher cohort, their experiences can be seen as illustrative of these teachers’ situation. Thus, in the context of previous research, there is sufficient empirical evidence in this study to tentatively make inferences about the acculturation and professional adjustment of migrant teachers to Australian teaching contexts. Particularly, the overall lack of support for migrant teachers in Australia has been reported by a number of studies, including work by Peeler (2002), Peeler and Jane (2005), Reid et al. (2014), Santoro et al. (2001), and Sharpin (2009). This study corroborates these former findings and reinforces previous calls for an improvement of current support policies and practices for migrant teachers in Australia (Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Reid et al., 2010; Santoro et al., 2001; Sharpin, 2009).

**Suggestions for change**

Although acknowledging the limitations of the study, this article proposes a number of recommendations for change. First of all, it would be beneficial to put strategies into place
that facilitate the professional transition of migrant teachers into the Australian school environment, as the assistance currently provided is evidently inadequate. If overseas born and educated teachers are to be retained in Australian classrooms and to ensure they can make valuable contributions to our education system, it is crucial that these teachers do not further have to continue struggling in isolation, but receive adequate preparation and support. Various studies have provided recommendations for the provision of support for migrant teachers. For instance, Peeler and Jane (2005) and Santoro et al. (2001) emphasised that support practices have to acknowledge and value the previous teaching experiences of migrant teachers. International research, including that undertaken by Fee (2010) and Walsh, Brigham and Wang (2011), suggested courses that are tailored to the specific needs of migrant teachers and which provide practical opportunities for migrant teachers to familiarise themselves with the new teaching context. Such classes need to address general educational expectations, the local educational system, job expectations, assessment practices, student characteristics, as well as issues relevant to specific subject areas (Hutchison, 2006). Mentoring programs, while found to be able to ‘bridge the gap’ between previous and new educational practices (Peeler & Jane, 2005) and described as a valuable source of assistance by the participants in this study, were only available to two teachers. Also, peer-support networks of migrant teachers have great potential for providing information, professional support, and counselling to newly arrived teachers (Guo & Singh, 2009).

However, such connections need to be frequent in order to be effective, as the interviews showed. The implementation of coordinated, long-term, and specific programs for teachers new to Australia, which offer induction, re-qualification courses, professional development, and ongoing support, is vital. Such programs should be viewed as more than helping migrant teachers to succeed in their new work environment and to retain them in the Australian school system (Collins et al., 2010), under conditions where career plans and work morale can be affected by negative experiences (Bense, 2014; Sharplin, 2009). Such programs are also important as a contribution to the quality of teaching (Bartlett, 2014; Caravatti et al., 2014) and the learning outcomes for Australian students.

This is now all the more the case, as international teacher mobility and migration are increasing dramatically and teachers have become one of the ‘most mobile professions’ these days (European Commission, n.d.). If Australia wants to compete successfully within a global teaching labour market in the future, there is an urgent need to rethink current approaches. A second important point, therefore, is for educational research to direct its attention to transnational and collaborative research in order to gather evidence on best practices in other countries and their potential for a future replication and systematic integration at regional
and/or national level across Australia. Finally, teacher education research has to respond to issues posed by increasing globalisation and teacher mobility. In order for teacher education in Australia to adequately prepare future generations of educational professionals, it is essential to understand what knowledge and skills are needed to meet the challenges arising from international teacher mobility and migration.

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ANALYSIS

Narrative studies with migrant teachers can offer new perspectives on local educational practices and policies. This journal article draws on the stories of two German migrant teachers, collected in the larger narrative study, to discuss differences in language education strategies between Germany and Australia and resulting difficulties with professional adjustments. The first part of the article examines the provision and uptake of foreign languages as a subject area in the two countries and compares existing educational goals and arrangements regarding language education in Germany and Australia. It outlines recent national initiatives in language education in Australia, including the development of a national curriculum and the government’s latest strategy to promote the study of Asian languages in Australian schools, and highlights some of the issues that are currently affecting language education in Australia.

The second part of this article offers the detailed analysis of the narratives of two German migrant teachers, and their experiences as German language teachers in schools in Western Australia. Instances of a patterned theme that was prevalent across the entire interview data set, and which referred to a different sense of worth of language education in Australia and Germany, initiated an analytic interest in this particular aspect in relation to the overall research question. This issue was not anticipated during the initial design of the study but emerged as a very dominant theme in all conversations and the following analysis of data. The reason for that is that, as outlined in previous sections, work experience in the subject area of language education was not a selection criteria in the initial recruitment of German migrant teachers and rather the result of difficulties in locating and recruiting teachers as participants for the study.

A more focused analysis was conducted that was interested in the way the theme “importance of languages” plays out across the two data items and concentrated on that particular feature in coding the data. This key theme captured an important element of the way in which German migrant teachers experienced differences in educational expectations, attitudes, and value between the two countries and depicted their process of professional orientation to the new concepts. Thematic analysis was used to identify, analyse and report themes within the two selected data items that addressed the different value given to language learning in the two
countries and the difficulties the two teachers encountered as a result of this. Selected data extracts from the two teachers’ interviews are reported as narrative evidence to give a detailed account of the participants’ experiences.

The following article is the second publication that has arisen from this study. It was published in September 2014 in *Australian Educational Researcher* a high-quality journal in the subject area of *Education & Educational Research*, ranked 170/224 by Thompson Reuters in 2014. The *AER* is the international, peer reviewed journal published by the AARE. The journal was selected for its impact as well as its relevance in regards to the article’s style and topic. Papers published by the *AER* are limited to 7,000 words in total.

The published article received a considerable amount of media coverage for its argument, including a nomination for the Springer Award for the best paper published in AER for 2014. Papers are judged on their “originality, contemporary significance and /or scholarly relevance; conceptual, methodological and theoretical soundness; use of disciplined, focused and persuasive argument; coherent organisation and clarity of written expression; and reference to appropriate literature” (Springer, 2015).

**Web reference**

“Languages aren’t as important here”: German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian language classes

Introduction

Over the past years, there has been an increased interest in teachers’ work and experiences within the classroom. Narrative studies with their focus on teachers’ personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985) offer new possibilities for an understanding of schooling and teaching. The narratives of migrant teachers in particular provide new perspectives on local educational practices and the cultural dimension of teaching. Listening to migrant teachers’ stories “teaches us about schooling in the ‘host’ culture and allows new questions to be asked about that culture and its arrangements for learning and teaching”, Elbaz-Luwisch emphasised (2007, p. 372). In Australia, where qualified teachers from overseas represent a consistent source of educational staff (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2007; Kato, 1998; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009), migrant teachers offer fresh outlooks on current school policies and teaching practices. Studies of these teachers’ experiences in Australia (Kato, 1998; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009) and their cross-cultural observations can contribute significant knowledge and new understandings to many aspects of education.

For example, Seah and Bishop (2001) investigated migrant teachers’ negotiation of value conflicts and adjustment to the Australian school environment. The study illustrated how two migrant teachers of mathematics encountered value differences and conflicts when they stepped into their mathematics classrooms. Seah and Bishop (2001) argued that migrant teachers bring with them some form of “cultural baggage of attitudes, beliefs and values” towards schooling and teaching. Hence, migrant teachers subscribe to certain concepts of individual curriculum subjects and the ways they should be taught and learnt. The study highlighted how subjects and the ways in which they are presented and taught in schools can be socio-culturally based and value-laden, and as a result practices might differ between countries.

In this article, the focus is on participants from a narrative study involving German migrant teachers. The aim of the research is to shed light on German migrant teachers’ experiences in
the Australian school environment. Based on problem areas identified in previous research on migrant teachers in Australia (Kamler, Reid & Santoro, 1999; Kato, 1998; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009; Reid, Collins & Singh, 2014), the study is primarily concerned with questions regarding issues of cultural diversity in teaching methods and classroom management. The stories the German migrant teachers shared during the interviews, often recounted similar experiences of transition into a new context. In this article attention is being paid to the narratives of two teachers. Both teachers translated their previous knowledge of language teaching in Germany to the new environment in Australia, and their narratives describe their professional transition and the difficulties they encountered during this process. Listening to their narratives of adjustment illustrates how existing national arrangements in language education in Australia and Germany and the different value placed on languages in the two countries are impacting on teaching in the language classroom.

**Language education in Germany**

In Germany, multilingualism and the capability to converse in a modern foreign language is highly valued (Council of the European Union, 2008; The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, 2011). For that reason, foreign language education in Germany starts at a very young age. For example, many day-care centres today offer bilingual programs with native speakers as carers. This is followed by foreign language programs at primary school level in Year 3 and 4 (in some federal states already in Year 1 and 2) and the mandatory study of one or more foreign languages at secondary level until the end of high school. Additionally, many schools offer *content integrated language learning* (CLIL), with subjects partially taught in a modern foreign language. Also, national educational goals established by The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (kmk.org) ensure a common and high standard of modern foreign language education in schools in Germany. These goals were developed by the standing conference in Germany in light of the „increasing importance of multilingualism“ in a steadily globalising world (The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, 2011, p. 2).

To achieve desired educational goals, minimum instruction times are allocated to single subjects within the compulsory curriculum. This time allocation provides an indication of how much formal instruction time is considered necessary for students’ learning. The latest report of the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD, 2011) offers comparative data of minimum instruction times for individual subjects between countries. In Germany, the high significance of foreign language learning is evident in how much time is assigned to modern language education within the compulsory curriculum. While among OECD
countries on average 9% of the compulsory core curriculum for 9-11 year-olds is devoted to modern foreign languages (OECD, 2011, table D1.2a and D1.2b), in Germany 10% of the compulsory instruction time for this age group is assigned to modern foreign languages learning. Compared with these younger students, an even larger part of the curriculum for 12-14 year-olds is allocated to languages. While in OECD countries in general this older age group spends on average 13% of their time with language learning, in Germany an even higher percentage of 15% is assigned to this subject area. The fact that more time is devoted to foreign language education within the German compulsory core curriculum than in many other OECD countries illustrates the importance placed on language proficiency and multilingualism in German education.

**Foreign languages in Australia**

The 2011 OECD report does not provide any data on instruction times for modern foreign languages in Australia. However, it can be argued that Australian school students receive far less foreign language instruction than students from other OECD countries (Go8, 2007). In spite of the country’s multicultural society, there is a “pervasive undervaluing of languages in education and in the wider Australian community” (Kleihenz, Wilkinson, Gearon, Fernandes & Ingvarson, 2007, p. 68). The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for all Young Australians (MCEECDYE, 2008) recognises language learning as an integral part of the educational experience of all Australian students, and since 1989 it is one of eight “Key Learning Areas” in the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty First Century (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2002). Yet, “provision of languages in schools in Australia and uptake by students remain fragile at all phases of schooling” a recent national assessment found (ACARA, 2011b, p. 8).

Australia has a “poor record of encouraging its students to learn a second language” The Sydney Morning Herald previously claimed (Macgibbon, 2011, February 11). Language education has been in serious decline, Macgibbon said in her article, as languages have been “crowded out” of the curriculum over the past years. She argued that the introduction of literacy and mathematical tests, such as the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) are responsible for this development. Since schools are competing to do well in these benchmark tests, the focus on literacy and numeracy has increased. The study of modern foreign languages has been regarded as an extracurricular option, she debated, rather than a valuable addition to learning.

Likewise, The West Australian recently bemoaned Australians were „too slow to understand others“ (Hiatt, 2012, June 21). The article argued that too few students enrol in the study of a
modern foreign language and refers to student enrolment numbers in WA during 2011. According to information provided by the School Curriculum Standard Authority (n.d.), only 1,278 Year 12 students in WA studied a language in 2011. Although these numbers show an increase of 213 students compared with the previous year, they still represent less than 6 per cent of this year group. This shows that, while learning a foreign language in primary school has been compulsory under WA’s curriculum framework for many years, only a small number of students choose to continue with the study of foreign languages to the end of high school.

It can be hoped that, these recent newspaper articles represent an impending change in attitudes towards languages. For, at the moment it can be argued that Australia is experiencing a “languages crisis” (Go8, 2007). The Group of Eight, a coalition of Australia’s leading universities noted that after “decades of policy neglect and inaction urgent action is required if Australia is to avoid the serious educational, national security and economic consequences of becoming monolingual” (Go8, 2007). Similarly, an opinion paper by Clyne, Pauwels and Sussex (n.d., p.1) described the state of languages education in Australia as a “national tragedy and an international embarrassment”. They argued:

> […] the issue of languages other than English has been neglected and marginalized in the too-hard basket. It is no exaggeration to state that this area is now a catastrophe in Australian education. (Clyne, Pauwels, Sussex, n.d., p. 1)

A national curriculum for languages that defines what school students should be taught and an expectation of the quality of their learning can be seen as the first step towards a change in language education in Australia. For, a previous study (Attitudes Towards the Study of Languages in Australian Schools, 2007) reported that “existing systemic syllabuses or teaching guidelines are at best unhelpful and at worst non-existent for language education in many primary schools” (ATSLAS, 2007, p. 8).

**A national curriculum for languages**

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), which is currently developing a national curriculum for languages acknowledged that “recognition by the school and the wider community of the value of languages” (ACARA, 2011b, p. 8) is essential for the program to be successful. At present, a national curriculum for languages is still in the process of being reviewed and over the course of the year 2011 feedback was provided on a draft shape paper (ACARA, 2011b). The currently released *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages* provides broad directions for the development of a languages curriculum, which
eventually will be conceptualised as a “Foundation to Year 12 development” (ACARA, 2011b, p. 38).

Learning content and achievement standards described in the paper are based on an indicative number of hours for language learning. It outlines Australian students should have access to 350 hours of language education from Kindergarten to Year 6; 160 hours in Year 7 and Year 8; 160 hours in Year 9 and Year 10; and 200 hours to 240 hours in Year 11 and Year 12 (ACARA, 2011b, p. 31). Although these numbers represent a slight conformation to average time allocations for language learning among OECD countries (OECD, 2011), the time assigned to languages in relation to the total teaching time per year is still considerably less than in other countries. For instance, the indicative allocation of hours across Kindergarten to Year 6 is equivalent to 5% of the total teaching time per year (compared to an average of 9% in OECD countries and 10% in Germany), and the time assigned to languages across Year 7 to Year 10 is equivalent to 8% of the total teaching time per year (compared to an average of 13% among OECD countries and 15% in Germany). That means Australian students on average will still spend only half as much time on language learning as students in Germany and other OECD countries. Also, it is important to stress that while there is continuity in language education in Germany and students learn a language in a structured and sequential fashion of levels (A1-C1), in Australia it is not uncommon at primary schools that, for example, half a year of Italian instruction is followed by a term of Indonesian. Plus, if students choose to continue the study of a language in high school often new languages are being introduced, with little or no prospects of continuation (ATSLAS, 2007). Finally, while the numbers in the OECD report are mandatory learning times for languages among OECD countries, the numbers in the ACARA paper only represent indications. Despite recommendations (Clyne, Pauwels and Sussex, n.d.; Go8, 2007) to make the study of a foreign language mandatory for all Australian students during their compulsory years of education, the ACARA authority allows schools and school jurisdictions to make necessary policy decisions regarding time allocation when implementing the new curriculum.

A recent media release by School Education Minister Peter Garrett (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012, October 28) outlined the government’s latest strategy to promote the study of Asian languages and Asia literacy across all curriculum areas in Australian schools. The aim is to equip Australian students with the necessary knowledge and skills for a future, which the government envisions with a strong focus on Australia’s neighbouring Asian countries (asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au).
“As part of our ongoing discussions we will require opportunities for students to study Asian culture, history and languages, from their first day of school, through the Australian Curriculum. That will give the next generation of Australians the knowledge and capabilities to prosper in the Asian century.” (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012, October 28)

To achieve this, one objective is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to study an Asian language right through to Year 12, with priority given to Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Indonesian and Japanese. While this broad national initiative might be the welcome push towards recognition of the personal and professional benefits of language proficiency and multilingualism, already existing issues that are currently affecting language education in Australia are being overlooked and ignored.

**Issues in language education in Australia**

In 2007, a study commissioned by the *Australian Council of State School Organisations and the Australian Parents Council*, examined current *Attitudes Towards the Study of Languages in Australian Schools* (ATSLAS, 2007). The main findings in the report, which was much applauded by several education jurisdictions and authorities, include a massive shortage of qualified language teachers, the lack of a national curriculum, limited time allocation for language education, a lack of professional development programs, missing training and network opportunities for language teachers, difficult working conditions (e.g. own classrooms for language teachers) and little incentives for schools to offer, and for students to study languages (ATSLAS, 2007, p. 8).

