Changing English
Vol. 15, No. 1, March 2008, 65–76

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

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Making a Difference: Early Career English Teachers Research Their Practice

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> However battered the professional ego may get, however cynical the old hand in the staffroom may profess to be, it still remains true that most teachers went into teaching not because of the chance it gave them to become a millionaire, but because it was a job where they thought they could actually do some good. (Connell et al. 1982, 206–7)

When teachers enter the profession, they come into curriculum and pedagogical worlds that are already shaped by policy, demographics and cultural trends. English teachers who began teaching at the beginning of the twenty-first century have entered a particularly fraught policy environment. In many nations ongoing media debates about what constitutes literacy, how to teach reading and appropriate curriculum have been intense (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 2006; Comber and Cormack 2007; Doecke, Howie, and Sawyer 2006; Openshaw and Soler 2007).

In Australia we have seen a sustained neo-conservative backlash against the inclusion of critical literacy, popular culture and new digital literacies in the English curriculum and a vociferous insistence on the literary heritage of the past (see Doecke, Howie, and Sawyer 2006, for a discussion of the media and political critique). The federal push for a national syllabus and standardised testing regimes and the unrelenting emphasis on normative standards and mandated programmes can be overwhelming for teachers entering the profession at this time.

The confusion likely to be elicited by policy and media debates is compounded by fundamental demographic changes facing the profession, both in terms of who is teaching English and who is studying English. As global population shifts result in increasingly multicultural and multilingual classroom profiles, many students are speaking English at school as a second or third language. The teaching profession itself is facing its own challenges with the baby boomer generation heading for retirement and many educational systems finding it difficult to recruit and keep new teachers. Many Australian graduates are taking teaching jobs in the UK, as they see themselves part of an increasingly mobile teaching workforce; and increasing numbers of young teachers are leaving the profession altogether, in order to do different work.

In the light of these challenges, and the new literacies emerging from new forms of communication and media technologies, early career teachers could be forgiven for being perplexed about what it means to be a teacher of English in these times. In some ways these identity crises are not new (Durrant 2001; Kerin 2005) in the sense that English teachers have been grappling with the question of what constitutes English for some time (Green 2006). Nevertheless, they do pose particular challenges for teachers who are entering the profession now.

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ISSN 1358-684X print/ISSN 1469-3585 online
© 2008 The editors of *Changing English*
DOI: 10.1080/13586840701825311
http://www.informaworld.com

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We may well ask why young people would be attracted to teaching as a profession at such a time? In many nations the status of teaching as a career is dwindling and many reports suggest low morale and burn-out (Haberman 2004). A recent survey conducted by Met Life and reported by the National Council of Teachers of English in the United States, for example, indicates high levels of burn-out in experienced teachers and suggests that one quarter of teachers say it is likely they will leave the profession within five years (http://ncteblog.blogspot.com/search/label/teach). An estimated one quarter of all beginning teachers are also leaving teaching within four years (Benner 2000). 'Teacher burnout' is now an established topic on WikEd (http://wik.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/Teacher_Burnout).

Yet today, as ever, many people enter the profession with the expressed intention of making a difference. As Connell and colleagues noted in 1982, the belief that they can 'actually do some good' (Connell et al. 1982, 206–7) attracts many people into teaching. Twenty-five years later, teachers still enter the profession with noble motives; some have working-class or poverty histories themselves and are committed to social justice when they begin their careers. Some leave successful careers to come into teaching as a more fulfilling career option.

Certainly, it is more crucial than ever to have a highly educated teacher workforce that can grapple with the competing demands of media, policy and practice outlined above and contribute to sustaining a collective, healthy, intellectual life in schools. But greater attention needs to be given to how best to support teachers to deal with these competing demands, particularly in the early years of their careers. In this article, we argue that engaging in research as a part of one's professional life is fundamental to sustaining teachers' professional learning and well-being and, as we will show, central to improving students' learning.

To make this argument, we draw on a longitudinal study, 'Teachers investigate unequal literacy outcomes: cross-generational perspectives'[1] whose overriding aim was to make a positive difference to young people's literacy learning. We believed that producing higher levels of achievement for disadvantaged students was a long-term project that could only be achieved by building reciprocal research relationships with teachers (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1993, 1999). In this article we focus on the research of two early career teacher-researchers who taught English in working-class and poor communities in Australia. Bev Maney's research was motivated by her interest in using critical, visual and digital literacies to connect young people with English. Kerry Rochford's research explored the role of written feedback in improving students' writing. In these two projects we have essential elements of both the old and the new of English pedagogy – one capitalising on the potential of new forms of multimodal literate practices to engage students, the other recognising the crucial, ongoing role of English teachers in helping their students write.

