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## Emotions and Casual Teachers: Implications of the Precariat for Initial Teacher Education.

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## Emotions and Casual Teachers: Implications of the Precariat for Initial Teacher Education

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*Abstract: It is the norm for the casual teaching precariat to experience insecure labour conditions requiring an additional skill set to teachers with stable employment. As more beginning teachers than ever before commence work in casual employment – often a tenuous and unsupported transition into the profession - it is beholden on teacher educators to re-think aspects of their preparation. Four teacher educators undertook ‘memory work’ based on their previous experiences as casual teachers. Content analysis of follow up focus group discussions stressed the emotional and challenging nature of casual teaching, for both novice and experienced teachers. Findings from this small study, as well as previous research on casual beginning teachers and casual teachers, provide significant insights that have ramifications for initial teacher education, highlighting the importance of the emotional practices of teachers.*

### Introduction

The work of teachers is complex, multifaceted and emotionally challenging (Hastings, 2008; Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2005). While this statement refers to teachers in general, it is the degree of complexity and difficulty that casual teachers (CT) experience on a daily basis that is the focus of this article. CTs, as part of their itinerant responsibilities, must deal with young children, teenagers, parents, carers, families, teaching colleagues, executive teachers and the local school communities within a range of schools and contexts in a very short space of time. The nature of this ‘uncertain’ work (McCormack & Thomas, 2005) can transpire as dynamic, unpredictable, arduous and very stressful (Johnson et al., 2005). It can often give rise to a diverse range of emotions for the CT. Feelings of anxiety, fear, vulnerability, alienation, powerlessness, stress, and dissatisfaction can ensue (Duggleby & Baddali, 2007; Jenkins, Smith & Maxwell, 2009; Latifoglu, 2016; Lunay & Lock, 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2005).

Such affective reactions can be in response to a stream of critical incidents and challenging experiences, which can have significant ramifications for teacher attrition, including CTs and especially casual beginning teachers (CBTs) (Fieman-Nemser, 2001; Latifoglu, 2016; McCormack & Thomas, 2005). There has been a growth in the numbers of beginning teachers (BTs) in their first or second year of work who are attempting to transition into the profession through casual teaching (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2016; Jenkins et al., 2009). Therefore, it follows that universities have a responsibility to prepare graduate teachers for a range of professional circumstances,

including permanent, temporary or casual positions (Jenkins et al., 2009; Jenkins, 2013). This preparation could go some way to address, avert, or minimise many of the challenges that novice teachers face as they enter the work force.

Increasingly, it might be said that BTs and CTs form a precariat. A precariat is a social class of people living without job security and a level of predictability, which can impact on their psychological well-being. As Standing (2014) observes, the precariat lives off “unstable labour” (p. 968), with “no occupational identity or narrative, being expected to be flexible in terms of type of labour” (p. 969). Furthermore they can experience “status frustration and forms of alienation that are deeply structural” (p. 970). These involve emotional responses, linked with particular positioning in schools. The lack of success that many CTs feel at meeting their own and other’s goals and standards can prove quite debilitating emotionally.

In the following sections, we outline literature on education and emotions, and in particular casual teaching, as an emotional experience. It appears that many teacher education universities still primarily prepare graduate teachers for permanent teaching roles. This is typically a reality of the past, however, with the current employment situation in which the majority of graduates experience casual rather than permanent employment, a reconsideration of this practice is required. Preparing graduate teachers for casual work is pertinent. In providing the account of CTs’ work below, we outline some implications for initial teacher education providers.

## Education and Emotions

Emotion can be defined as, “socially constructed, personally enacted ways of being that emerge from conscious and/or unconscious judgments regarding perceived successes at attaining goals or maintaining standards or beliefs during transactions as part of social-historical contexts” (Schutz, Hong, Cross, & Osbon, 2006, p. 10). Emotions are “multicomponential processes” (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003, p. 329). These may involve tendencies toward judgement or “appraisal”, “subjective experience” as a private mental state, “physiological change” for instance, fluctuations in body temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure, “emotional expression” for instance facial expression, and “action” that at times may take over as an immediate response to circumstances (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003, p. 329). Although these dimensions of emotion can influence each other, they also, in part, operate independently.