Similar findings were reported by *The Review of Teacher Education for Languages Teachers* (Kleinhenz, et al., 2007), which offers a comprehensive national picture of the nature of education programs for language teachers. The paper covers a number of problems, which are affecting language teacher education in Australia at present. These include inadequate or the lack of specific language teacher courses at universities, insufficient funding for languages and the lack of research in language teacher education. It further reported that Australian education students feel discouraged to train as language teachers by the low status of this subject area, the perceptions of a lack of career path, especially in primary schools, itinerancy and associated problems, a lack of support in schools, and difficult work conditions (Kleinhenz et al., 2007).
What is more, languages are often perceived as a subject area that is difficult to teach (Kleinhenz et al., 2007, p. 69). Research (Sakui, 2007) found that the introduction of communicatively-oriented strategies has created additional challenges for teachers as many say they struggle to balance these interactive strategies with the normal task of managing a class. Due to a lack of language teacher training programs at Australian universities, Kleinhenz et al. (2007) concluded:

> It seems likely that, especially in some secondary schools, the insufficiency of some teachers’ knowledge of languages and their poor pedagogical skills are contributing to classroom discipline problems. (Kleinhenz et al., 2007, p. 70)

To address the shortage of qualified language teachers in Australia, overseas-trained teachers are being employed as an additional source of teaching staff (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2007; Kato, 1998; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009). But while these teachers bring the necessary knowledge of languages and teaching methodology into the classroom, previous research (Kato, 1998; Sharplin, 2009) found that migrant teachers, whose first language is not English, often face problems with student behaviour and classroom management. Kleinhenz et al. (2007) reported in their review of teacher education for languages teachers:

> Several principals commented that if they had to choose between a teacher with poor language skills but high classroom management skills, or a teacher with high language and low classroom management skills they would choose the former, and in fact had done so in some cases. This usually resulted in orderly classrooms where children learnt something of the country and culture but gained little in the way of language skills. (Kleinhenz et al., 2007, p. 68)

However, it is essential to recognise that many of these issues derive from the persistent undervaluing of foreign language proficiency in the wider community. It is this “lack of value and marginalisation of languages”, Kleinhenz, et al. argued (2007, p. 70) that “filters down to the students, who do not see the area as important”. Similarly, a national study investigating current attitudes towards the study of languages in Australia (ATSLAS, 2007) concluded that parent organisations will play an important role in improving the status of languages in the eyes of the community. A national initiative “should make explicit an expectation that parents have a role to play in the implementation of the [plan]” (ATSLAS, 2007, p. 9).
Stories of migrant teachers in Australia

Over the past three decades, educational research has become increasingly interested in how teachers themselves see and experience their work within the classroom. Influenced by the use of life stories in psychology and other disciplines (Atkinson, 2007; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007), an awareness of the narrative approach as new qualitative research method that asks participants to tell their personal accounts of events began to develop in education. Clandinin’s (1985) longitudinal interview study with two teachers can today be seen as a “template” for the developing methodology (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007). Clandinin was one of the first to draw attention to the personal nature of a teacher’s classroom actions and highlighted the importance of experiences for an understanding of teaching practices. Today, narratives and their contribution to educational research are widely recognised and a growing body of narrative research and literature on the methodology of narrative inquiry is available (Carter & Doyle, 1995; Clandinin, 2007; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007; Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Recently, overseas born and educated teachers and potential issues of cultural differences in the teaching profession have become a focal point of educational research in Australia (Collins & Reid, 2012; Kamler, Reid & Santoro, 1999; Kato, 1998; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009; Reid, Collins & Singh, 2014). Here, qualitative studies present exclusive insights into the teachers’ experiences of professional transition into an unfamiliar environment and the difficulties they often face during this process (Bense, 2012; Kato, 1998; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009). Yet, studies on migrant teachers also hold significant potential to contribute new understandings and knowledge to many aspects of education. These teachers’ unique standpoint of being both “insider” and “outsider” (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007) allows for cross-cultural observations that offer new and fresh perspectives on local educational practices and policies.

Study of German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian German language classes

In the following, the narratives of two German migrant teachers will be used to illustrate how existing issues in language education in Australia are effecting the work on classroom level. The article will present interview extracts from a larger study exploring German migrant teachers’ navigation of entry as professionals into Australian school communities. The research was initiated by the researcher’s own experiences as a German migrant teacher in German language education and by study reports (Jung & Boman, 2003) of problematic student behaviour in Australian German language classes. Since previous research in Australia has mainly investigated experiences of teachers of Asian backgrounds (Kato, 1998; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001; Sharplin, 2009), this study was interested in
whether the circumstances and experiences of teachers from Germany as a western European country would reflect former findings. A total of ten German teachers with work experience as German language educators in Australian primary and secondary schools participated in the study. The semi-structured narrative interviews were conducted in the participants’ first language German. The collected narratives were analysed in German and translated into English by the researcher for reporting and publishing purposes. Here, the researcher’s own background significantly facilitated the study, as it enabled the capturing of rich narrative data and a level of analysis not available to monolingual researchers (Temple & Young, 2004).

During the data analysis, a recurring theme emerged in all interviews that relates to language education and how the teachers’ perception of their subject area as being of little value impacted on their professional transition (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007). In this article, attention is being paid to the narratives of two teachers, who were chosen because both were qualified and experienced teachers of modern foreign languages in Germany before they immigrated to Australia. The teachers are both female and between 40-50 years old. They had recently moved to Australia and just started to establish their professional career as German language teachers in this country. Therefore, their cross-cultural observations and experiences of adjustment were still recent and fresh in their minds. Listening to the narratives of these two German migrant teachers illustrates how the low value and the marginalisation of languages within the Australian (school) culture are impacting on teaching in the German language classroom.

German is one of the languages for which a national curriculum is being developed and is “among the most commonly taught foreign languages in Australian schools” (ACARA, 2011a, p. 35). Yet, both teachers interviewed in this study expressed their initial astonishment about how low foreign languages as a subject area rate within the Australian curriculum.

I have to say, this was a new experience for me to have students who weren’t interested in my subject. In Germany, I was a teacher of English as a foreign language, where grades for that subject determine the progression to the next year level at the end of the school year. […] Now, I teach a subject that […] is not a core subject and not considered important. (Elisa)

I think, overall foreign languages have a higher significance in Germany compared to here in Australia. (Beate)

Elisa, an experienced languages teacher from Germany, articulated how this different sense of worth and value of foreign languages ultimately contributes to difficulties with classroom
management for language teachers. Her response to a prompt about her initial teaching experiences in language education in Australia shows how students’ attitude and behaviour toward the subject are influenced by the general attitude towards languages in Australia.

For me it was the biggest shock here to start teaching and [to realise] well, this student doesn’t want to do German at all. So, what do I do with him? He just totally refused to engage. And, when you have one of those in your class, and I had four of them in one class, that is where I really had difficulties […]. (Elisa)

Elisa explained how in Germany marks offer the necessary incentive for appropriate student behavior in language classes, whereas in Australia:

One has to motivate the students more intrinsically, because the extrinsic incentive doesn’t work. The subject is perceived as not relevant. (Elisa)

Due to the lower importance of foreign language study within the Australian curriculum fewer periods per week are allocated to foreign languages in student timetables in comparison to Germany or other countries (OECD, 2011). Both teachers voiced how this limited time allocation impacted on their relationships with the students.

[In Germany], I saw my students more often during the week, which made teaching easier. When you see a Year 8 class only once a week [as in Australia] it is only until the end of the term that you can develop a relationship with the students. It was much easier in Germany to establish a good relationship with the students […]. (Elisa)

I think that is a problem here, particularly in primary schools. [As a language teacher] you only go into the classroom once a week for one period. First, it takes a long time until I remember all the names of the students. That I find very difficult. Also, you can’t really develop a personal relationship with the students.

That was easier in Germany. (Beate)

Classroom management is often perceived as particularly difficult in language classes (Kleinhenz et al., 2007; Sakui, 2007). The development of a positive teacher-student relationship is seen as essential for successful classroom management (Jones, 1996). Beate, a former teacher of French in Germany, conceded how her limited contact hours with the students affected her classroom management as she was not able to establish the relationship with her students she would have liked.
It was noticeable that I had to ask [the students] three times, before they listened and did what I asked them to do. In contrast, their classroom teacher just asks once and the students do what they are told. I think, this is due to the fact that I only see them once a week. (Beate)

Kleinhenz et al. (2007) found that compared to other subject areas the status of language teachers in Australia is perceived as low. The two German teachers revealed similar experiences upon reflection of their observations in the Australian school context.

What is important to mention is that, as a teacher of German and French at my school in Germany, my status as a teacher was very different. [...] I think, [in Australia] particularly at primary school level, there is almost a hierarchy, between the classroom teacher and the specialist teacher. (Beate)

Within our language team we all get along really well. Yet at times it is rather our language department that has [...] to justify within the entire school, when we need some new teaching resources. (Elisa)

Apart from the lower status, difficult working conditions have been blamed for the low interest of Australian education students to train as language teachers (Kleinhenz et al., 2007). For example, a study (ATSLAS, 2007) highlighted the importance of an allocated classroom for language teachers. Beate communicated the personal impact of working under such circumstances.

[In primary schools] you don’t have your own [language] room. That means you go into the room of the classroom teacher. And that is a pity, because if I had my own classroom I could decorate the room. And at the beginning, when I came into the class, the classroom teacher just left the room and left all the stuff on the desk. I then had to make a little room for my own materials. (Beate)

She also described her difficulties of allocating materials and resources for her language classes at the school.

In Germany, I had access to a lot of books and teaching materials, [...]. That is what I really found difficult here [in Australia], that there were no resources [provided at the schools]. You are basically on your own. [...] At the end, I developed all my teaching materials myself. (Beate)

It is these working conditions, the itinerancy and inconvenient working hours for language teachers, particularly in part time positions that have proven to be a real disincentive for local
students to study language education (Kleinhenz et al., 2007), and which eventually contribute to staffing issues (ATSLAS, 2007). Yet, while overseas trained teachers offer an additional source of qualified language staff, previous research reported a lack of support for these teachers. Peeler and Jane (2005) underline the advantages of mentoring relationships and assert the development of support strategies for migrant teachers, after learning that workplace tensions have the potential to alienate these teachers from their school community and the teaching profession. Also, Sharplin (2009) advocated effective induction and high levels of collegial and administrative support for migrant teachers. However, both teachers in this study described their difficulties finding the much-needed support and assistance at their schools.

[When] I went to that teacher [to discuss a student], he was very unfriendly. He asked me, whether I had put that into writing, and when I said no, he was not very happy that I even approached him. I thought this was not very cooperative. I felt quite left alone at that moment, I have to say. I didn’t like that. (Elisa)

At [that] school, there was no one who really looked after me. And I eventually had to find out everything on my own [...] I think that was also a reason why I didn’t like it there, there I felt absolutely left alone. [...] At one point I simply gave up. I then realised I don’t like it here and obviously no one takes interest in me and looks after me, and then I thought, well that is only a fixed appointment for one term and I do it until the end of the school year but next year I don’t want to work here anymore. (Beate)

**Conclusion**

These two teachers’ narratives illustrate some very real problems that are currently affecting language education in Australia. Difficult work conditions, the low status of language teachers, a lack of support and network opportunities, but particularly the general attitude towards languages in the wider community are having an impact on teaching in language classes in Australia. A national curriculum for languages and an adjustment of instruction times to the standards of other OECD countries can be seen as the right step forward. Also, the government’s recognition of the benefits of language proficiency and multilingualism, professionally, in trade, as well as personally, in today’s increasingly globalising world symbolise a welcome change of focus in education. Yet, while the latest initiative to promote the study of Asian languages is the right move for Australia’s future, it is necessary to take some points into consideration. Firstly, the strong focus on Asian languages will eventually be to the disadvantage of other modern foreign languages, particularly the European languages,
including German. Recognition that the European countries will still remain influential in the future, politically and economically, is important. Proficiency in at least one modern European language will continue to be beneficial in all aspects of life. An evaluation of this narrow focus in Australia’s future language education program is crucial. Secondly, a lack of specific language teacher courses at universities and insufficient research in language education have contributed to staffing issues in language education in the past. For the national plan to be successful an improvement of language teacher education programs at universities and the establishment of professional development opportunities for language teachers are critical. Further, migrant teachers with the desired language skills will need effective induction and high levels of collegial and administrative support to ease their initiation process into the Australian school environment. The development of mentoring strategies implemented in the Australian school system would be an ideal and essential strategy. Finally, the two teachers’ accounts have shown how prevailing attitudes towards the study of languages in the general public are impacting on student behaviour in class. It will be interesting to see how long it will take for this broad national initiative to reach the wider Australian community and to bring about a change in attitudes towards recognition of the value, importance and benefits of foreign language proficiency and multilingualism.

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OUTLOOK

This final paper presents the preliminary findings of a spin-off research project, which investigated a state-funded migrant teacher network in Düsseldorf, Germany. The topic of increased needs for professional support is a very strong finding and consistent theme across the entire thesis and as such deserved particular attention. The paper addresses the identified lack of adequate support strategies by providing an outlook for future ways of responding to this problem. It looks at various models of support and discusses some concrete and practicable approaches. A particular focus is given in this paper to a small-scale study conducted by the researcher in Düsseldorf.

The paper introduces state-run migrant teacher networks as a novel concept of in-service support for migrant teachers in Germany. It presents the results of a single case study on a network in the state capital of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), the first of seven networks established over the last eight years in various states. This pilot project in NRW comprises an administrative centre in Düsseldorf and an affiliated professional learning community of more than 600 members from over 40 different nations. The research, which was carried out over the month of September in 2014, used interviews with two office employees, observation, and document data to gain an understanding of the organisational structure, key activities and objectives of the organisation. In addition, interviews with three network members were collected to get insights into the motives and perceived benefits of participation in the network. The study found that the network in NRW provides an important institutional framework for peer support among the local teachers with a migration background as it enables the transmission of knowledge, experience as well as emotional, social, and practical help among its members. Finally, this paper closes by suggesting some directions for future research.
“You realise, you’re not alone”: Migrant teachers finding peer support and belonging in an instituted professional learning community

Introduction

One phenomenon of contemporary society is the growing international mobility and migration of educational professionals (Caravatti, McLeod Lederer, Lupico & Van Meter, 2014; Reid et al., 2014). These days, migrant teachers have become an important part of the brain circulation between countries (Collins & Reid, 2012) and represent one of the “most mobile professions” (European Commission, n.d.). Working in another country not only offers teachers financial advantages (Appleton, Morgan & Sives, 2006; Manik, 2014; Miller, Ochs & Mulvaney, 2008), but also unique opportunities for professional development and work experience, with self-reported benefits for teachers’ instructional knowledge, cultural, and language competencies as well as content expertise (Caravatti et al., 2014; Reid & Collins, 2013). Recruiting countries on the other hand, not only benefit from migrant teachers as an additional source of teaching staff during labour shortages, but also from the cultural diversity these teachers bring with them into the local education system (Caravatti et al., 2014; Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 2011). There is strong evidence that a growing number of educational professionals take advantage of the increasing opportunities of working abroad today (Caravatti et al., 2014; European Commission, n.d.).

The transition into a new working environment, however, can be a difficult process for migrant teachers as numerous international studies have shown. Although the social contexts differ between studies, some of the key themes that cut across the research in different countries include: difficult recognition processes (Fee, 2010 in the USA; Vandeyar, Vandeyar & Elufisan, 2014 in South Africa), mandatory requalification requirements (Beynon, Ilieva & Dichupa, 2004 in Canada; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), non-recognition of previous professional education and experience (Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Krüger-Potratz, 2013 in Germany; Michael, 2006 in Israel; Miller, 2008a in England), employment issues (Collins & Reid, 2012 in Australia; (Maylor, Hutchings, James, Menter & Smart, 2006 in England; Remennick, 2002 in Israel; Walsh, Brigham & Wang, 2011 in Canada), assignment to unpopular schools (Bartlett, 2014 in the USA; Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Manik, 2014 in the UK; Remennick, 2002 in Israel; Sharplin, 2014 in Australia), issues with adjustment to an unfamiliar teaching context (Fee, 2010 in the
USA; Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Maylor et al., 2006 in England; Reid & Collins, 2012 in Australia; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), issues with student behaviour and classroom management (Collins & Reid, 2012 in Australia; Fee, 2010 in the USA; Maylor et al., 2006 in England; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), language barriers (Sharplin, 2009 in Australia; Hutchison, 2006 in the USA; Janusch, 2015 in Canada; Remennick, 2002 in Israel), encounters of discrimination (Collins & Reid, 2012 in Australia; Phillion, 2003 in Canada; Remennick, 2002 in Israel) and racism against migrant teachers (Manik, 2014 in the UK), feelings of marginalisation (Fee, 2010 in the USA; Pollock, 2010 in Canada), and an overall lack of professional support (Fee, 2010 in the USA; Peeler & Jane, 2005 and Sharplin, 2009 in Australia). This international research base shows that teachers who endeavour to enter the teaching profession in another country often encounter massive institutional, professional, and personal challenges.