The research conducted by Rochford and Maney suggests that making a difference in challenging schools requires teachers to become researchers. Developing a researcher stance allows early career teachers to move beyond orthodoxies, to analyse the actual effects of their practices on different students and deal effectively with the provocative challenges of contemporary English teaching. We now elaborate the context of our larger research project, discuss Maney and Rochford's research and its effects on their emerging teacher identities and practice. We conclude by reiterating the importance of early career teachers participating in supported research communities,

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where they can tackle the daunting challenges of making a sustainable difference to students who find school literacy learning a struggle.

Our research project with teachers was designed to address the continuing problem of unequal educational outcomes in literacy as it is manifested in high poverty schools. In terms of performance on standardised measures of literacy, numerous national and international studies (Alloway and Gilbert 1997; Hill et al. 1998, 2002; OECD 2004; Masters and Forster 1997) have consistently found that whilst Australian students perform well in terms of overall averages, there are significant groups of young people who perform at a very low level. These groups typically include low SES (Socioeconomic Status), Aboriginal, some ESL, and some geographically remote students. The latest PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment, which is coordinated by OECD) results testing 15-year-olds' reading literacy (OECD 2004) indicate that while Australia ranked second overall in the participating OECD countries, its record in terms of equity is poor. There were significant numbers of students in the lower bands of achievement and there was a correlation between social background and lower levels of achievement. That is, students' social backgrounds were more strongly related to achievement in Australia than in countries such as Canada, Finland and Korea. Canada, which shared the second ranking with Australia, did much better than Australia in terms of equity (McGaw 2006). So some education systems do better than others in terms of delivering equal outcomes to different students.

Our three-year longitudinal study supported two networks of teacher-researchers across two states in Australia, Victoria and South Australia, to investigate how these inequities were produced and what could be done to overturn these trends. We recruited five early career teachers in each state and asked them to invite a colleague with considerable experience (approximately 25 years of teaching or more) to work with them in a reciprocal mentoring arrangement, so that they could support each other to study the problem of unequal literacy outcomes in their particular school contexts. Barbara Kamler and Kirsten Hutchison worked closely with the Victorian teachers and Barbara Comber and Lyn Kerkham with the South Australian teachers. Kamler and Comber travelled to attend research workshops in both states to build an intellectual community of inquiry across generations of teachers. Each teacher was supported by their self-selected mentor, the teacher-researcher network, a part-time research assistant, and the two chief investigators, Kamler and Comber.

The overall project attracted 20 teacher-researchers who were teaching English from early childhood to senior secondary. Four were secondary English teachers and of these three were in their first five years of teaching. One had tenure, one had a full-year contract position and one had several short-term contracts in different schools. All four English teachers were passionate about making a difference to students at risk and had strong views about education for social justice. The teachers, whose work we examine in this article, had working-class histories themselves and a commitment to teaching as a vocation.

A key assumption of the project was that producing long-term and sustainable gains in literacy learning required a knowledgeable teacher workforce who were supported to analyse critically the effects of their practices. To that end we spent a considerable part of the first year of the project inducting the teachers (both early and late career) into research practices – case study, scholarly reading, interviewing, and transcript analysis. Later we helped them to present their research findings at a

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research conference and document their research in book chapters and journal articles for the profession.

We provided this professional learning through a series of full-day and half-day workshops at our respective universities, with follow-up readings, teleconferences, and occasional research assistant phone calls and school visits. Importantly, the research workshops and teleconferences were based around meaningful teacher-collected data: interviews of each other, parents, students, observations of students, student artefacts and so on. Hence teachers were in an expert position with respect to the data they decided to share with their colleagues in the wider research network. Yet as members of a research community, they were also prepared to open their minds to alternative interpretations of the various problems they encountered and to work towards collectively-designed responses.

We are interested in the people who become English teachers – some by choice and design – where they come from and where they go as teachers. Bev Maney was in her third year of teaching when we met her. She had been appointed to a secondary college in regional Victoria and focussed on a Year 8 English class during the research. Maney had worked as a youth worker before deciding to teach, but said, 'I felt that I could do a better job in a school environment than I could do out on the street' (Maney interview, 2002).