Although research that connects teaching with emotions is comparatively new, its influence is growing in importance (Hargreaves, 2000; Hastings, 2008; Johnson et al., 2005; Kenway & Youdell, 2011; Lasky, 2005; Uitto, Jokikokko & Estola, 2015). Prior to 1996, studies featuring emotions and teaching were often overlooked, in light of education being regarded as a more cognitive process (Hargreaves, 2001; Lasky, 2005; Schutz & Lanehart, 2002; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). As Kenway and Youdell (2011) state:

*Education is almost always positioned as rational – as a social and epistemological endeavor, as an abstract process, as a set of reasoned and logical practices, and as a series of formal spaces the production and use of which is as ‘uncontaminated’ by emotion as possible (p.132).*

Until recently, educational discourse has tended to “center rationality and foreclose emotions” (Kenway & Youdell, 2011, p.132). Yet, as four teacher educators, we know from personal experience that teachers shed tears in staffrooms following frustrating and demanding lessons. Laughter can also emanate freely from classrooms when lessons go well and everyone enjoys interactions and tasks. Nias (1996, p. 297) highlights how classrooms

provide the locations where teachers' 'self esteem', 'fulfillment' and 'vulnerability' are molded. For teachers, emotions are entangled with classroom events that influence relations in school and with the wider community. Teaching is after all "a universal human activity" (Watson, 2006, p. 511).

Each day, practitioners encounter a range of incidents and interactions (Nias, 1996) that can promote a spectrum of emotions. For example, constructive experiences where students might indicate their gratitude for the teacher's support, a colleague provides words of encouragement and advice, or a parent illustrates willingness to assist in the classroom or in extra-curricular activities, can promote positive emotions for the teacher. In contrast, encounters with irate parents, disagreeable staff, or discovering tragic circumstances about students, are instances that can precipitate a range of teacher emotions including anguish, embarrassment and anger. These intense human exchanges readily occur in 'volatile' schooling contexts where there are "crowded conditions, with large numbers of pupils who are frequently energetic, spontaneous, immature and preoccupied with their own interests" (Nias, 1996, p. 296). Such experiences can be difficult for any teacher to manage; however, permanently employed teachers may respond to these incidents with the knowledge that they are within a school context of supportive colleagues, executive staff and administration. For those on the precarious periphery of the profession, it can be a lonely and isolating experience (Duggleby & Badali, 2007).

As a result of the numerous emotional interactions teachers are involved in each day (Hastings, 2008), their work is often very stressful. It is emotional labour in that it involves a process whereby employees are required "to manage their feelings in accordance with organisationally defined rules and guidelines" (Wharton, 2009, p. 147). It is a term used particularly to describe work in stressful and demanding occupations where individuals have a role in the care of others (Johnson et al., 2005). As a form of governance that pertains to both perceptions of emotional display rules (organisational rules for expressing emotions) and emotional acting (the relationship between how someone acts on the surface and how they may actually feel) (Brown, Vesely, Mahatmya, & Visconti, 2017), emotional labour has generated sociological interest over the last three decades (Hochschild, 1983; Oplatka, 2007; Yin, Huang, & Lee, 2017). Emotional labour can be both positive and negative. Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006) consider that generative dimensions of teacher caring manifest in the form of commitment to the job, intimacy with others, and passion for the profession, require significant emotional labour.

In general, research in the emotions of teachers has identified that they express both positive and negative emotions because of the highly affective and interactive nature of their work (Nias, 1996). Enjoyment, anger and anxiety tend to be the most common emotions reported by teachers (Scherer, Wranik, Sangsue, Tran, & Scherer, 2004). When teachers consider they have facilitated successful teaching experiences they tend to experience "joy, excitement, exhilaration and deep satisfaction" (Nias, 1996, p. 4), while teachers can experience "hostile passions" which include "fear, vulnerability, resentment, frustration, pain, guilt and anger" when this does not occur (p. 6). Thus 'goal congruence' can be a source of positive emotions, while incongruence can produce negative emotions (Frenzel, Goetz, Stephens, & Jacob, 2009; Schutz, 2014). After Frenzel et. al. (2009) reviewed a range of theoretical and empirical research, as well as carried out their own study with teachers via a questionnaire and lesson diaries, their work indicated that interrelationships existed between the perceptions that teachers have of their students' performances, their motivation and discipline (p. 137). These authors progressed on to develop a model of "reciprocal causation" that also illustrated links between teachers' emotions, their instructional behaviours and ultimately the quality of their students' outcomes (p. 137 - 138). Emotions such as enjoyment were positively correlated with teaching quality, while anxiety and anger were less conducive

to teacher quality (p.146).

The teaching profession is an occupation that manifests high work-related stress due to the degree of emotional labour involved (Johnson et al., 2005). Emotional labour demands multidimensional interpersonal interactions between workers, whilst adhering to appropriate conduct and strict professional guidelines (Zapf, 2002, as cited in Johnson et al., 2005). For the purpose of this paper, we will now explore how the less professionally supported cohort of CTs and CBTs enacts the emotional labour of casual teaching (Jenkins et al., 2009; Latifoglu, 2016; McCormack & Thomas, 2005).

### **Casual Teaching as an Emotional Experience**

Research has indicated that CTs commonly feel marginalised, uncertain, powerless and unconfident regardless of their career stage and as a result of the experiences and interactions they have faced in schools (Jenkins et al., 2009, Lunay & Lock, 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2005). Since ‘Emotion’ also implies “a strong feeling derived from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others” (English Oxford Living Dictionary, 2017), it follows that culminating emotions such as anger, joy and sadness, can be facilitated or illustrated by commonly experienced feelings. In fact, Hochschild (1983, p. 5) concurs that, “feelings are social expressions of the emotional state of an individual”.