While the administrative circumstances in the host country as well as the teachers’ personal and professional background, including insufficient communication skills in the language of instruction (Hutchison, 2006; Sharplin, 2009) and a lack of previous teaching experience (Maylor et al., 2006), may be factors that are contributing to challenges for migrant teachers during their transitional period, there is a large number of studies which assume a correlation between sociocultural concepts of education and the reported issues. Key points of perspective are sociocultural models of learning, including Vygotsky’s concept of cultural mediation and internalisation (1978) and models of professional development in communities of practice by Wenger and Lave (1991). This socio-cultural view believes that teachers internalise contextual concepts of teaching through the participation in communities. Participation in social interactions and activities allows them to experience the cultural norms and expectations of the community, which are conceptualised as a set of theoretical and practical concepts and towards some shared goals of education. From this perspective, teachers become enculturated into their community of practice as they learn from personal experiences and professional training. They become progressively aware of the tacit beliefs and normative practices of teaching within their community and develop towards increasing competence and a sense of belonging.

Since migrant teachers often gain their professional qualifications and work experience before deciding to teach abroad (Caravatti et al., 2014), these previous expectations and practices need to be negotiated with the theoretical and practical concepts of teaching in the host country (Caravatti et al., 2014; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001). This process of acculturation includes gaining the necessary “culturally specific educational knowledge” (Peeler & Jane 2005; see also Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004), understanding local perspectives, establishing a new teaching career as well as developing a new “teacher
identity” (Deters, 2006; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Virta, 2015). The provision of professional support during this transitional period is a critical need (Caravatti et al., 2014; Fee, 2010; Sharplin, 2009), as research has shown that migrant teachers’ career pursuits can be destabilised by negative experiences during this period (Bense, 2014; Sharplin, 2009). Subsequently, the international research base has consistently called for increased support policies and practices for internationally mobile teachers (Caravatti et al., 2014; Fee, 2010; Hutchison, 2006; Maylor et al., 2006; Sharplin, 2009; Walsh et al., 2011).

Support strategies across countries

Currently, strategies of support for migrant teachers differ greatly between countries, even from one federal state to another, depending on existing resources and the number of migrant teachers. For example in countries like Australia and England, local state education departments offer orientation and induction programs to help teachers “by familiarising them with current best practice in [...] public schools” (Department of Education. Institute of Professional Learning, n.d.). Another way of supporting migrant teachers are mentoring programs, which can range from formal to informal arrangements. In international research, such programs have been found to be the most valued professional learning model of migrant teachers (Deters, 2006; Caravatti et al., 2014) to help them “bridge the gap” between old and new professional practices (Peeler & Jane, 2005). An Australian study reported that mentoring has great potential of orienting migrant teachers to the theoretical and practical concepts of teaching in their host country and informing them of contextual orientations in education (Peeler & Jane, 2005, p. 325).

However, overall most support programs have been found to be too brief and too generic for the specific needs of migrant teachers. For instance, based on their study of migrant teachers in England, Maylor et al. (2006, p. 7) pointed out that a “two-day induction cannot by itself eliminate differences in perception and expectations of teaching and learning derived from different educational systems.” In Australia, orientation courses often have been developed for a broader audience, including returning and interstate-trained teachers, and thus do not address the support requirements of migrant teachers settling into the Australian teaching context. Consequently, Reid and Collins (2012) found that fewer than half (31%) of the migrant teachers (83%) who participated in an Australian induction described the program as useful. Also in Canada, Walsh et al. (2011) criticised the limited number of programs offering specific assistance for teachers new to the country. They found that migrant teachers were, in rather “ad hoc ways”, included in other regular programs instead (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 663). Mentoring, on the other hand, requires a “considerable investment” and depends on a well-
functioning relationship between mentor and mentee in order to be successful, as Peeler and Jane (2005) highlighted. Also, not all migrant teachers seem to have access to mentoring programs, due to limited personnel resources (Bense, 2012) or a lack of administrative support (Guo & Singh, 2009a) at their school. A recent study found that only two out of ten participants had been allocated with some form of a mentor during their initial transition into the Australian education system (Bense, 2014). Finally, professional development can be an additional source of information for migrant teachers, and was described as vital for their professional orientation by survey respondents of a large international study (Caravatti et al., 2014). For teachers appointed to schools in rural or isolated regions, however, professional training can be out of reach or may only be accessed with financial and time constraints. For instance, Sharplin (2014) identified overseas-educated teachers as one group frequently recruited to fill vacancies in rural and remote schools in Western Australia.

In light of consistent reports of massive personal, academic, and professional challenges for migrant teachers during their process of adjustment, there is clearly a need to improve current arrangements. Recognition of the importance of support services for internationally trained teachers is growing, with numerous studies calling for increased strategies of assistance to ease the process of transitioning for migrant teachers (Caravatti et al., 2014; Deters, 2006; Fee, 2010; Hutchison, 2006; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Reid & Collins, 2012; Sharplin, 2009; Walsh et al., 2011). For example, Michael (2006, p. 167) maintained that support for migrant teachers is “crucial” in order to “aid them in growing accustomed to the formal structure of the school” in Israel, whilst Rhone (2012, p. 46) stressed that it is “essential” for teacher education in the United States to “rethink their approach” to migrant teachers. Particularly in view of teaching becoming a global labour market, Reid, Collins and Singh (2010, p. 13) argued that the current “procedures designed to acclimatise global teachers to local education situations require more thought and further development”.

The reasons for this overall lack of support, which Reid et al. (2010, p. 197) called a “labour market failure” and Miller (2008b, p.1) compared to “professional neglect”, are under-researched. However, Miller (2008b) reported that in interviews with country officials in England, responsibility for the social and professional integration of migrant teachers was passed on between policy makers and local authorities. In particular, the great homogeneity of migrant teachers in terms of background, qualifications, and teaching experience were named as reasons for the lack of integration programs in the country. Consequently, several studies compared migrant teachers’ situation with a fight for “survival” (Maylor et al., 2006) that only the “fittest” teachers manage to overcome (Remennick, 2002). Insufficient support during migrant teachers’ process of adjustment, however, can lead to diminished professional
motivation and an alienation from the teaching profession (Bense, 2012; Peeler & Jane, 2005). Sharplin (2009), who investigated the experiences of six “imported and overseas-qualified teachers” in Australia, found that migrant teachers’ difficulties during their professional transition can let them turn away from their profession. In her study, this resulted in two of the six participants resigning earlier from the teaching assignment. Yet, the cost of this general neglect is not just the loss of these teachers for the host countries’ education system, as Collins et al. (2010) pointed out. An inadequate preparation and orientation to the local education situation also impedes the effectiveness of these teachers in the classroom (Bartlett, 2014; Caravatti, 2014; Collins et al., 2010), which can lead to poor work performance and might negatively affect the quality of learning for the students in recruiting countries.

**Recommendations for improving support services**

A large number of studies on migrant teachers over the past has also provided diverse recommendations for improving current support strategies. For instance, researchers like Peeler and Jane (2005, p. 325) emphasised that support practices have to acknowledge the “unique histories” and previous work experiences of migrant teachers (see also Rhone, 2012; Walsh et al., 2011). Accordingly, several researchers have suggested tailored classes as a way of responding to migrant teachers’ specific needs (Fee, 2010; Maylor et al., 2006; Walsh et al., 2011). Such classes, Hutchison (2006) recommended, should address general educational expectations, the local educational system, job expectations, assessment practices, as well as student characteristics. He also suggested to discuss any pedagogical issues relevant to migrant teachers’ individual curriculum areas. Walsh et al. (2011), Janusch (2015), and Fee (2010) further stressed that support practices have to provide opportunities for practical application to allow migrant teachers to successfully familiarise themselves with new teaching practices. There also seems to be agreement among researchers that any arrangements have to be designed as long-term support strategies (Caravatti et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009; Walsh et al., 2011). Although country officials will look at the budgetary implications for developing, establishing, and maintaining continuous target-group specific support programs, these expenses would be reasonable compared to the real costs associated with teacher fluctuation and the potential risk of migrant teachers’ being ineffective and inadequately prepared due to a lack of orientation.

In fact, there is empirical evidence emerging that suggests some effective, yet low-cost solutions. A number of international studies (Fee, 2010; Guo & Singh, 2009b; Virta, 2015) reported how migrant teachers had formed networks of their own and cooperated among themselves in order to access support from more knowledgeable and experienced members.
Such groups were described as important source of help by the teachers, as it brought them together and offered opportunities for professional learning and sharing of experiences. In recent years, teacher networks have become a popular form of professional development and support in education (Niesz, 2007). This rise is largely influenced by global societal changes and new technological opportunities, including the ability to collaborate and communicate over the internet (Baker-Doyle, 2011). While teacher networks can vary largely in aims and activities, central to all is that, in contrast to traditional approaches in teacher education, they are based on a participatory and collaborative concept of learning. From this view, learning should provide opportunities for interaction and the exchange of understandings and practices (Niesz, 2007). The growing literature on teacher networks indicates that participation in such networks can have a positive impact on teachers, including their professional learning (Berkemeyer, Manitius, Müthing & Bos, 2009; Baker-Doyle, 2011; Firestone & Pennell, 1997; McCormick, Fox, Carmichael & Procter, 2010), motivation (Berkemeyer et al., 2009; Firestone & Pennell, 1997), empowerment (Firestone & Pennell, 1997), and professional socialisation (Baker-Doyle, 2011).

Further, anecdotal evidence form an Australian study (Reid et al., 2010) suggests that, the establishment of a centralised point of contact might be another way of addressing migrant teachers’ needs. Interviewees revealed how individuals in local state education departments became key contact persons during their process of re-establishing a teaching career in Australia. The findings also highlighted the importance of having someone who is able to connect with migrant teachers’ specific situation based on own experiences and personal background. As many needs overlap the personal and professional spheres in migrant teachers’ lives, support has to be more personalised and holistic, Reid et al. (2010) concluded. In view of the aforementioned evidence, it appears that an effective strategy for support will require a combination of measures.

One relatively new concept that a review of the international research and literature on the issue yielded, and which combines various models of support, is instituted and state-run migrant teacher networks. Over the last eight years, seven of such networks have been structurally established in different states of Germany as a strategy for strengthening the situation of the local teachers with a migration background. “Teachers with a migration background” is a broad term generally used in Germany to describe teachers with a personal or family history of immigration. The first network was founded in Düsseldorf in 2007 following an initiative by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Integration in North Rhine-Westphalia. The state North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) is the most populated state in Germany and also has the highest population of people with a migration background. Key areas of
activities of the network in NRW include the professional support for teachers with a migration background already working in German schools, the targeted recruitment of migrant students for the teaching profession as well as assistance for teacher students/beginning teachers with a migration background during the early stages of their career. The network in NRW, called “Projekt: Lehrkräfte mit Zuwanderungsgeschichte” (“Project: Teachers with a migration background”), soon began to grow in numbers and is counting more than 600 network members from over 40 different nations today (lmz-nrw.de). Because of the project’s great success it has received several awards over the past (Bainski, 2013) and has now gained model and “flagship character” (Bainski, 2014). In the following, the findings of a recent single case study on the network in NRW will be presented.

**Study of the state-run migrant teacher network in North Rhine-Westphalia**

Given the small amount of research on migrant teacher networks in general and the almost non-existent research on state-sponsored migrant teacher networks, this project had the very broad aim to gain an understanding of how the state-funded migrant teacher network in NRW supports teachers with a migration background. For that, the research addressed the following four research questions: What is the organisational structure of the migrant teacher network in NRW, including coordination, governing authorities, funding bodies, and external partners? What are the key activities and objectives of the migrant teacher network in NRW? What are the main challenges for teachers with a migration background in NRW? And finally, what are the motives and perceived benefits of participation for members of the migrant teacher network in NRW?

**Methodology**

As a phenomenological study, this research followed an inductive approach and empirical strategy of investigation. Considering this exploratory nature of the research, the use of a case study strategy was deemed the most suitable methodology for analysing the phenomenon of interest as it allowed the integration of information from diverse data sources. Hence, the research design applied a mixture of methods, including ethnographic observation, narrative interviews, and the use of secondary data in the form of published material.

Data were collected over the month of September in 2014 in various locations across the state of NRW, such as the network office in Düsseldorf, participants’ homes, and during outside appointments. Narrative interviews were conducted with two employees of the network office and three current network members. Interviews with staff addressed the organisational structure, key activities, and objectives of the institution in Düsseldorf. Other questions
discussed the main challenges for teachers with a migration background in NRW and the perceived impact of the network. Interviews with network members focussed on key challenges during their professional transition as well as the motives and perceived benefits of participation in the network. A narrative approach was used to gather natural and in-depth insights into the participants’ experiences, practices, views, and meanings in relation to the phenomenon under investigation. All five participants of this study were teachers with a migration background and current members of the network. This sample size provided sufficient data as well as depth and redundancy of information to meet the purposes of this short case study. The interviews were conducted and analysed in German. Participant quotations presented in this article to illustrate the findings were translated into English by the researcher.

Participants

Contact to the network coordinator was established by email in order to get approval/support for the proposed research project. Two of the participants (Participant 1 and 2) were working as coordinators at the network office in Düsseldorf and were interviewed as key informants. At the time of the study, one participant was working in a permanent part-time position at the office as well as at school, while the other was working in a permanent full-time position for the network. The participants, one female and one male, had been working at the office between one and two years. Both were between 30 and 40 years old, qualified and experienced teachers and from different ethnic backgrounds. One interviewed employee was a founding member of the network.

Key selection criteria for the interviewed network members (Participants 3, 4, and 5) included a migration background, international teaching qualifications and/or work experience, teaching experience in NRW, and current membership in the network. All three participants were male, qualified and experienced teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds and between 30 and 60 years old, with two participants having international teaching qualifications. The participants had lived in Germany between 13 to 20 years, were currently teaching at schools in NRW and had been members of the network for between three to seven years. One interviewed participant was also a founding member of the migrant teacher network.

Theoretical framework

The research used key theories of sociocultural learning (Vygotsky, 1978) and communities of practice (Wenger & Lave, 1991) together with theoretical concepts of participatory and collaborative learning in professional teacher networks (Berkemeyer et al., 2009; Baker-Doyle,
2011; Firestone & Pennell, 1997; McCormick et al., 2010) as the overarching framing for the
design of the study and the interpretation of results. Based on this framework the study
makes a number of assumptions. Firstly, it is believed that teachers develop and adopt a set of
meanings in regards to education that is socially mediated through participation in educational
activities, including their own education, teacher qualification, and work experience. It is also
anticipated that teachers who start working in a different context need to negotiate these
internalised expectations and practices with the predominant concepts of the new
environment in order to teach effectively (Caravatti et al., 2014; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Peeler &
Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001). Further it is assumed that, while these new understandings
and meanings can be acquired in various ways, interaction and participation in professional
communities can positively support this process of professional acculturation. Hence, it is
presumed that migrant teacher networks can be a means of framework for cooperation and
the exchange of information, materials, and experiences (Berkemeyer et al., 2009; Baker-
Doyle, 2011; Fee, 2010; Firestone & Pennell, 1997; Guo & Singh, 2009b; McCormick et al.,
2010; Virta, 2015).

Ethical considerations

Before commencement of the study, approval of the research project was obtained from the
researcher’s affiliated institution. Consent to the interviews and its recording was obtained
from participants by signing a consent form. Approval of the project from the governing
authority in Germany was obtained by the network coordinator and was given under the
premise to provide a summary of the research findings and to ensure the anonymity of
participants, when publishing research data. Given the very small population under study, only
limited identifiable information will be provided in this article to ensure participant privacy.
Whilst it would be desirable to provide individual participant profiles to better contextualise
the research, the desire to maintain anonymity requires that any further description of the
participants is withheld so as not to reveal individual identities (Reid, 2005). Hence, the
conscious decision has been made to not use pseudonyms despite the minimal risk of
difficulties with comprehension.

Biases and limitations

Due to personnel and financial limitations, the research was designed as a short case study
conducted by the researcher. An unforeseen limitation to the research represented the
networks’ structure and main working method by telephone and online. Under these
circumstances, the research population was not as accessible as initially planned and desired.
Since there were no connections to the network prior to this study, the interviewed network
members were selected by the network coordinator and contact details provided to the researcher. This study recognises that as a result of this the participants and their expressed views and meanings in relation to the phenomenon under investigation might have been biased.