Maney's orientation to English teaching was not separate from her youth worker identity. She saw her English class as a place for nurturing young people – 'for taking risks and stepping outside their comfort zone and having a go' at writing and speaking. She was critical about the ways that at risk students are often represented.

> They're the ones who have been labelled the '10 per centers', or in the case of our own school 'the povos' ('povos' is a term used by students to describe young people from poor families). As a profession, teachers don't use these labels, because it's not the Australian thing to do; in Australia we give everyone a 'fair go'. From where I was standing, most of these 'at risk' students were either being disciplined or counselled. Alternatively, those who were deemed 'saveable' generally because they exhibited the 'right' attitude were placed into diversion programmes including remedial/compensatory classes or work skills programmes that were aimed at enhancing their employment opportunities. (Maney interview, 2002)

The students in Maney's class represented the local working-class demographic and she was all too aware of the statistics which suggested a high school drop-out rate of between 30 and 39% (Teese and Polasel 2003, cited in Maney 2005). At the beginning of the project, she described feeling painfully frustrated as an early-career teacher about how to deal with the complexities of building an inclusive curriculum where all students could experience success.

Kerry Rochford was in her fifth year of teaching and was at an outer suburban coastal high school in a working-class area when she joined the project. She conducted the research with her Year 12 English class. Like Maney, Rochford's decision to become a teacher was a considered choice. She had done a range of things before she decided to become a teacher, including a Bachelor of Arts and two-thirds of a Law degree. Like Maney, Rochford was also strongly committed to making a difference and was active in contesting the politics of disadvantage. By her fifth year of teaching, she was the English Co-ordinator, the School Promotions Co-ordinator, the Aboriginal Education teacher and a Year 12 English teacher. She was also very vocal about colleagues who dismissed at risk students as 'past the effort' and like Maney, deeply worried by the circulation of negative, judgemental discourses.

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> It bothers me a lot that there is that stuff and I hear it every day … I mean I heard a teacher saying one day 'We don't have to worry about PES[2] subjects. If we don't get enough enrolments we'll just scrap them, because let's face it, these kids aren't going to go to university', and I mean that is such terrible stereotyping. 'If you live in this area you will not go to university', and it made my blood boil quite frankly. I just thought 'How can you do that?' and I mean as somebody who grew up in a Housing Trust home, in a working-class family, I found that personally insulting. I know it can be done, people do do it.

Rochford, like Maney, found resources within the research project to contest the deficit discourses that all too often circulate in schools (Comber and Kamler 2004). The research conversations fostered by our project allowed these early career English teachers, who themselves had working-class childhoods, safe spaces to articulate positions which cannot easily be uttered in some school cultures.

Both Maney and Rochford decided to undertake their Masters degrees whilst they were participating in the research project, and this extra study further supplemented the intellectual resources offered by the project and resulted in their developing particular approaches to their more extensive research studies. In this article we draw from their published and unpublished writing about their research, as well as interviews conducted with them at the beginning and end of the project. We now explore how each teacher worked to make a difference to the literacy learning outcomes of their students, by adopting an analytic research stance to their teaching.

When students presented a problem in Maney's classroom, she was determined to find out how their risk was being produced. She never assumed that not being interested in reading or failure to produce adequate writing was simply the student's responsibility. Rather, she investigated and collected as much data as she could to inform her pedagogical interventions. So, for example, in the case of one student she calls DJ (Maney 2005), Maney initiated conversations outside class to better understand DJ's interests, interviewed his mother to clarify his history of poor performance, analysed school records, made formal observations in the classroom, sought a formal psychological assessment and recommended his participation in the school's remedial reading programme.

That is, she went to a great deal of trouble to educate herself about her students so that she did not place them in a position of failure. In fact, the curriculum redesign she developed on critical and visual literacies – the focus of her teacher research – was motivated by a desire to capitalise on student expertise outside the classroom.