On the other hand, the researcher’s own background significantly influenced and facilitated this research project (Bense, 2012; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007). Native German language skills helped getting access to the network and during data collection, while the researcher’s background as a German migrant teacher in Australia helped to establish trusted relationships with the participants and enabled a shared understanding. First of all, this study acknowledges matters of subjectivity in relation to the researcher, including her values, aims, perspective, gender, background, ethnicity, and language skills (Schwandt, Lincoln & Guba, 2007). Instead it is argued that the inquirer-respondent relationship in this investigation was one of mutual power as it is only because of this “interactive nature of the relationship” that the researcher and participant may fruitfully learn together (Schwandt et al., 2007, p. 17). Based on the assumption that meaning is socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978), the interviewer-interviewee-relationship in this study was one of respectful negotiation, joint control, and reciprocal learning. As such, the researchers' interpretations of responses were constantly verified with the participants during the interviews, which provided a way of checking for inconsistencies, challenging the researchers' own assumptions, and to ensure credibility of the findings.

**Analyses of research data**

The four research questions of this study provided the main categories and framework for the analyses of the entire data corpus. Given the descriptive and exploratory nature of this study, the qualitative data were analysed inductively. Thematic analysis was used to identify, analyse and report themes that occurred across the interview dataset. Data and themes were grouped into the following four categories and subcategories (Table 1):

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### Table 1 Coding frame for data analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions and main categories</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the <strong>organisational structure</strong> of the migrant teacher network in NRW?</td>
<td>Network office, network committee, network of teachers with a migration background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the <strong>key activities and objectives</strong> of the migrant teacher network in NRW?</td>
<td>Lobby work, professional development, professional support, and provision of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the <strong>motives and perceived benefits</strong> of participation for members of the migrant teacher network in NRW?</td>
<td>Lobby, professional learning, peer support, motivation, and sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
migrant teacher network in NRW?

What are the challenges that teachers with a migration background in NRW face? Recognition of qualifications, discrimination, cultural diversity in teaching practices, lack of support at school

Labelling themes that related to the same research question or category helped to draw together data from the different sources, including the collected documents, interviews, and field notes. Corresponding to the four focal points of the study, the following findings section is organised into four subsections: the organisational structure of the network, its key activities and objectives, motives and perceived benefits of network participation, and challenges for teachers with a migration background in NRW.

**The organisational structure of the network**

These days, the network is under the authority of the local *Office for Integration* and cooperatively funded by the federal ministries of *Education* and *Integration*. Administrative and financial support from these local government agencies largely increases the opportunities for public outreach and activities of the network. In NRW, the funding is used to subsidise the operating costs of the coordinating office, the salary of the three administrative staff, published materials as well as network activities, including an annual conference. It is, however, important to mention that the network still relies on additional financial support from external partners, funding bodies, and the voluntary engagement of its members and staff.

The impulse [for the network] came from the top [the ministries], but the organisation at the end came from us [the teachers]. In my opinion, it is extremely important that this is a top-down as well as a bottom-up project. (Participant 1)

All activities of the network are managed by the coordinating office, which today is staffed with three teachers with a migration background. Since 2012, the network has its administrative centre in Düsseldorf. The maintenance of this office is fundamental for the organisation and operation of the network and provides the institutional framework for all activities (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 2011).

[Before the establishment of the office] we always would meet somewhere, for example in cafés or at school. (Participant 1)

Now, workspaces and a meeting room provide the spatial conditions for consultations, conferences, training courses as well as the management and administration of the network. The network itself consists of over 600 teachers with a migration background. The interests of
these members are represented and supported by a network committee and its spokesperson. External partners of the network include universities and teacher colleges, schools, parent groups, and teacher unions.

**Key activities and objectives of the network**

One major objective of the network is to bring together, represent, and support the teachers with a migration background in NRW. For that, the network office offers target group-specific information, development programs, and professional support to teachers with a migration background. The other two central fields of activity of the network seek to attract migrant students in Germany to the teaching profession as well as to assist teacher students and beginning teachers with a migration background during the first stages of their career. For this, the coordinating office, in cooperation with its external institutes and foundations, organises information sessions for migrant students about training and job opportunities in the teaching profession. The network has also established a number of teacher student networks at five universities in NRW that provide peer support for students with a migration background in relation to issues concerning their teacher training (Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2014).

**Provision of information**

For teachers seeking information about career development opportunities, resources, the recognition of previously obtained professional qualifications, and the employment process in NRW, the network office in Düsseldorf serves as a central point of contact.

The majority of people coming to us are either still in their home country or have just arrived [in Germany] and haven’t taken any steps yet. [...] Hence, their very specific question [is]: “I am a teacher in my home country. I would like to teach here [in Germany]. What do I have to do?” That is the typical question. (Participant 1)

Here, the coordinating office is able to aid the teachers’ process of navigating access into the German education system by providing important information on key contact points, teacher training courses, teacher unions, interest groups, and other points of support.

We provide advice and try to refer them to the relevant department. We also have a guide [for the recognition of professional qualifications acquired abroad], which we email to the teachers. (Participant 1)
Professional development

The network also offers training programs to facilitate the professional development and career advancement of teachers with a migration background in NRW. Professional development offered by the office addresses issues of inclusion and integration, racism and discrimination as well as career prospects. Worth mentioning is also the annual network conference, which offers workshops, food, and accommodation free of charge to members. This two-day event represents a valuable learning opportunity for the teachers on topics such as diversity in education and career development.

However, all teachers with professional qualifications obtained outside of Germany are required to pass a mandatory aptitude test and one year of supervised practice before they are appointed a teaching position by the Ministry of Education in NRW. Therefore, the network office does not offer introductory programs to migrant teachers but rather offers workshops that focus on the migration background as a resource. For example, together with teacher education institutes, associations, and universities, the network office developed several professional training programs focussing on diversity in teaching and learning. These days, the University of Cologne offers three seminars that aim to develop an awareness in teacher training students of the opportunities and challenges of working in multi-cultural classrooms, which are held by members of the migrant teacher network in NRW (Landeskoordinierungsstelle der Kommunalen Integrationszentren, 2013).

We try to professionalise the “plus” [the benefit] these teachers bring with them because of their migration background. (Participant 1)

Professional support

Due to the large geographical coverage of the network, the majority of consultations take place over the phone and internet. During these informal consultations, a shared background as teachers with a migration background creates a unique relationship between the network employees and teachers looking for help. Participant 2 narrated how the teachers feel that “they are in a safe place […], where they can share their problems and worries” and how this represents “a moment of great relief” for some teachers. The same participant further explained that, because the network staff are teachers with a migration background themselves, they “take the teachers and their problems seriously and are able to provide support”. Teachers contacting the office were described as being “grateful to have someone to talk to” and unaware about the large number of fellow teachers with a migration background in NRW.
It is more the social component. It doesn’t matter whether they are internationally educated teachers or teachers and students with a migration background. We can often observe that it helps their confidence. You realise, you’re not alone. And you get advice from others, often very practical tips. (Participant 1)

**Motives for and perceived benefits of network participation**

In order to get insights into the experiences of network members, their motives for participation and perceived benefits of membership, the study interviewed three current network members. Reasons for participation were described differently by the interviewees, depending on individual expectations and their motives for joining. Often simply “curiosity”, the idea of meeting “interesting people”, “working together”, “giving voice” to migrant teachers in NRW, and “networking” were mentioned as motives for participation.

**Professional learning**

Described benefits of the network included the opportunity for professional learning in programs offered by the network office as well as through collaboration and exchange with other network members. Topics of particular interest to the members included classroom management strategies, instructional and content knowledge, and culturally specific educational knowledge.

What we are planning to do next is, that we meet at [network members’] home […] and everyone prepares something and reports what he has done [at school] so that the others might learn from this and don’t make the same mistakes. (Participant 4)

Information. […] Information creates new ideas. Information enables professional development. And by exchanging experiences one might start to understand a little: “Where do I stand, where am I going, and what am I doing?”(Participant 5)

**Peer support**

Particularly, the chance to discuss professional issues and “to share experiences with other teachers” with a migration background were described as beneficial by the participants.

It is very different whether you talk to people with a migration background or to other colleagues. […] You can talk open and honestly. (Participant 4)

Participant 4 also described how the staff at the network office are able to assist teachers with a migration background:
If a teacher has a problem, he knows, there are people, who will help him. [...] They [network employees] have also told me what to do in difficult situations. [...] And sometimes, someone else has had a similar problem before. (Participant 4)

Lobby

Also, by acting as a group the interviewed network members feel they have some lobby within society and are able to make their voices as teachers with a migration background heard.

In a network, I thought, perhaps there are other teachers. So maybe we could collaborate and initiate a policy reform at the ministry [of education], and change the situation [regarding the recognition of professional qualifications]. [...] These were my motives [for joining]: my profession and my status as a teacher. [...] I feel, as a networker you can have a say. (Participant 5)

Sense of belonging

Positive experiences within the network provide important feelings of acceptance, inclusion, and connection for the teachers. This sense of belonging to a community became particularly obvious in the expression of “not being/feeling alone”, which was articulated by all five participants during the interviews.

You get the feeling, you are not alone. (Participant 4)

You realise, you’re not alone. (Participant 1)

Even more, such network relations developed into close friendships for some teachers:

Many friendships have formed over the years. [...] For example, we have the annual conference and you can always observe an increase [in friendships] afterwards. And we can see who stayed in contact with whom. Particularly during professional development workshops, because you spent more time with each other and get to know each other on a different level. (Participant 1)

I have become close friends with the people from the beginning [of the network] [...], and then there are always new people [joining]. (Participant 4)

Motivation

The narratives further highlighted the positive effect of network membership on the teachers’ personal and professional motivation. “Positive experiences” within the community provide “new impulses” and a “boost of motivation and strength”, so that the teachers often “go back to their schools with new energy” a network employee (Participant 2) reported.
That is particularly the case for [beginning] teachers, [...] or teachers who have just started. They get a new understanding of their migration background as something positive. [...] And this boosts their confidence when dealing with colleagues and the school administration. (Participant 1)

**Challenges for teachers with a migration background in NRW**

The narrative accounts also provided some valuable insights into the challenges the interviewees faced during their professional transition. Negative experiences that the participants discussed included problems with culturally diverse teaching practices and feelings of discrimination.

I think, some teachers with a migration background have difficulties sometimes. Especially, if they weren’t born or didn’t grow up in Germany. Because [...] you never experienced the other side. (Participant 4)

I find, the main issue for people who come from other countries is that they have to find their place within the system. Each system has its rules. And those rules have been in place for decades. [...] And then conflicts happen. For example, [...] about the way of teaching. These, I find, are the biggest challenges. (Participant 3)

[Because of my accent, I feel] the colleagues at school put me into a lower category. [...] Without thinking, just like that. (Participant 5)

**Recognition of qualifications**

Participant 5, a qualified teacher with more than 10 years of teaching experience prior to moving to Germany, also talked about the rigid recognition process of professional achievements.

That was a shock. Everything I had done before, all my qualifications were not recognised here. Zero. That means no teaching qualification. Nothing. (Participant 5)

**Lack of support**

The interviewees also described their difficulties of finding the much-needed collegial and administrative support at school.

The reception [at school], I have to admit, was very positive. [...] But, you quickly realise that as a migrant you have to be very thick-skinned. As soon as there were any conflicts, everyone would readily say: “That happened because you’re not German.” (Participant 3)
Actually [there was] no [support]. And, I don’t think it was because of me or my background. [...] The staff team was just so small. (Participant 5)

Discussion

This case study explored the innovative “Projekt: Lehrkräfte mit Zuwanderungsgeschichte” in North Rhine-Westphalia, as a novel support strategy for teachers with a migration background in Germany. The aim of this study was to address the current lack of research evidence about migrant teacher networks in general and on state-run migrant teacher networks in particular. It sought to understand how the state-funded network in NRW facilitates the professional integration of internationally educated teachers into the regional education system. It employed a number of methodologies to collect evidence, with a particular emphasis on narrative interviews as qualitative data collection strategy. The study addressed questions in relation to the organisational structure, key activities, and objectives of the network. Other questions discussed the main challenges for teachers with a migration background in NRW as well as the motives and perceived benefits of participation in the network. The research found that the state-run migrant teacher network in NRW was able to offer target-group specific information, professional learning, assistance, lobby, and feelings of belonging to the study participants, and thus to aid their personal and professional lives as teachers with a migration background in NRW.

The first and fundamental contribution of this study is that it introduces the concept of state-funded migrant teacher networks. It addresses the present lack of knowledge about state-run migrant teacher networks by conducting an original and phenomenological case study on the very first network to be established in Germany. To this date, only one other study on the topic is available, which was conducted on the very same network and commissioned by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. The research report (BAMF, 2011), which is published in German, provides recommendations for the development of similar networks in other states of Germany based on the model project in NRW. For this, the report primarily offers information on the organisational structure of the network together with a short description of its activities. The results of this single case study all in all reflect the findings in this research report. Thus, by describing in depth the design of the state-run migrant teacher network in NRW this research contributes further evidence to this very limited knowledge base. In addition, the research gathered data on the function of the network and provides a detailed description of its objectives and activities. This information is especially beneficial in view of strong international evidence on issues with professional adjustment for migrant teachers, the identified need for increased support strategies, and an increasing international mobility of
By investigating and describing the work of the state-run migrant teacher network in NRW, this research is addressing this internationally significant issue and is hoping to stimulate and advance the current discussion on support strategies. For that reason, the findings of this exploratory study are first of all seen as an important foundation for further basic and applied research on this problem.

Secondly, this study adds to the international knowledge base on migrant teachers and their experiences while settling into the education system of another country. The collected interviews provided evidence of challenges for migrant teachers with regard to culturally diverse teaching practices, feelings of discrimination, non-recognition of professional qualifications, and a lack of administrative and collegial support at school. These findings corroborate previous international studies that also reported challenges for migrant teachers in relation to the (non)recognition of previous professional education and experience (Janusch, 2015; Krüger-Potratz, 2013; Michael, 2006; Miller, 2008a), issues with adjustment to unfamiliar teaching contexts (Fee, 2010; Janusch, 2015; Maylor et al., 2006; Reid & Collins, 2012; Remennick, 2002), encounters of discrimination (Collins & Reid, 2012; Phillion, 2003; Remennick, 2002) and racism (Manik, 2014), and an overall lack of professional support (Fee, 2010; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Sharplin, 2009). Thus, this study confirms challenges for internationally trained teachers and seems to substantiate former claims that those issues are “more universal” and “part of the global teacher experience” (Reid & Collins, 2013). Moreover, the findings once again highlight the importance of professional support for migrant teachers and reinforce the call for increased strategies of assistance (Caravatti et al., 2014; Deters, 2006; Fee, 2010; Hutchison, 2006; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane 2005; Reid & Collins, 2012; Sharplin, 2009; Walsh et al., 2011).

Finally, the third and most significant contribution of this study derives from the collected qualitative evidence on the motives and perceived benefits of participation in the network. For instance, the interviews give valuable insights into the participants’ reasons for joining the network, which overall related to an interest of meeting, interacting, and working with like-minded people. Yet more importantly, the study gathered evidence on the networks’ value and meaning for the interviewed members. It found that the network in NRW provides an important institutional framework for all kinds of peer support among the local teachers with a migration background as it enables the transmission of knowledge, experience as well as emotional, social, and practical help among its members.

Elements of the institution that were described as beneficial by the participants related to opportunities for professional learning, peer support, lobby, and a sense of belonging.
Opportunities for professional learning were reported for the network office in the form of target group-specific information and professional development programs, as well as for the affiliated network by means of interacting with other members. Further described benefits included an enhanced representation of occupational interests through the network and the peer support from staff and other members.

In particular, the shared history as teachers with a migration background has emerged as important for the teachers in this study. The participants narrated how this common ground allows the teachers to learn from one another by sharing knowledge and experiences, and to emotionally support each other based on a mutual understanding of challenges. Even more, this connection creates a unique community within the network in NRW that seems to meet the emotional needs of the teachers by providing important feelings of friendship, acceptance, and inclusion. Already during data collection a patterned theme appeared in the interviews, which referred to a sense of companionship and feelings of belongings that the network offered these five teachers. This was an unanticipated theme within the research, yet at the same time the most significant result of this study. This leitmotiv of “not being alone” was the most pervasive theme in the participants’ narratives and a common thread that played out across the entire interview data set. This described sense of belonging depicted an important element of how the network is able to support the teachers in NRW, and thus represented a breakthrough in answering one of the four key research questions.

Owing to a lack of previous research, a discussion and analysis of these findings must draw upon the literature on teacher networks and informal support networks of migrant teachers in order to evaluate the results. For instance, the networks’ described positive impact on the participants’ professional learning echoes previous research on professional teacher networks. Increased opportunities for professional learning were reported in the work of Berkemeyer et al. (2009), Baker-Doyle (2011), Firestone and Pennell (1997), and McCormick et al. (2010). The findings also mirror the results of an Australian study on informal networks formed by migrant teachers in New South Wales, which found that these support networks provided the teachers with “access to accumulated knowledge and intellectual resources” (Guo & Singh, 2009a, p. 1). Further, the significance of peer support (Fee, 2010; Guo & Singh, 2009a) during migrant teachers’ transition or “having someone who is able to connect with migrant teachers’ experiences” because of “insight and understanding for the specific situation” (Reid et al., 2010) has been highlighted previously. Finally, the findings are consistent with studies that reported beneficial effects of networking on teachers’ professional motivation (Berkemeyer et al., 2009; Firestone & Pennell, 1997) and empowerment (Firestone & Pennell, 1997). On the
other hand, described feelings of belonging represent significant new findings. Nonetheless, these results seem to be coherent with previous research on migrant teachers that reported issues with “professional isolation” (Bense, 2014; Santoro et al., 2001; Virta, 2015) and feelings of marginalisation (Bense, 2014; Fee, 2010; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Pollock, 2010; Santoro et al., 2001) due to a lack of support.

The findings of this study provide some very satisfactory answers to the overall research question of how the state-funded migrant teacher network in NRW supports the local teachers with a migration background. Here, the use of a case study as research strategy has proven as particularly successful because it allowed the integration of information from diverse data sources and the application of different data collection methods. Thanks to that, this exploratory study is able to give a very detailed and in-depth description of the design, workings, and impact of the phenomenon under investigation. Further, key theories of sociocultural learning (Vygotsky, 1978) and communities of practice (Wenger & Lave, 1991) as well as theoretical concepts of participatory and collaborative learning in professional teacher networks (Berkemeyer et al., 2009; Baker-Doyle, 2011; Firestone & Pennell, 1997; McCormick et al., 2010), which underpinned the conceptual framework of this study, have proven suitable and coherent with the findings of this study.

Conclusions

This study found that the state-funded migrant teacher network in NRW represents an important contact point for the local teachers with a migration background. The office in Düsseldorf was found to be a vital point of contact for target group-specific information, training, lobby, and support, while the linked network represents an exclusive professional community that seems to offer indispensable peer support and feelings of belonging to the teachers with a migration background in NRW.

However, it is recognised that the generalisability and transferability of these findings are significantly limited. For instance, the focus of this investigation on one single network in Germany are affecting the results, which must be understood within the context of the specific organisation and location where the fieldwork was performed. Also, the small sample population plus potential constraints in the type of individuals who provided information (e.g. gender, employment at the network, participation in network foundation, membership) are limiting an extension of the research findings to the population at large, including other teachers with a migration background in NRW and other network members. Finally, the research design as short case study conducted by one single researcher represents another limitation of the research. Hence, the results of this case study are seen as specific to the
participants and the particular context under investigation, and the study does not intend to make generalisable claims. Yet, at the same time the study employed a combination of different data collection techniques and conducted extensive interview sessions in order to offer an in-depth and thick description of the phenomenon of interest. Credibility of the findings was ensured by describing the phenomenon from the participant’s eyes, while the dependability and transferability was enhanced by providing a detailed account of the research context and the central perspectives of this research. Furthermore, the research utilised several strategies for enhancing the confirmability of the results.

Above all, this study is intended as an impetus for an enhanced discussion on the professional needs of migrant teachers and a greater attention to their support requirements. The increasing mobility and migration of educational professionals make the issue of professional support a field of international significance that ultimately will require the transnational attention of educational researchers and policy makers. There is a global responsibility to address the challenges of migrant teachers and develop more comprehensive and more effective professional support strategies. A review of the current international literature has shown that the support strategies currently provided are largely inadequate and ineffective and will be increasingly so in the future. A concerted effort in improving professional support policies and practices for migrant teachers must become priority not only to improve the overall experiences of migrant teachers and to ease their professional transition, but also to ensure these teachers can make effective and valuable contributions to the education system of their host country.

Thus, while acknowledging the limitations of this exploratory study, this paper concludes by suggesting some directions for future research. First of all, there is a critical need for further research on formal and informal migrant teacher networks. Since international research (Fee, 2010; Guo & Singh; 2009b; Virta, 2015) has shown that some migrant teachers form peer support groups in order to assist each other, research should direct its attention to these networks to enhance our current fragmentary knowledge and understanding. Secondly, further basic research on instituted and state-run migrant teacher networks has to be conducted to assemble more evidence on the structure and workings of such organisations. Finally, research needs to evaluate the impact and value of instituted migrant teacher networks in order to determine the suitability and potential future application of state-run migrant teacher networks as support model in other countries.
References


**Web references**


**Additional reading**


The following discussion summarises the findings of this research as a whole. It critically analyses the findings of individual papers and seeks to synthesise and assess their overall significance. The main focus of this investigation was the global phenomenon of increasing international teacher mobility and migration. The research examined this topic by focusing on various aspects of this issue. The outcomes of this investigation are presented as a series of five publications, with each article addressing a different thematic focus in relation to the main topic.

The first article (Bense, 2016) reviews the current international research base on the issue of internationally mobile teachers. International teacher mobility is growing, with a continuous increase since the turn of the century, and research investigating this phenomenon has accelerated over the last 15 years. The article synthesises this large body of research and identifies gaps in the literature that may serve as points of departure for further research. The review also identified two distinct methodological approaches in the international research base: large scale studies employing a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and small scale studies using interviews, especially narratives, as method of inquiry. Correspondingly, the second section in this cumulative thesis discusses narrative inquiry as methodology frequently used in educational research. The paper (Bense, 2012) outlines the development of narrative inquiry, links it to the epistemological position of this research and demonstrates its appropriateness through excerpts from interview data.

The third article (Bense, 2015) reports the findings of the main component of this investigation, which explored the lived experiences of German migrant teachers in Australia. It presents the demographical data assembled on German born teachers in Australia and the results of the narrative study on ten German migrant teachers in Western Australia. The investigation highlights a number of challenges for the interviewed teachers in relation to their professional adjustment to the Australian context. A particular problem that emerged from the interviews and analyses of data related to language education in Australia and the different value placed on languages in comparison to the teachers’ country of origin, Germany. For this reason, a specific emphasis was given to this issue in the fourth article of this series of publications. The publication (Bense, 2014) compares existing educational arrangements
regarding language education in Germany and Australia to argue how these contextual circumstances impact the teaching and learning in the classroom. Extracts from the interviews with two participants are used as examples to illustrate how differences in language education approaches between Australia and Germany led to challenges for the teachers.

Finally, this in-depth engagement with the issue of internationally mobile teachers together with personal experiences led to a particular interest in ways of supporting migrant teachers during their adjustment. A review of the international knowledge base highlighted the overall lack of targeted support strategies and the general neglect of migrant teachers’ professional needs (Bense, 2016). Also, the findings of the interviews in this study revealed that a lack of support and feelings of isolation were the second most common problem for the ten participants (Bense, 2015). In response, the research focused more specifically on that particular issue and investigated different types of actions to aid migrant teachers’ transition. One relatively new concept found in this targeted review of the international research and literature are instituted and state-run migrant teacher networks. Hence, the fifth article presents the findings of a study conducted in 2014 on a state-run migrant teacher network in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). As the final section of this thesis, the manuscript provides potential as a prospect for future research on this important matter.

In the following these diverse focal points addressed in the collective research will be discussed in more detail. Corresponding to the five publications that have arisen from this examination, the discussion is organised in five subsections each discussing the aim, questions, results, significance, limitations, and implications of the individual article.

**International teacher mobility and migration: A review and synthesis of the current empirical research and literature**

The first article (Bense, 2016) presented in this cumulative thesis takes up a topic of major current concern and international interest. The literature review, published in *Educational Research Review*, offers the very first overview of the literature in the field published in English and German and synthesises the large amount of research on this relatively new area of interest. The aim was to offer an up-to-date assessment of what is known and not known about the issue of international teacher mobility and migration. It addressed questions regarding the main trends and flows in international teacher migration, the main characteristics of migrant teachers, their contribution to host countries, the impact of teacher migration on sending countries, the main challenges for migrant teachers, the personal and professional benefits of international migration, and existing professional support practices.
Ultimately, the aim was to identify gaps in this international research base and questions which require further engagement.

First of all, the review highlights the current lack of an international data collection on migrant teacher stocks, and the reliance on publicly available national census data in OECD countries. These datasets indicate large-scale teacher movements between countries with long-standing historical ties, particularly countries of the Commonwealth union. The review found that teachers have actively been recruited in the past, attracted by the prospect of a better pay and an exciting life outside the classroom, which eventually led to one-directional teacher flows from small, developing countries to large, more developed countries. The review also illustrates the large number of challenges experienced by teachers in host countries, and the overall consistency across the large body of research on this issue. It further highlights the overall lack of successful professional support strategies across countries. Finally, it shows the existing controversies and lack of evidence in the literature research base on the value of migrant teachers for receiving countries.

This comprehensive review of the literature represents a significant contribution to the field of education. It was able to illuminate main themes within the literature, highlight trends regarding theoretical perspectives, paradigms, and conceptual frameworks, as well as to provide an overview of the main disciplines and corresponding publishing outlets. As such, the review enables the reader to understand this huge global wave and brings to the fore the educational ramifications of this international issue. In light of the fact that all over the world teachers and teacher educators seem to face the same problems and challenges, the review is especially valuable. It further offers a comprehensive overview of the methodological approaches to teacher mobility and migration, which will allow researchers to review studies based on their conceptual and methodological approaches. The last section of the review shows that some aspects of the phenomenon are still under-researched and identifies gaps in the existing literature.

The limitations of this literature review result from the prescribed format and word count for the published article, which inevitably led to omissions. However, a detailed description of the elimination process enables the reader to review the literature based on the information provided. It is also contended that, the comprehensive review of over 240 documents published in English and German on this issue over the last 15 years represents a reliable overview of the existing knowledge base on the topic. Hence, some suggestions for future research are made. Firstly, the review illustrates the need for research with more homogenous participant groups as more focused investigations of this type are able to add more
differentiated descriptions to the diverse research base. A second area requiring further attention are professional support strategies for internationally mobile teachers. In order to deepen our current limited knowledge, more research is needed on successful ways of scaffolding the challenging professional transition of migrant teachers.

**Narrative inquiry: A methodology for studying German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australia**

Even though there is a wide variety of methodologies used in studies on the issue of international teacher mobility, two distinct methodological approaches can be identified in the international research base: large scale studies employing a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and small scale studies using interviews, especially narratives, as method of inquiry. Particularly in small qualitative studies, the number of researchers with a personal interest and involvement in the topic was evident. The aim of the second publication (Bense, 2012) was, therefore, to examine the usefulness of narrative inquiry in studies of migrant teachers in general but especially in studies in which the researcher is a migrant teacher oneself. To this end, the paper drew on previous narrative research and studies conducted by migrant teacher-researchers as well as the initial results of the narrative interviews with ten German migrant teachers in Western Australia.

The study found that the researcher herself plays a unique role in narrative inquiry. In this investigation, the researcher’s own personality, language skills, and access to a particular community group, but in particular her professional and personal history had critically influenced the research. For instance, the position as member-researcher facilitated the recruitment of study participants, helped to build relationships of trust during the interviews, and ultimately enabled a high level of analysis and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. For example, remarks made by the participants, such as “you know that yourself” or “you can probably say that better”, show how comfortable and well-understood the teachers felt by the interviewer. Furthermore, the shared German language background allowed the participants to tell their stories in their native language, resulting in rich and natural interview data.

The paper contributes to the growing body of narrative research and the literature on narratives as a method of inquiry in educational research. Published in 2012 in the conference proceedings of the *Australian Association for Research in Education*, it demonstrates that narratives can be a successful data collection strategy for this field. It shows that narratives are able to more clearly elicit tacit values and the reality of the participants’ experiences and feelings. Because the interviews largely followed the narrative thread of the teachers’ stories
of lived experiences, they not only illuminated the complexities and subtleties of the topic but were also able to reveal some unanticipated themes within the research. In addition, the study was able to underline the importance of language in narrative research, a topic that has been overlooked so far. It illustrates that, allowing the participants to tell their stories in their native language allows for a great depth and breadth of interview data, an argument that previously has been put forward by Temple and Young (2004; see also Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

Additionally, the paper adds to the limited methodological literature on member-researchers in narrative inquiries by illustrating the nuanced eye that comes from being an 'insider'. Some of the nuances brought to light in this inquiry relate to specific issues around 'being German', which previous studies had not revealed. For instance, the patterned theme of differences in strategies of language education between Australia and Germany was not anticipated in the initial research design. Yet, it represented a moment of vivid insight for the research and a breakthrough in answering the overall research question as the described critical incidents captured an important element of how the German migrant teachers experienced their professional orientation to the Australian context. In this regard, the study seems to confirm Elbaz-Luwisch’s (2007) argument that in narrative studies with migrant teachers in particular the interviewer’s own migration background is a crucial element in such investigations, a point also supported by other researchers (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Williamson, Choi, Charchuk, Rempel, Pitre et al., 2011).

At the same time, it is recognised that this unique insider-outsider position creates some limitations and potential biases. As stressed by Dwyer and Buckle (2009), for each of the advantages of being an insider, questions arise about the objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity of the research. In this study, characteristics shared by the researcher and participants might have limited the depth and detail of the interview data, analyses, and research report, while links to the same professional community may have affected the participants’ openness during the interviews (Williamson et al., 2011). Researcher-facilitated translations for publication purposes also entail issues about the correctness of reported research findings. The paper acknowledges these limitations and, by describing the strategies used to assess and enhance the validity of the reported findings, enables the reader to critically review the research and its findings. Moreover, based on the experience from this study, three positions are contended: first, narrative interviews conducted by a member-researcher can offer a level of understanding that might not be accessible to non-member researchers. Second, narrative interviews in the participants’ first language allow for a level of detail that may not be available in commonly used translator- or interpreter-facilitated cross-language practices. Third, although not without some challenges and limitations, researcher-
facilitated translations of interview data can be an effective alternative to expensive translation and interpretation services. Implications for future research that result from this research concern the existing methodology literature. Firstly, there is a need for more detailed descriptions about and critical reflection on the role of member-researchers in qualitative research. Other areas that require further attention include the language of investigation in narrative studies and the use of researcher-facilitated translations in cross-language research.

**German migrant teachers in Australia: Insights into the largest cohort of non-English speaking background teachers**

The aim of this paper (Bense, 2015) was to report the findings of the investigation into German migrant teachers in Australia. The starting point for the research was the lack of research evidence about this population in Australia. The study set out to investigate the circumstances and experiences of German born teachers in Australia, focusing in particular on the phenomenon of professional adjustment. The central question of this investigation was, how German born teachers experience their professional transition into Australia. Sub questions in this investigation addressed German migrant teachers’ experience in Australian schools and with Australian education authorities, the main challenges they faced, and how teachers responds to these difficulties. Not addressed in the original design of this study were questions in relation to the contribution of German migrant teachers and their professional support needs. However, these issues emerged as themes from the interview data, and subsequently were addressed in the discussion of study results. Further sub questions addressed the numbers of German migrant teachers in Australia and their main characteristics.

To answer this set of questions the research gathered qualitative as well as quantitative forms of data (Bense, 2012). The quantitative component of this research collated demographical data about the migrant teacher cohort in Australia in general and the German born teacher population in Australia in particular. Sources included statistical data collected from the study participants and data packs provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2011). The data compiled included their numbers, place of residence, gender, age, occupation sector, employment status, and professional qualifications. These demographical statistics were gathered to provide the context and background to this research.

The main component of this investigation explored the lived experiences of German migrant teachers navigating their entry into the Australian school context. The research achieved this by interviewing and reporting on the experiences of ten German migrant teachers in Western Australia. It employed narratives as the method of inquiry and asked the ten teachers to tell their personal accounts of events and experiences. Based on problem areas identified in
previous research on teachers from non-English speaking backgrounds in Australia, the interviews addressed questions regarding issues of cultural diversity in teaching methods, issues with classroom management, as well as problems with language transition.

Important findings from the quantitative part of this study include the significant number of German born teachers working in the Australian education system and the high level of their professional qualifications (Bense, 2015). The study indicates that German born teachers can be found across all states and territories in Australia, with the largest numbers in New South Wales and Victoria. They are predominantly female, 40 years old and above, and work as secondary teachers in Australian schools. This statistical investigation demonstrated that German born teachers are typical for the overseas born teacher cohort in Australia and that their characteristics reflect the general profile of migrant teachers in the country.