> I … aimed to redesign an aspect of my curriculum so all my students were more actively engaged in the learning process. Given that many students come to class 'with large repertoires of knowledge based on their engagement with visual text' (Albright and Walsh 2003, 15) I wanted to explore and tap into their knowledge and experiences. (Maney 2005, 96–7)

In preparing her curriculum re-design, Maney read voraciously about critical literacies (e.g. Comber 1998; Kamler 2001; Morgan 1998) and digital literacies (Kress 2003; Snyder and Beavis 2004). She took into account related research on working from students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al. 1992; Thomson 2002) and became a passionate interlocutor with her late career partner researcher about the importance of incorporating the new literacies into their school curriculum.

It was therefore somewhat baffling to her when her early attempts to incorporate critical literacies into the study of the class novel, *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton

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(1970) failed to engage her students. She designed a number of activities, some print-based, some oral, to prepare students for the culminating activity: designing their own book covers for the *The Outsiders*. Blinded perhaps by her new passion for multiliteracies, she was initially shocked when students complained about using the Internet to download a range of published book covers that represented the novel; and surprised when they struggled to answer the critical questions (following Comber 1998, 2001) she had prepared to guide their analysis of the book covers:

- What or who is represented in the text?
- Who or what is missing from the text?
- What do these representations say about youth?
- How are the characters constructed in the text?
- Where have you seen any illustrations like this before?

It took some time for Maney to understand that new ideas or orthodoxies (in this instance, critical literacy) would not automatically lead to improved student engagement. But this required her to adopt a researcher stance, to listen to and learn from her students as she tried new things. Thus she came to realise, for example, that even though she thought she was encouraging students to work critically with visual images, her curriculum design actually privileged her own greater comfort with written and verbal text production. Her critical questions asked students to rely on words/print, rather than the visual, as the point of entry to working with the visual – as did the requirement that they write a character discussion and analyse a newspaper article before they could design their book covers.

When students finally began to produce their own book covers, she was delighted to observe student engagement increase markedly. She was surprised at how innovatively and productively her students worked: at their proficiency in a range of programmes including Photoshop, Word Art and the Internet more generally and at the critical discussions they initiated with peers to develop their designs on the computer. An additional bonus was how frequently some of her under-achieving students were utilised as technology experts in the classroom. Nonetheless, Maney was disappointed with the outcomes of her students' multimodal literate activity, at least initially.

> I have to admit that my initial reaction to these designs was one of disappointment as all I could see was a set of popular-culture images downloaded from the Internet that had little connection to the novel or issues of alienation and being an outsider. Images of sunsets, Mickey Mouse, fast cars and haunted houses on fire appeared to be simplistic representations that had little to do with the characters' lives, the themes in the novel or critical literacy for that matter. It took some time until I realised I needed another lens to disrupt my 'English teacher' expectations and read their visual images more critically myself. (Maney 2005, 102)

This 'disruption' was facilitated by her art teacher colleague, who (at Maney's invitation) saw very different things in her students' images – 'a sophisticated understanding of the topic of conflict and alienation, and of visual composition' (Maney 2005, 102). Maney was also assisted by our broader research community, who encouraged her to ask more questions, check her assumptions, test the limits of the pedagogical constraints and her own potential for inventiveness and innovation. Thus, in the face of great disappointment with her pedagogic intervention, Maney never gave up or blamed the students. She adopted a highly self-critical research stance, examined the unanticipated effects of her own practices and made

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adjustments. This led to new knowledge and subsequent action, which made a positive difference to her students' literacy learning.

Maney learned that including ICT in the English curriculum was no simple matter; that she needed to engage with questions of how students' interests and knowledge could be meaningfully woven into a purposeful and coherent curriculum design. She also began to explore the need to put text deconstruction with production as she discovered that critical questioning and attention to how texts worked became more important to students as they produced their own covers – not in advance and in abstraction. These pedagogical insights came gradually but forcefully as Maney consciously and often painfully researched her way forward.

Kerry Rochford faced similar challenges in deciding how to work with students in her Year 12 English class. She described the situation this way:

> Week 1, Term 1 and my classroom is full to overflowing. 34 students sit and talk about holidays, the year ahead and their fears and hopes for their final year at high school. They range in age from 17 to 55. The school is an adult re-entry site hence I have continuing students, repeating students and students returning to study. The numbers don't worry me too much. I know that the fall-out rate will see at least a third of them gone by term three, but what I am not prepared for is the huge disparity in skill and ability amongst the students. (Rochford 2004, 5)

Rochford recognised the sad reality that many students who began the school year would leave for various reasons, to find work, to look after family members or just simply because studying became too difficult, or less relevant to their immediate lives. However, her challenge was how to teach this large, complex and diverse class. As a teacher-researcher she designed her pedagogy around her need to learn about her students.