The major findings of the qualitative inquiry were that the ten German migrant teachers faced various difficulties during their process of settling into the local education system. The research identified six key problem areas for the study members. The two most common challenges described by the participants related to different concepts of education between Australia and Germany as well as a lack of support during their transitional period (Bense, 2015). Other difficulties, in descending order of ranking, included problematic student behaviour, inadequate teaching resources, a lack of local knowledge, and minor language barriers.

The quantitative and qualitative results of this study, published in the e-journal *Issues In Educational Research* (Bense, 2015), add to the national knowledge base on migrant teachers. Firstly, the research provides more recent statistical data about Australia’s overseas born teacher population in general and the German born teacher cohort in general, since some of the demographic evidence is dated (Collins & Reid, 2012; Santoro, Reid & Kamler, 2001). For instance, data extracted from the 2011 ABS data packs indicates a percentage of 14% for teachers from European countries (excluding the UK and Ireland) in 2011 (see Appendix 2, Table 5), which suggests a massive increase compared to the 4% reported by Collins and Reid (2012) based on 2006 Australian census data. Additionally, the data gathered in this research in regard to the German born teacher cohort in Australia addresses a gap in the existing knowledge base. Although these data have been collected by the ABS in 2011, such detailed information had not previously been extracted from the available data packs. These statistics not only provide detailed insights into the current demographics of the German born teacher population in Australia but were were also valuable in contextualising the narrative inquiry.
Secondly, the research offers new qualitative evidence to the current literature about migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian classrooms. A review of the existing national evidence has shown that previous qualitative studies have predominantly drawn on participants from Asian backgrounds, including the work by Kamler et al. (1998), Santoro et al. (2001b), Peeler (2002), Kostogriz and Peeler (2004), and Sharplin (2009). Although teachers from Europe represent a considerable portion of the migrant teacher cohort in Australia, this population has been neglected in empirical inquiries so far. By providing specific information on the circumstances and experiences of German born teachers in Australia, the study addressed this imbalance in the knowledge base and looks to fill that gap.

One of the main findings of the narrative study was that, diverse expectations and values of education in Australia and Germany caused the biggest challenge for the interviewed German migrant teachers. Dissimilarities reported by the teachers related to learning and teaching styles, teacher status, professional roles, and student behaviour. For example, eight of the participants described differences in learning styles between students from Australia and Germany that related to a more independent working style and sense of responsibility in German students. Eight interviewees also discussed how they thought their current position and responsibilities differed from the professional role of teachers in Germany. Three teachers further narrated how they felt that teachers in Australia had a lower status compared to their colleagues in Germany. While the participants’ personal conditions, such as a lack of previous teaching experience and existing institutional conditions in Australia, may have been factors that contributed to reported difficulties, certain problems seem to arise from variances in educational theories and practices between Australia and Germany. This mirrors reports of previous qualitative studies on migrant teachers in Australia, including work by Kato (1998), Seah and Bishop (2001), and Sharplin (2009), who found that cultural differences created a massive challenge for the teachers interviewed in these studies. Also, Collins and Reid (2012) reported difficulties for migrant teachers that are related to a “cultural gap/way of doing things” in Australia, although these challenges were only mentioned by a very small number (3%) of teachers.

The second main finding of this inquiry was that, a shortage of administrative and collegial support created a significant challenge for the interviewed German migrant teachers, with eight of the ten participants bemoaning a lack of professional assistance. Since all participants in this narrative study were working as teachers of LOTE (German), their experiences may illustrate the specific circumstances of teachers working in this subject area. For instance, the issue of “professional isolation” had been highlighted in previous studies on migrant teachers working in the area of LOTE (Santoro et al., 2001; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007). Four teachers in
this study described feelings of loneliness in spite of their membership in a professional association and the findings suggest that such connections need to occur on a frequent basis in order to be helpful. All participants were also working in schools in Western Australia, thus their situation might differ from the experiences of migrant teachers in other Australian states due to varying processes and procedures. Apart from a two-day induction course offered by the WA Department of Education, there are currently no procedures in place to help migrant teachers in their process of negotiating entry into the local situation. However, all in all the findings of this study align well with previous findings by Collins and Reid (2012), Peeler (2002), Peeler and Jane (2005), Reid et al. (2014), and Sharplin (2009). For example, Collins and Reid (2012) reported that a “lack of support” was the third biggest problem for the migrant teachers surveyed in their study. Another big challenge for the German migrant teachers in this study represented the difficult behaviour of students in class, which was described by half of the participants. These results also reflect former national studies, including research carried out by Collins and Reid (2012) as well as by Kato (1998). This study, therefore, concludes that challenges resulting from differences in educational concepts between countries and the overall lack of support programs for migrant teachers have general validity for the difficulties faced by migrant teachers in this country, albeit to a different extent and with varying degrees of prevalence. This discussion section will in the following focus on findings that disagree with previous research.

For example, difficulties in relation to a rigid system (Collins & Reid, 2012; Reid et al., 2014), employment difficulties (Collins & Reid, 2012; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Sharplin, 2009) or experiences of racism and discrimination (Collins & Reid, 2012; Reid et al., 2014) were not found in this study. In this point, the participants’ reports appear to differ from the experiences of migrant teachers in other national studies, and the reasons for these variations in findings need to be explored in further research. However, the small sample size and homogeneity of the participants in this study might be possible causes for the different findings in the literature. For instance, the research conducted by Collins and Reid (2012) and Reid et al. (2014) were national large-scale studies while other studies, including the work by Kostogriz and Peeler (2007) and Sharplin (2009), focused on Asian background teachers. Due to the fact that all participants in this study were of European origin and ‘white’, it is recognised that racism may not have been such a strong factor among the ten interviewees, something which might have made the experience qualitatively different.

Also, language barriers could not be verified as a major obstacle for the participants in this study as described in other research (Kato, 1998; Sharplin, 2009). In this case, previous findings are only partially valid for the teachers interviewed in this study because only very minor
issues were recounted by only four of the teachers. Reasons for fewer reported communication issues include a high level of English proficiency of the participants, a possible appreciation for native speakers in foreign language education, and the use of German as dominant language of instruction in class. These findings are also fairly coherent with reports by Guo and Singh (2009a), who found that despite self-reported high levels of English proficiency some overseas trained teachers in their study, including native English speaking teachers, described minor language issues that related to having an accent as well as to the local educational jargon.

In addition, accounts of challenges with *inadequate teaching resources*, which were articulated by half of the participants and were the third biggest challenge for the group (together with difficult student behaviour), represent new results. Half of the interviewed teachers explained how a lack of resources at their school for their teaching area LOTE (German) made class preparation hard and laborious. Again, it is possible that these results exemplify the specific work conditions in this subject area in Australia. However, with these findings the study is able to contribute important new knowledge and to enhance the current theory in Australia. In particular, it provides more differentiated evidence on migrant teachers’ experiences in this country.

Limitations of this study again result from the unique role of the researcher in this inquiry as well as the specific study population and location in WA. It is acknowledged that the sample size and homogeneity of the participants in this study, in terms of gender, ethnicity, country of origin, and teaching area, limit the general validity of the findings. As a consequence, the results of this narrative study cannot be generalised to a larger population and must be considered in view of the specific participant group and location under investigation. Instead, the transferability of the results to other contexts has to be examined and validated in further investigations. However, in order to enable the reader to make an informed assessment of the reported data, a detailed description of the research process has been provided. A specific suggestion for change arising from this study is a greater empirical and political attention on support strategies for migrant teachers in Australia.

"Languages aren’t as important here": German migrant teachers’ experiences in Australian language classes

The aim of this article (Bense, 2014), published in the *Australian Educational Researcher*, was to examine national strategies of language education in Australia and Germany. The narrative inquiry with ten German migrant teachers in WA had shown that differences in concepts of language education between the two countries and specifically a different sense of the value
of foreign languages contributed to difficulties for the participants. Hence, the article addressed questions of the provision and uptake of foreign languages, educational goals and arrangements regarding language education as well as national attitudes toward language learning. This information was gathered to provide the context and background for the article’s analysis and overall argument.

The paper illustrates a number of cultural-historical differences in concepts of language education between Australia and Germany, and demonstrated how this can impact the teaching and learning for those involved. Narratives of two participants were used to show that, due to an unfamiliarity with Australian approaches, the teachers translated their previous expectations to their new teaching context and experienced some challenges as a result. For example, the teachers reported how the allocation of fewer periods per week to language learning in student timetables affected their student-teacher-relationship and ultimately their classroom management. The teachers also discussed how different work conditions in terms of teaching resources, designated classrooms, itinerancy, and inconvenient working hours confronted them with a new and difficult situation. In addition, accounts of challenges with inadequate teaching resources were new results.

With these findings the study enhances the current conversation in Australia on language education, and the article subsequently received a considerable amount of media coverage as well as citations for its argument (e.g. Hamid & Kirkpatrick (2016). Foreign language policies in Asia and Australia in the Asian century). The findings also seem to substantiate claims that values as “an inherent part of the educational process at all levels” influence the ways in which individual curriculum subjects are learnt and taught (Bishop, 2008, p. 47). While Seah and Bishop (2001; Seah, 2002) had previously found value differences in migrant teachers towards mathematics education, this study was able to show that approaches towards language learning and teaching might also be socially created and culture-specific. This notion had previously been put forward by Stigler and Hiebert (1998, p. 2), who emphasised that teaching in each country is shaped by a “relatively stable and tacit set of core beliefs about the nature of a subject, how students learn, and the role that a teacher should play in the classroom”.

The article analyses the results of the narrative inquiry in relation to the development of a national curriculum for languages in Australia. It contrasts the indicative allocation of hours for languages, as outlined in the newly developed national curriculum, with the average mandatory instruction times in other countries (2011) to demonstrate the different value placed on languages in these societies. Yet at the same time, Australia’s slight approximation to existing standards in other countries can be interpreted as another argument in the discussion.
about increasing commonalities in education (Anderson-Levitt, 2002; Hörner et al., 2015; LeTendre et al., 2001, 2002). After all, these indications also represent an overall orientation on standards in other OECD countries, thus illustrating the trend of education increasingly becoming the same globally.

It is further important to note that Australian born and educated teachers of LOTE (German) might experience similar problems with their students, as some of these issues were previously reported for this subject area (see ATLAS, 2007 and Kleinhenz et al., 2007). Therefore, it is acknowledged that these findings cannot be generalised and must be considered in view of the specific participant group under investigation, and the limitations resulting from this have been discussed earlier. Nonetheless, some recommendations for research and policy that arise from this investigation include, among other issues, the development of support strategies for migrant teachers as well as an re-evaluation of societal attitudes towards language leaning in Australia.

“*You realise, you’re not alone*”: Migrant teachers finding peer support and belonging in an instituted professional learning community

This spin-off study, conducted in 2014, was not planned in the initial design of the research. Rather, it was rather initiated by an identified need of professional support for migrant teachers and the gap in the international literature about effective support measures. Hence, the research had the very broad aim of gaining an understanding of how state-funded migrant teacher networks can support teachers with a migration background. The study focussed on a network in Düsseldorf, the state capital of North Rhine-Westphalia, the first institute of this kind to be established in Germany. The research addressed questions in relation to the network’s organisational structure, its key activities and objectives, the main challenges for teachers with a migration background, and the motives and perceived benefits of participation for members of the network. It used observation, document data, and narrative interviews with two office employees and three network members to gain an understanding of the networks’ procedures.

The study found that the network in NRW was able to provide an important institutional framework for peer support among its local members. Key activities of the network office in Düsseldorf included the provision of *information, professional development, and professional support*. Motives for joining the associated network and perceived benefits of participation that were described related to opportunities for *professional learning, peer support, lobby, sense of belonging,* and *motivation*. Challenges for teachers with a migration background in
NRW, as reported by the participants, included the recognition of qualifications, a lack of support, and feelings of discrimination.

The first and foremost contribution of this study is its introduction to state-funded migrant teacher networks. To date, only one other study has examined the concept of state-funded migrant teacher networks. The study addressed this current lack of knowledge and aims to fill that gap by conducting an original and phenomenological case study. The information gathered in this study is particularly valuable in view of strong international evidence on issues with professional adjustment for migrant teachers, the identified need for increased support strategies, and an increasing international mobility of educational professionals. Thus, the aim of this exploratory study is to stimulate and advance the current discussion on support strategies and to offer a foundation for further research on this problem.

The study also adds to the international knowledge base on migrant teachers and their experiences during professional adjustment. The collected interviews provided evidence of challenges for migrant teachers in Germany and, by so doing, once again reinforce the call for increased strategies of assistance (Caravatti et al., 2014; Deters, 2006; Fee, 2010; Hutchison, 2006; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane 2005; Reid & Collins, 2012; Sharplin, 2009; Walsh et al., 2011). The third and most significant contribution of this research, however, results from the collected narratives on the motives and perceived benefits of participation in such network. In particular, stories of how the network provided an important sense of belonging to its members represented a significant finding and a breakthrough in answering one of the four key research questions.

The biggest limitation of this study in terms of the generalisability and transferability of its findings arises from the lack of previous research on the issue. Other restrictions include the researcher’s personality, the limited scale and timeframe of the research, and potential biases of study participants. However, by providing a detailed description of the study’s methodology, sample, strategy of analysis, as well as potential biases, the paper facilitates the informed assessment of the research process and its findings. Implications that result from this exploratory study are the critical need for further research on formal and informal migrant teacher networks, with a particular focus on the workings, impact, suitability, and potential future application of state-run migrant teacher networks as support model.

The findings of the research in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks

The overarching paradigm of this research drew on theories of Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978, 1997, and 2004). This perspective assumes that humans construct knowledge by way of
social interaction and interpretations of meaning. This led to an application of a predominantly qualitative methodology in order to explore the social phenomenon of professional adjustment for migrant teachers. Further key perspectives for this investigation were theories in the field of Sociology of Education, including sociocultural theories of learning (Vygotsky’s, 1978, 1997, and 2004), models of situated learning in communities of practice (Wenger & Lave, 1991), as well as theories of globalisation and the internationalisation of education (LeTendre, Baker, Akiba, Goesling & Wiseman, 2001, 2002). The collective findings of this investigation were able to add new evidence to its field of study, and the relation of these results to theories and concepts in the discipline will be discussed in the following section.

Drawing on sociocultural theories, a number of studies (Caravatti et al., 2014; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Maylor et al., 2006; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Seah & Bishop, 2001) presume a relationship between sociocultural concepts of education and issues with professional transition for migrant teachers. Some of the earliest researchers to put forward the notion of a culturally specific and socially constructed nature of teaching were Spindler and Spindler (1987). However, a more recent study by Hörner, Döbert, Reuter and von Kopp (2015) also found some preserved idiosyncrasies in national education systems.

The findings of this research seem to substantiate this perspective. The results of both studies emphasise the strong impact of previous experiences and professional training on teachers’ educational knowledge and practice (Clandinin, 1985). For instance, the interviewed German migrant teachers in Western Australia narrated how they had to develop new teaching strategies based on information they acquired from observation, professional development, books, and colleagues. Four of the teachers described how they had to “adjust” to the new system and eventually “adapted their teaching style” to the Australian context. Two teachers explained that the transition required some level of “adaptability” from them. Similarly, the migrant teachers interviewed in Düsseldorf reported the need to negotiate their previous teaching practices to German concepts:

"I find, the main issue for people who come from other countries is that they have to find their place within the system. Each system has its rules. And those rules have been in place for decades. [...] And then conflicts happen. For example, [...] about the way of teaching. These, I find, are the biggest challenges. (Participant 3)"

These results are in line with theories of a culturally mediated and internalised knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978, 1997, and 2004). Moreover, they appear to confirm a relationship between sociocultural concepts of education and issues with professional transition for migrant teachers, and thus the notion of professional acculturation for migrant teachers (Deters, 2006;
Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Virta, 2015), the conceptual framework that underpinned both studies.

However, although cultural-historical differences in concepts of education between countries explain some of the difficulties experienced by the participants in the two studies, it is important not to put everything into a ‘cultural box’ as it then becomes culturally deterministic. It is critical to note that, cultural difference does not determine a range of matters but might often be used as a rather easy target for explanation. This research recognises that some of the reported issues might be the result of local, contextual, and even personal singularities rather than national features (Anderson-Levitt, 2002). The results of this research also seem to support theories of globalisation and an increasing internationalisation of education (LeTendre, Baker, Akiba, Goesling & Wiseman, 2001, 2002). The described move in Australia towards an alignment of instruction times in language education with other OECD countries, for example, indicates how global forces are deeply affecting the historically developed and socio-culturally formed models of education on a national level, not least due to policies emanating from the OECD and also from the UNESCO and the Global Bank.

The findings further appear to substantiate models of situated learning in communities of practice (Wenger & Lave, 1991). The study of a migrant teacher network in Germany highlighted the great value of interaction in teacher networks and informal support networks. The findings confirmed the positive impact of participation in such professional communities due to increased opportunities for professional learning (Berkemeyer et al., 2009; Baker-Doyle, 2011; Firestone & Pennell, 1997; McCormick et al., 2010), access to target-group specific knowledge (Guo & Singh, 2009a), peer support (Fee, 2010; Guo & Singh, 2009a), professional motivation (Berkemeyer et al., 2009; Firestone & Pennell, 1997), empowerment (Firestone & Pennell, 1997), and, as it seems, an increased sense of belonging.

The findings and significance of this collective research

The collective significance of this investigation is its focus on an issue of major current concern and international interest. The research addressed the issue of international teacher mobility and migration by focussing on five different themes within this main topic area. By doing so, the research was able to bring to the fore the implications of this huge international development at various levels, including the global, national, and individual.

The major conclusions from this body of research are that international teacher mobility and migration represent a global phenomenon, which is affecting practitioners and policymakers all over the world. The findings show that teachers have become increasingly mobile over the
last two decades, and that there is a critical need for increased professional support strategies. This is not only to aid migrant teachers’ professional transition and to reduce the risk of teachers being ineffective due to a lack of orientation, but also to maintain a competitive position in a global labour market.

The findings of this research are believed to be especially valuable in light of the international relevance of this issue, and each publication in this cumulative thesis is designed as a thematic contribution to the research in this field of study. The first article provides the international researchers with a comprehensive review of the relevant literature in the field. The second publication, a discussion of narratives as a method of inquiry, aims to add to the methodology literature for this field and issue of interest. The third article contributes to the international research base on migrant teachers with the detailed exposition of the results of a study on German born teachers in Australia. An in-depth analysis of differences in language education between Australia and Germany, in the fourth article of this series, hopes to make a contribution to current theories in the field of Sociology of Education. Finally, the last article focusses attention on the strong international evidence in regard to issues with professional adjustment for migrant teachers and the identified need for increased support strategies by investigating and describing the work of an established migrant teacher network in Germany. Notwithstanding that this research satisfies a personal interest in this issue initiated by professional experiences, above all it is hoped that this comprehensive investigation on the topic of international teacher mobility and migration makes a significant contribution to the knowledge in this field.

**Limitations and challenges**

Major limitations of this collective investigation include the person of the researcher, the scale of the investigation, and the overall format of this thesis as a series of publications.

Firstly, the researcher takes on a unique role in this investigation. As previously acknowledged and discussed, personal interests and experiences have played an important part in this study. This involvement not only stimulated the initial interests in this topic, but also facilitated and influenced the entire research process. Established connections to a professional community helped to recruit study participants, while shared experiences as a German migrant teacher in Australia fostered the development of trusted relationships with the interview partners. In addition, the common language background made it possible to conduct and analyse the narrative interviews in the participants’ native language, German. As outlined earlier, this special position raises a number of issues in terms of the objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity of the research process and the reported findings. However, it is argued that the
research has stated and adequately addressed any potential biases resulting from the researcher’s role in this investigation, thus enabling the reader to critically review the research and its results.

A second limitation of this research is the scale of the investigation, which affects the generalisability and transferability of the findings to other contexts. Limitations for the study on German migrant teachers in WA, reported in publications number 2, 3, and 4, result from the relative homogeneity of the study participants, plus the specific subject area under focus. Limitations of the findings on a German migrant teacher network in Germany, reported in the final paper of this thesis, include the limited time frame of the fieldwork and potential biases of study members.

Finally, a third limitation arises from the format of this thesis as a series of publications. Restrictions that result from this design include the overall organisation of the thesis as well as the style, structure, and word limit of individual papers. For instance, standards in regard to the overall format of a publication led to a degree of repetition of information across the number of papers presented. Additionally, prescribed word limits for publications led to omissions of information, which affects the depth of discussion and background information in each publication. Strategies used to address this problem include the presentation of additional supporting material in the appendices of this thesis. However, although not without challenges and limitations, it is also contended that the successful publication of four papers highlights the significance, timeliness, and overall quality of the publications in this thesis. Furthermore, it is hoped that the rigid review process in the selected academic outlets not only enhanced the quality of the individual papers but also of the entire thesis.

**Implications of the findings and suggestions for future research**

Although recognising these limitations of the findings, this thesis concludes by foregrounding some of the implications for practice and by suggesting a number of fruitful directions for future research:

A first major implication of the study derives from the discovery of divergences in approaches to language education between Australia and Germany. The findings point to a set of issues that differentiate language education in this country from that in Germany (and other OECD countries), and which ultimately have the potential to hinder a rounded education of current and future generations of Australian students. Such information is particularly valuable in view of the newly developed national curriculum for languages in Australia and current national strategies to promote the study of Asian languages and Asia literacy. Describing in depth the
difficulties experienced by German migrant teachers in adjusting to local concepts of language teaching will enable policymakers to develop initiatives and actions that are likely to strengthen the situation of language education in Australia and the work conditions of language teachers. The findings might also inspire new research studies. A possible new question to be addressed is a transnational comparison and analysis of successful strategies in language education. However, there is a need for strong partnerships and systemic coherence between policymakers and key stakeholders of education in order for any initiatives to generate a transformation in attitudes toward language learning in Australia.

The second and most important implication of this research stems from the finding of massive struggles with professional adjustment experienced by the ten interviewed teachers, which to a certain extent resulted from an overall lack of institutional support. This research provides very strong evidence of the teachers’ difficulties in finding much-needed support and clearly shows that there is not enough professional assistance available to help migrant teachers navigate their entry into the Australian education system. The important contribution of these findings is that they help to better understand the needs of migrant teachers working in Australia and will give guidance for policymakers and other stakeholders to hopefully respond accordingly. This research once again highlights the importance of support services and reiterates the call made by others (Guo & Singh, 2009b; Peeler, 2002; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Reid et al., 2014; Sharplin, 2009) to improve the way we provide support for migrant teachers in Australia. Santoro et al. (2001, p. 63) already declared more than a decade ago that “the assistance currently provided […] is inadequate”. And more recently, Collins, Reid & Singh (2010, p. 9) called this lack of professional support “a form of labour market failure […] that impedes the ease by which [these] teachers enter and teach in our schools”. However, the cost of this administrative neglect is not just the loss of these teachers for the Australian school system (Collins et al., 2010) as migrant teachers’ career pursuits can be destabilised by negative experiences (Bense, 2014; Sharplin, 2009). An insufficient preparation for and orientation to the local education situation also impedes the effectiveness of these teachers in the classroom (Bartlett, 2014; Caravatti et al., 2014) and might potentially negatively affect the education of Australian students.

Thus, as a final point, this discussion suggests a number of actions to be taken in order to improve the current situation for migrant teachers in Australia. Based on the findings of this study as well as an extensive review of the national and international literature on the issue, this study recommends the systematic and comprehensive introduction of support services for migrant teachers in Australia. Such programs need to address the personal and professional difficulties of migrant teachers settling into Australia and should provide continuous and target
group-specific information, training, and mentoring, particularly during the initial period of settling in. Starting with basic and application-oriented research, the initial introduction of model projects, and ultimately leading to the gradual establishment of support service across Australia. The following necessary and important next steps arise from this for theory and practice in Australia:

1. There is a crucial need for a closer link between research and the transfer and application of study results into practice. In order for any research to bring about a change, coordinated actions and systemic collaboration among all levels of policymakers, key stakeholders, and researchers is essential.

2. Current national, federal, and regional policies and procedures aimed at providing support for migrant teachers must be analysed and evaluated. Existing strategies have to be assessed in terms of their approach, scope, impact, and the potential transferability to other national contexts. Successful programs should be endorsed in order to promote the application of good practices.

3. Basic research, including transnational collaborative research, has to be conducted to assemble evidence on best practices in other countries and determine their suitability and potential future applicability within the Australian context.

4. Applied research should direct its attention to investigating and analysing the issue of professional support for migrant teachers with a view to initiating social change through an improvement of current policies and programs. Potential projects include policy development and analysis, program design, as well as the experimental implementation, management, and evaluation of model projects. A particular focus should be on individual small initiatives or the grouping of several small projects that have the potential of future replication and systematic integration at regional and/or national level.

5. Sufficient funding will be an important fundamental requirement of a long-term strategy to provide better professional support for migrant teachers in Australia.

Although policy makers and local authorities in Australia will look at the budgetary implications involved in developing, establishing, and maintaining such specific support programs for migrant teachers across the country, it is argued that one needs to take into account the real costs associated with teacher attrition (Buchanan et al., 2013) and the potential risk of migrant teachers’ being ineffective and inadequately prepared due to a lack of orientation. This is even more the case in the present situation of teaching becoming a global labour market. Removing the obstacles to the professional transition of teachers into Australia is vital, if it is to compete successfully against global competition for migrant teachers of the highest ability.
References


at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, University of Warwick.


# APPENDICES

**Appendix 1. Quantitative data from the literature review**

### Table 1 Number of documents with search term in title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search term</th>
<th>Number of documents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant teacher(s)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant teacher(s)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher migration</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lehrer mit Migrationshintergrund</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationally trained/educated teacher(s)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas trained teacher(s)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign trained teacher(s)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority immigrant teacher(s)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas teacher(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native teacher(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imported teacher(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global teacher(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher mobility</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas born teacher(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2 Found documents by year of publication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of publication</th>
<th>Found documents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970 - 1979</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - 1989</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 - 1999</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 – 2009</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 – 2014</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3 Found documents by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Found documents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji/Cook Islands/Vanuatu</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2. Demographic data of total migrant teacher cohort in Australia

The data provided below was compiled from 2011 national census data (ABS, 2011). It is important to note that, the Australian Bureau of Statistics randomly adjusts numbers to avoid the release of confidential data, as such no reliance can be placed on very small numbers. Terms used in the tables represent the labels applied in the ABS data collection.

Table 4 Birthplace of Australian school teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Australian school teachers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>260,293</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>56,394</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>2,775</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>319,462</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 Regions of birth of migrant teachers in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region of birth</th>
<th>Migrant teachers in Australia</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North-West Europe</td>
<td>21,308</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>6,809</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern and Eastern Europe</td>
<td>4,644</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>4,552</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern and Central Asia</td>
<td>4,149</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-East Asia</td>
<td>3,914</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-East Asia</td>
<td>3,180</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa and the Middle East</td>
<td>2,430</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2,873</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59,159</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 Top ten countries of birth of migrant teachers in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number 1 to 10</th>
<th>Countries of birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>England (13,985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>New Zealand (4,709)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>South Africa (3,742)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>India (2,914)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>United States of America (2,043)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Scotland (1,848)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Canada (1,424)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Germany (1,346)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>China (1,179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Italy (1,172)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3. Demographic data of total German born teacher cohort in Australia

The data provided below was compiled from 2011 national census data (ABS, 2011). It is important to note that the Australian Bureau of Statistics randomly adjusts numbers to avoid the release of confidential data, as such no reliance can be placed on very small numbers (ABS, 23/05/2011). Terms used in the tables represent the labels applied in the ABS data collection.

Table 7 Usual place of residence of German born teachers in comparison to the total school teacher population in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usual place of residence</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 Sex of German born teachers in comparison to the total school teacher population in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>997</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,346</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 Age of German born teachers in comparison to the total school teacher population in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29 years</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39 years</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49 years</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 59 years</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69 years</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,344</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 Occupation sector of German born teachers in comparison to the total school teacher population in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation sector</th>
<th>German born teachers</th>
<th>Australian teacher population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early childhood teachers</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teachers</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school teachers</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education teachers</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School teachers (nfd)</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 Employment sector of German born teachers in comparison to the total school teacher population in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>German born teachers n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Australian teacher population n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>164564</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>154357</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>319,462</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 Employment status of German born teachers in comparison to the total school teacher population in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>German born teachers n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Australian teacher population n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed, worked full time</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>199,751</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, worked part-time</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>101,513</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, away from work</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14,419</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, hours not stated</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3,782</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>319,465</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 Qualifications of German migrant teachers in comparison to the total school teacher population in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>German born teachers n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Australian teacher population n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Degree Level</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1,742</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Degree Level</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28,133</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma Level</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>46,596</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree Level</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>196,348</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Diploma Level</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>31,779</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate Level</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2,775</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,269</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>307,373</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Web references


Appendix 4. Demographic data of participants in the qualitative study

Data gathered in the interviews conducted in Western Australia over a period from 2012 to 2014. Cells in the tables provided below have been randomly rearranged to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

### Table 14 Demographic data of interviewed German migrant teachers in Western Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic data</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29 years</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39 years</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 59 years</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>60 – 69 years</td>
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### Table 15 Current employment of interviewed German migrant teachers in Western Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current employment</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation sector</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Away from work</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Casual work</td>
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<td>X</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 16 Qualification of interviewed German migrant teachers in Western Australia

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staatsexamen I and II</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Education</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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### Table 17 Teaching experience of interviewed German migrant teachers in Western Australia

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<tr>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years of experience</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 9 years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 19 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 – 30 years</td>
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<td>X</td>
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### Education sector

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult education</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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### Employer

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<th>3</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Public sector</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 18 Difficulties of interviewed German migrant teachers in Western Australia

<table>
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<th>Difficulties</th>
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<th>3</th>
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<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Different expectations/values</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support/isolation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student behaviour</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Inadequate teaching resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language barriers</td>
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<td>X</td>
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</table>
Appendix 5. Interview data of the narrative study with German migrant teachers in WA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Interview data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1; A1</td>
<td>57yrs, secondary education in Germany, only casual employment on primary and secondary level, Government, Australian teaching certificate Year 1 to 10, Bachelor of Education, 9 years of teaching experience, 30 years in AUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02:11</td>
<td>• Started as primary school teacher in a difficult school, first year, socio-economic background of students difficult, all boys class, not many consequences for the students, not much support from school, particularly difficult for beginning teacher, student behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04:20</td>
<td>• Cannot compare teaching in G and teaching in AUS, always hard for beginning teachers, German background big impact on difficulties as beginning teacher, expectations regarding student behaviour were influenced by own schooling experiences in Germany, made it difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05:51</td>
<td>• So lonely, isolated, very difficult, no one to converse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:13</td>
<td>• No respect from students, expected independent work, status of teachers different, students didn’t conform, when reported to principal no support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:05</td>
<td>• Mentoring programme at one school, liked that, very helpful, tips from mentor, e.g. regarding teaching indigenous students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:21</td>
<td>• Every student individual study plan, expectations regarding student achievements vary between schools, streaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:22</td>
<td>• Tells story about dyslexia of daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23:05</td>
<td>• Different expectations regarding student behaviour, more difficult, was able to confer with colleagues at that school, classroom rules developed and displayed by school, in G no classroom rules displayed at school, was expected, at high school the students not well prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25:00</td>
<td>• In G expectations to do best, no experiences regarding cheating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34:00</td>
<td>• Classroom management depending on teacher, observed different styles, didn’t expect difficult student behaviour, very different, AUS multi-cultural, students diverse, narrates about tips from mentor, expectation is that we do it together and to the best of our ability, expectations are not high, but is annoyed when students don’t behave, typical German</td>
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| 2; A2       | 50-60yrs, secondary education in G, currently teaching on primary level, private school, no teaching qualification, 6 years of teaching experience in AUS, 10 years in AUS, Waldorf school |
| 02:30       | • Start of career in AUS, bit tricky at beginning, students no interest in German, student behaviour difficult, worked in Hawaii, no boundaries or rules, not independent, adjusted teaching style, behaviour better in G, level of achievement higher, involvement in class is missing, more strive/pressure in G, expectations in G are higher |
| 08:45       | • Drinking in class, calling out, talking, standing up, punctuality, expectations different, better now, common ground now, developed 10 classroom rules with students, Yr 7 difficulties, but resolved issue,
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tr>
<td>17:45</td>
<td>Flexibility as teacher required, no own classroom, behaviour management plan at school, observed different approaches from teachers, meetings at school or with classroom teacher, no issues because German background, students in G work are more independent</td>
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<td>• Students in G work more independently, e.g. homework, behaviour better, no patience, adjusted teaching style, modified teaching plan, humour doesn’t travel, speaks only German from Yr 4, lack of concentration, teaching goal facilitator, wants to develop confidence in students, no language barriers, expectations different regarding taking notes looking after stationaries, preparation</td>
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<td>• Start stressful, lack of knowledge, curriculum, planning stressful, now easy, stress due to student behaviour, self-doubts, different values, development of strategies that work for all parts, no mentor particularly in Waldorf pedagogy, professional development</td>
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<th>Time</th>
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<th>Summary</th>
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<tr>
<td>02:52</td>
<td>3; B1 “Beate”</td>
<td>40-50yrs, education in G, teaches at primary level, private school, 3 years of teaching experience in AUS in both private (GER) and government school (FRE), Staatsexamen I and II, 6 years of teaching experience German and French in G with interruptions at Realschule and Gymnasium, 4 years in AUS</td>
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<td>06:40</td>
<td>• No big differences in student behaviour, longer lesson times, standard of learning higher in G, German and foreign languages higher valued in G, school rituals eg. lunch box</td>
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<td>08:30</td>
<td>• Teaching in a foreign language not a big issue</td>
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<td>09:30</td>
<td>• Status of language teacher in G vs. AUS, classroom teacher with close relationship to students, time allocation affecting teacher-student relationship</td>
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<td>12:30</td>
<td>• Knowledge of standard of discipline, different status compared to classroom teacher, on primary level no designated room, no desk and wall space for language teachers, hierarchy of classroom teacher and specialist teacher, no mentor</td>
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<td>20:20</td>
<td>• Classroom management well organised at private school but no info at government school, felt absolutely left alone, orientation program at private school, no introduction at public school, eg. Regarding budget, 4 language teachers at private school, behaviour management plan does not exist in G, classroom teachers responsibility, more structured in AUS, student behaviour similar in G and AUS</td>
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<td>22:30</td>
<td>• No support at public school, gave up, decision not to continue</td>
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<td>26:00</td>
<td>• Not enough resources, no books, locating resources and teaching material most time consuming, works not in her area of training (secondary level), difficult to find a job, working hours as a part time teacher are not efficient</td>
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<td>30:00</td>
<td>• Students more dependent, complex instructions too difficult, cultural difference, eg. school drop offs and pickups</td>
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<td>• expected too much from students at the beginning regarding independence, adapted teaching style, little influence due to limited time allocation, structured lessons vs. creative work, instructions more detailed and guiding, surprised about students dependence on instructions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• More value on independence and creativity in G education</td>
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### Participant 1: 4; B2