The first writing task she set was for students to write her a letter about their expectations for Year 12. The vast range of writing skills astonished her and raised many questions, which she recorded at the time.

> What had the gaps in their learning been? How could I help them? Was it too late and would I simply have to support them through Year 12 as best as I could? What about the more able students? How could I assist them to advance their skills when I had so many in the class that would need lots of time and support? How much could I reasonably expect from them and myself? Where could I begin? (Rochford 2004, 6)

Like Maney, Rochford's approach was to research the problem as she began what she called the 'long hard process' of teaching students to revise their writing. She modelled writing for weaker students. She held teacher–student conferences in class and talked to students about their work, what they needed to do to improve and move forward. And she did what English teachers have always done: provide written feedback on students' work. While time-consuming, it was a practice Rochford described as 'fundamental' to her relations with her students (2004, 6). But she wondered if it would make a difference? Was it going to be worth the effort to spend hours commenting on her students' work? To find out, she made four research moves. Each move gave her more information, a different angle of observation, and more data. Rochford:

(1) reviewed research literature on written feedback;
(2) assessed her own feedback techniques;
(3) surveyed students through a written questionnaire; and
(4) invited students to write narrative memoirs about writing and feedback.

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Her reading of related research suggested 'that while students were reportedly perplexed by teachers' vague comments and symbols and bewildered by the many directives placed on their work' (Rochford 2004, 15), there were also some things that did work. The least useful feedback appeared to be criticisms, vague comments and symbols. The most useful feedback concentrated on one or two things at a time, provided praise with an explanation and offered specific and positive advisory comments.

Armed with this information, Rochford's second research move was to turn her focus on to her own practices and examine the written feedback she gave her students.

> It was quite a challenging experience. How often would I find those words that the students find so useless? How often did I criticise without offering suggestions? Did I use those dreaded abbreviations that were as useless as hieroglyphics to them? Well I plunged into it regardless and found that I probably didn't fare too badly. My comments were generally encouraging, I did use 'awkward' at times, I gave suggestions rather than directives unless it was about the mechanics, i.e. 'new paragraph' and overall I was specific and detailed in my comments. The question now was what else could I do to advance these students and assist them to improve their writing skills? (Rochford 2003, 7–8)

Rochford then made a third research move – to survey her class with a written questionnaire. She chose a written form to protect students' anonymity and because she knew some students were reluctant to speak in front of others. Rochford genuinely wanted to know what her students thought about her written feedback, but she was also afraid to find out, because her literature review had made her pessimistic. However, her analysis of the students' survey responses indicated that her students did value her feedback – indeed, for some it was seen as 'the difference between passing and failing' (Rochford 2004, 31). She learned that they not only read her written feedback, but also that the majority believed it had a significant effect on their skill development. Twelve students said their writing had improved during the year as a result.

Rochford's fourth research move was to ask students to write a narrative memoir about their experiences of becoming a writer and how written teacher feedback had influenced them. She hoped this form of data might deepen her insights and enhance the questionnaire data. Here we briefly consider what Rochford learned from Ella's memoir.

Ella was a quiet, conscientious student, whose earliest memories of schooling were painful. Her mother could not read or write and she remembers being the only child in class who could not write their name. Her mother compensated for her illiteracy by telling Ella stories; hence she was familiar with fairytales, but books were not a part of her early life. Ella wrote:

> I can remember my teacher in grade two telling mum that I was a bad reader and that I should stay in grade two until I got better. I didn't want to so I tried hard to get better at writing. I can remember having lots of red crossing out on my work and the teacher writing 'this is wrong' or just 'wrong' in capital letters all over my work. So I knew what was wrong but I didn't know how to correct it. (Rochford 2004, 42)

This early experience of negative and critical written feedback affected Ella well into her early years in high school. While her writing improved and she became a more competent reader, the fear of handing in work for assessment remained with her.