**66yrs, secondary education G, currently teaching on secondary level and adult education, private Montessori, completed teacher education in G (I and II), no teaching experience past initial training, 25yrs experience in AUS**

- Goethe Society, no resources, no training as teacher of foreign languages, professional development, no comparison to G, no issues, preparation difficult due to lack of resources and curriculum
- No language barriers, need to be flexible, different levels of abilities, speaks mostly German, uses humour
- No big issues with student behaviour, very good mentor during initial teacher training in G, student behaviour different 40yrs ago, set boundaries and expectations in G, start at Montessori school with 2 students, start at College, Yr 10 students, very lively class, had to get loud, collaboration with colleague, preparation of students for IB and TEE

**24:25**
- Homework less strict, Montessori no homework, different expectations re homework, feels helpless because wants students to learn, gave up, sometimes disappointed, always had small groups, close relationship to students, no behaviour issues, not a lot authority at Montessori school, set of rules established at beginning of year, fun very important in class, every teacher has an individual style, tried to change style before, students sit in a circle, no designated classroom, teacher is part of class, prefers that structure when teaching

### Participant 2: 5; D2

**28yrs, school education in Germany, Master of Education in G for Primary education (GER, ENG, Sachkunde), 2 years of teaching experience in AUS at all levels and sectors, including tertiary education, 2yrs in AUS, currently employed and casual work, primary, secondary, tertiary and adult education, Waldorf school and other education (Goethe), tutoring**

- After Master study, applied for exchange program as Language Assistant (LA) for German at public schools in AUS, wanted to practise language skills, was offered a fixed one year post through DET, liked it a lot, wanted to do something similar, did another half year as LA, but could not extend any longer, started to teach at university as assistant, has now registration as teacher in WA with TRBWA, was a lot of work, worked at uni, private school and adult education, started at Waldorf, one other teacher from Austria

**03:35**
- Was good to get insights into gov school, then “world” of private schools, “wow”, big differences between private and gov school, even between gov schools, differences in the way the students are, very interesting, at Waldorf first time alone in front of class

**10:00**
- Only started 3 weeks ago, really enjoys it, lots of help from colleagues, classes are smaller, not many problems so far, one has to adapt that is for sure, maybe because it is all still very new but also because of previous experiences as LA, you get to observe the other teacher as a LA, you actually just do co-teaching, you can discuss

**12:12**
- Classroom management, classes are smaller at Waldorf, management different. At public school different, bigger classes, stress rather caused by own perfectionism, too fresh from uni, admits to have lots
of ideas but in reality you are busy doing classroom management, not much routine, often a bit nervous

- No problems with registration as teacher, but maybe because has Master of Education, very long process still, has fixed employment contract for one year, school must advertise job again at the end of term, feels valued as native speaker, seen as expert, experience and language skills more important than qualifications

- AUS students are less competent in languages, in GER students start earlier with ELT, greater focus in GER, in AUS you get the feeling even with principals, if it is not working it is not so important, no focus on language learning, but on the other hand more freedom, students in GER are “better” in when they leave school and can speak English more competently, more diversity in students, some are native German speakers or second language speakers, here more flexibility, you can drop the subject, in GER compulsory, students change between languages, those who continue have fun or have a family background, in GER more exposure to English due to proximity to UK and music, films, curriculum different here

- Students in AUS more casual, being called by first name, not attending class, that is not possible in GER, or students going on holiday during term, is “strange”, more laid back, easy going

- Not so much pressure, students don’t see the value of languages, doesn’t mean they are not engaged but students are not stressed about homework as they think it is not important for their life or career,

- talks about mentor at school, expected students to work faster, they are “slow”, Waldorf very activity focused, encouraged by principal, trying to find balance, doesn’t get as much work done as hoped, loss of teaching time because of students being late, or new students without previous language experiences, has to adjust to diverse student needs, expected better language skills, talks about basic vocabulary, not shocked anymore but is initially highly motivated for class and then this..., talks about students not remembering basic words, “I am trying to lower my expectations because I know not a lot will be remembered”, one has to repeat it again and again, discusses private schools in GER, students with migration background better at learning languages

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<tr>
<th>14:09</th>
<th>29yrs, secondary education in G, currently away, primary and secondary, adult education and TAFE, government and independent, initial teacher education in Germany (I), completed training for overseas trained teachers by DET, professional development at school, no employment in G, 3yrs teaching experience in AUS, 4 yrs in AUS</th>
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<tr>
<td>18:01</td>
<td>Course for overseas trained teachers, 10 days relief teaching, only after that application through DET, classroom management covered in course (2-3hrs), interesting, not covered in G, very helpful, establishes classroom rules,</td>
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<td>20:00</td>
<td>language classes other value in G, same hours in timetable as German in G, languages only DOT teachers, subject not important, more fun oriented, getting to know students difficult, no curriculum, no structure</td>
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<td>21:12</td>
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| 22:00 | - Independent work/groups very difficult to organise in AUS, big value on diversity in teaching practices in G, tries to use different practices/arrangements  
- At primary school little difficulties with names, pronunciation, depends on approach of teacher, not offended or embarrassed, uses humour, language not a hurdle for classroom management, only rarely unsettled  
- No language colleagues at primary school, difficult students, was not strict enough, sees herself as facilitator  
- Start stressful, no colleagues, felt alone, if mentor would have asked for advice, cultural activities very interesting for students, grammar/vocab rather for interested students, not to overwhelm students, independent learning not developed, no motivation, different expectations regarding interest, class spirit, dobbing of cheater |
| 7; D1 | 40yrs, secondary education in G, currently teaching, 8-12 yrs, no primary experience, independent Montessori, started teacher education in G and graduated in UK with a Bachelor (Postgraduate Certificate and Master of Education in UK), 7 years teaching experience in UK, 7 years in AUS, 6 years of teaching experience in AUS, adult education |
| 02:40 | - Start difficult because of IB, no other schools doing German in IB, had to find out herself, no other teachers to ask, discusses IB exam for Yr 12  
- No resources, no existing language book for students, organised books herself through network,  
- Teacher qualification in UK made start easy, had experiences teaching German as Foreign language, qualifications easily recognised, teaching in English, 2 teaching practice in G, in UK more practice oriented, mentor at school very helpful, felt very well prepared, classroom management experience in UK, students better behaved than in UK, but small classes at current school |
| 07:25 |  
- Exchange with a class from BER, German students were more critical towards teacher, teacher has to assert themselves, in UK teacher has more backup from colleagues, hierarchy in school very supportive, teacher left alone, own experiences from teaching in G, students were disrupting classes, no support structure, in G people avoid authority, in UK students respect authority, in AUS similar to UK, students less street wise in Perth, in G students more independent  
- Montessori pedagogy encourages independence, but no influence on students, has to accept if student doesn’t do homework, no classroom rules or behaviour management plan, talks to students if problems occur, narrates an example, advanced by German background in Montessori school  
- Montessori education for teachers, classroom management learnt in UK, but not necessary in small classes, no specific classroom rules, Montessori based on respect for each other, teacher-student relationship good, very personal relationship with students  
- Sits students apart during a test to avoid cheating, never discovered a cheater, attitude  
- No language issues because studied English, but narrates some
incidents of misunderstandings and feelings of not being as glibly, education of own children similar to own childhood, avoids stereotypes, but maybe educates children more critical and freely, dislikes catholic pedagogy (uniforms, assembly) at children’s school, but would not send own children to MON school, high expectations at catholic school, too little fun, too much focus on results not on learning, teachers have to prove reputation of school

- No national curriculum, critical thinking not a teaching goal, project work not yet taught, classroom management at kids school regulated and structured, in G classroom management more communicative, rules taught and developed together with students, it is expected to behave, classroom rules not specifically discussed in G
- More interest in G for students, more methodology, interest of teachers to teach students something, personal involvement, more a job in AUS, not much emphasis on education in AUS, more about reputation of school, in G emphasis on education and subject, in AUS emphasis on results, in G teacher training longer, teacher in AUS need class rules as guides
- Imagines working at public/independent school in AUS, foresees difficulties if teaching in G, doesn’t want to discuss and assert her authority in G, narrates exchange with UK teacher friend, classroom rules and status of UK teacher felt foreign, acknowledgement of presence of teacher, authority not accepted or wanted in G (“verpoent”), result of G history, experienced racism in UK

### 8; E1 “Elisa”

#### 40yrs, education in G, teaches at secondary level, government school, Staatsexamen I and II, attended 2-3 day overseas-trained teachers entry and orientation program, 4 years of experience teaching German and ESL in German schools, 3 terms teaching experience in AUS, migrated to AUS 5 1/2years ago

- Orientation course for teachers: curriculum, marking, where to find information, classroom behaviour management, didn’t feel well prepared, no subject specific information, information too basic, not relevant for her situation, no info about personal development options and requirements
- No differences in classroom management, methodology and teacher student relationship, booklet from ECU largely on teacher-student relationship, in German teacher training not covered, understanding was expected, in German teacher training focus on methodology, planning, curriculum, but not classroom management, important to plan lesson adequately, interesting and challenging for students
- Start of teaching career in AUS, taught at GYM in G, new experience to have students who weren’t interested in her subject, taught G and ESL in G, both subjects determine the moving up to next year level, now I teach a low-esteem subject, more intrinsic motivation than extrinsic, saw students more often, easier to develop relationship, biggest shock students weren’t interested, not enough preparation by school regarding behaviour management, now after 3 terms more experienced and better prepared
- Gap in knowledge about behaviour management, after school detention, school hierarchy, school intern procedures, lack of
understanding from colleagues, felt left alone and insecure because of lack of knowledge of school policies, more info from DET would have been helpful

- classroom dynamics, talks about educational goals, feeling of belonging
- behaviour management issues, classroom rules, students behaving “unbelievable”, nothing similar in G, yard duty, too soft, felt stupid to ask about management strategies during staff meeting, students still don’t love German but management has improved, in G would have known what to do, here unsure
- strong parent involvement in AUS, calling parents more common in AUS, strong feeling of school community, lunch time detention, student learning in groups
- independence, had to adapt her teaching, in G students are used to independent learning, in AUS takes time, AUS students less independent
- language difficulties, not as glibly, matter of practice, use of humour in classroom management
- role of a teacher, students as a critical thinker, Western culture vs. Eastern cultures, facilitator vs. instructor
- language team within the school hierarchy has to justify if resources are needed, wants to observe other teachers (“coaching”), Chinese or Japanese differently taught, other teachers AUS

9; F1

39yrs, secondary education in G, currently teaching in adult education, teaching experience in secondary education in AUS, completed teacher education in D Gym (Eng and GEO) (I and II), 2 years teaching experience in G during initial training, 9 months teaching experience in AUS as school teacher, adult education, 10 yrs in AUS

- overseas trained teachers course, very positive presenters, had to write diary, could fail course, example lesson, thinks G teachers are similar to AUS, other teachers (e.g. Indian background had more trouble), lack of knowledge, had to get students in class, course (2months), found course very helpful, taught to be assertive, classroom management covered, positive encouragement for students, has no specific set of classroom rules
- in G teacher has authority, in AUS teachers have to assert themselves, has to point to classroom rules, kids in G are more independent and responsible for own learning, own ideas not expected, exams in AUS are more standardized, multiple choice questions for students, e.g. IELTS, more guidelines for students
- students from SIN, Murdoch school, difficulties being accepted as teacher in school, lack of collegial support and resources, always gave input at teacher conferences, G always have to contribute towards discussions, Teacher advisory group at school, lack of local knowledge, worked independently, took on responsibility, different expectations, overstepped responsibilities, too direct and honest, uniform Nazi,
- narrates story about whiteboard marker incident, “drama”, “talk of the school”, didn’t know, she couldn’t do that, anger management course suggested, no support from colleagues, very surprised of reaction, didn’t think anything of it at all, would not have been an
issue in G
- teachers not as prepared in AUS, not well prepared for school in AUS, not intimidated by principal, teacher doesn’t have to be entertainer and always in a good mood, more a show in AUS for paying parents, more knowledge necessary about writing reports, particularly at private schools, narrates stories about students, own opinion not wanted, authority in G is a given, in AUS teachers are employer of parents
- group work, difficult to provide exercises for different learning levels, students not encouraged enough, students don’t work independently, cheating not appreciated, never caught a cheater, G students learn to question authority and this is also encouraged, in AUS one has to be good, e.g. presents for teachers
- language barriers, no vocabulary to assert oneself, pronunciation, no problem to ask students, schreibschrift at whiteboard, not many resources or teaching books, no one to ask at school, afraid to lose job, more subject specific information necessary, had no punishment, nothing to assert authority, lack of local knowledge, narrates stories of cultural differences

40-50yrs, secondary education in G, currently teaching in primary education, but 5 years teaching experience in secondary education, government, Bachelor of education in AUS, 15 years teaching in AUS, 21 yrs in AUS
- not easy start, different education system, very difficult, teaching practice, unfamiliar system, took a while to adjust (2-3 years), not assertive enough at the beginning, was expecting more independence, no intrinsic motivation, teacher = boss, has observed teaching in G, students more equal, more facilitator, in AUS more instructor, more support from parents, different expectations from own school and teaching in G
- classroom management issues, students behaved unbelievable, wanted to give up teaching at schools, had to learn strategies, no control over class, students behaved badly, had no strategies, was exhausted, learned cm strategies from books and courses, wasn’t prepared, only had a mentor at her last school, no support, asked for it, lack of local knowledge, but lots of collegial support, only very little language learning, not enough exposure and subject hours
- classroom management strategies, no problems anymore, in G students more equal, no rules in G, more pressure at Gym, more mature, students more independent, more responsible
- language students not very interested (Yr 7 – 9), stream students depending on skills, very important what you do with students, have a curriculum, languages must be taught interestingly, different methods, lots of teaching experience now, as long as students are interested they work in class, in G language skills more advanced, more exposure, discusses language teaching in G and AUS, more subject hours in G, not very structured, foreign language decided by school or depending on teacher availability, employment
- discipline very stressful, no experience, attended PD’s, no experiences about cheating, describes classroom rules, one has to be consequent, everything new at beginning, group work has to be learnt, only with
assistant, exhausting, no language difficulties, had to learn teacher language, one has to show respect towards students, to use “please”, trying to teach independence, behaviour modification vs. emotional intelligence, wants lots of freedom for her children, naughty vs “frech”, “Laura’s Stern”, kids more moral freedom in G, more consequences