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> In high school it got easier in some ways. Lots of teachers in Year 8 and 9 just ticked your work and didn't write anything on it. I know now that that isn't good and I was still scared of handing up work but that got better because I didn't get negative things written all over my work. I guess I got better because there wasn't anyone telling me I wasn't any good at writing. I felt like I was an ok writer now. (Rochford 2004, 42)

This lack of written teacher feedback through the middle years of high school had the anomalous effect of allowing Ella to gain some confidence in her writing, but at the expense of learning how to self-assess her work or structure her writing in a variety of genres. In Year 10 she was shocked and bewildered when her Year 10 teacher used the red pen to demolish her essay on a novel.

> I just felt sick. It was like I was in primary school again, the teacher was telling me what was wrong but not how to fix it and I felt like I couldn't do that again. (Rochford 2004, 43)

With her confidence low, she made little progress through Year 10. Her grades, she recalled, were consistently between 10 and 12 out of 20, which she told herself was 'at least a pass'. Year 11, however, was a turning point for Ella as a writer. Her English teacher was passionate about writing and used a variety of teaching strategies to enthuse her students.

> I think this is the first time I found out what a draft was and I didn't know before that you could do that. I read what she had written and it was just saying things like where I should put a new paragraph and how to join up my paragraphs so that one followed on from the other better. I felt like this was the secret I had missed out before. I felt better again about my writing and I think I even started to like it … (Rochford 2004, 43)

Rochford was struck by the far-reaching consequences of Ella's experiences with written teacher feedback – in both its positive and negative forms. By probing Ella's perspective, she could see how Ella felt excluded from 'the secret' of becoming a good writer; and how positive experiences in the final two years of high school made a significant difference. Thus Rochford researched her way forward to a crucial insight: that her students needed access to the teacher thinking behind her written feedback. She learned that red hieroglyphics – even the best ones – only give the end point of teacher evaluation and reading. What students want is to be 'privy to the methodology used by teachers to read their work' (Rochford 2004, 54).

Rochford and Maney demonstrate that making a difference to students' literacy learning requires complex and ongoing intellectual work by teachers; it requires continual analysis and adaptation rather than working from assumptions and good intentions. Literacy pedagogies and their effects on different students need to be researched by teachers. Even (or perhaps, especially) approaches which teachers find persuasive and ideologically in line with their own beliefs need scrutiny in terms of how they are resisted, misunderstood, appropriated or adapted by students.

In end-of-project interviews, Rochford and Maney reflected on the effects of this mentoring on their teaching and identities as early career teachers. Rochford emphasised the importance of having a space for honest reflection and inspiration outside her workplace; and its impact on helping her develop a questioning disposition to teaching.

> I have started to look at things in a different way for sure, and probably a bit more critically and a bit more analytically. I ask myself questions. If I do something with my kids and it doesn't work, rather than just saying 'That wasn't a good idea', and going off and trying something else, I'll actually say 'What was it about that that didn't work?' I guess I bring in things that I've read or heard other people in the project talk about. (Rochford interview, 2004)

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Maney also stressed the importance of the research collective, using the evocative metaphor of a parachute to capture the support she received.

> I do feel like the project has been my parachute in that I've been given an opportunity to take this leap in the school, and that's been supported by a whole number of people, Ivan and everyone in the project. Without the parachute above me, I'd be jumping into depths beyond what I would be able to achieve without the project. (Maney interview, 2004)

In the end it was reciprocal mentoring, research and dialogue across generations of teachers that made a difference to these teachers and their students – no quick fixes, no easy methods, no one-size-fits-all solutions to unequal literacy outcomes. It was collaborative problem-solving and supported opportunities to engage in serious research and dialogue about pedagogy that facilitated a researcher disposition in teachers. This kind of research, we argue, needs further exploration as a crucial resource for sustaining and rejuvenating the teaching profession.

However, the research stance and ethical commitment adopted by these early career teachers did not just happen. It was fostered by our funded research project, which provided the time and space for serious intellectual work, as well as access to our expertise and experience as researchers. This study suggests that if we want to make a difference for students long term, then we need to make a difference for teachers long term. For us, this means developing research communities to support teacher research. Making a sustainable positive difference to equitable learning outcomes for young people means making a sustainable difference to the educational health of the profession.

Notes

1. The *Teachers Investigate Unequal Literacy Outcomes: Cross Generational Perspectives* research project (no. DP0208391) was funded by the Australian Research Council Discovery Grants Program (2002–2004). The views expressed in this article reflect the views of the authors.
2. PES means that the subject is a 'publicly examined subject'. PES subjects have been understood as academic and as of higher status in terms of university entry.

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