Studies illustrate that negative emotions can evolve out of the demanding circumstances that CTs often endure (Duggleby & Badali, 2007; Jenkins et al., 2009; Lunay & Locke, 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2005). For example, feeling like an outsider is not motivating, thus casual teaching can prove a “lonely job” (Duggleby & Badali, 2007, p. 25). Lunay and Locke (2006) discovered that 95% of the casual primary teachers surveyed felt alienated in their teaching. Their study reported that participating CTs serviced from two to over 20 schools, with 65% of those surveyed attending more than 10 schools during their careers. The CTs reported suffering from feelings of isolation (85%), powerlessness (60%) and meaningless (36%). CTs do not feel valued for many reasons and the lack of support in relation to mentoring, induction and professional development opportunities proved to be significant issues for these teachers (Jenkins et al., 2009; Laifoglu, 2016; Nicholas & Wells, 2016; Pietsch, 2011). According to Lunay and Locke (2006), school staff and students frequently had low expectations of the CTs’ work; while CTs felt that they lacked equity and were undervalued in relation to the permanent staff (e.g. no sick leave and little, if any, professional development). These psychological aspects contribute in varying degrees to the CTs’ feelings of alienation and lack of status (McCormack & Thomas, 2005). Maxwell, Harrington, and Smith (2010) also highlight how CB teachers may experience a type of culture shock of personal and professional isolation and a perception of loss of social, personal and professional identity.

The transient nature of casual teaching can prove problematic, as these teachers frequently operate within a less supported context than their permanently employed colleagues, thus they often have to suffer alone from “persistent negative feelings” (Lunay & Lock, 2006, p. 171). CTs can enter school grounds feeling extremely vulnerable (Nias, 1996) and proceed through their day battling feelings of uncertainty, powerlessness and isolation (Duggleby & Baddali, 2007; Jenkins et al., 2009; Lunay & Lock, 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2005). Subsequently, casual teaching can involve the full gambit of intense emotions, the nature of which is dependent on what is experienced in a particular classroom, at a particular time and in a particular school.

Crittenden (1994) noted that some CTs had to register with up to 40-50 schools to gain enough work to sustain themselves. Having to accept casual days across a range of sites

may minimise time for building an effective rapport with colleagues and students in any one school (Jenkins et al., 2009). These important relationships could help minimise issues with challenging classroom behaviours. Duggelby and Badali (2007) observed that casual teaching requires “extra skills”, especially in relation to behaviour management (p. 24). It can therefore prove a daunting task for those new to the profession who are trying to develop pedagogical expertise while encountering unique and different classes and school contexts on a day-by-day basis. CTs can be in a school “one day and gone the next” (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 63). Feelings of vulnerability come to the fore when CTs/CBTs find themselves in situations where their knowledge and experience are not sufficient to cope with the multiple and simultaneous demands of particular students, classes, schools and curricula (McConaghy & Bloomfield, 2004, p. 11).

As discussed, it is likely that CBTs can be described as a precariat as they are over-represented in the casual teaching numbers across Australian states. For instance, researchers from one regional university estimated that only 22% of its graduates found permanent employment in 2007 after completing their initial teacher education (Boyd, Harrington, Jones, Kivunja, & Reitano, 2010). Obviously, the numbers of CTs in employment differ between states however the state of Queensland can be used as an example of this overrepresentation. In 2013 only 197 Queensland teaching graduates secured permanent positions in public schools whilst 348 were given temporary employment (Chilcott, 2013).

Following a 2014 Australian graduate survey of teachers, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2016) reported that under half had full time employment in the year after their graduation. Of those who were employed full time in schools – only a third had permanent, and 25% had part-time employment (pp. 6-7). Accordingly, uncertain employment can exert adverse impacts upon an individual’s sense of efficacy, job satisfaction, career trajectory and consequently career length (Fieman-Nemser, 2001; Laifoglu, 2016; McCormack & Thomas, 2005) for those transitioning into the teaching profession, as ‘a casual’. Compounding such experiences, is the lack of support casual teachers receive in terms of induction programs and the increase in confronting challenging classroom situations. Furthermore, Pietsch (2011) observes that there can be detrimental effects of regression of knowledge and skills for CBTs given the frequent lack of support and teaching experience with minimal mentoring they receive. This regression may also translate into a lack of confidence, especially if it takes the CBTs a lengthy period of time to acquire their first day’s work (Jenkins et al., 2009).

Although there is less literature on CBTs, the research on CTs indicates issues applicable to this precariat. Operating on the margins with limited opportunity for connectedness and belonging, can impact on CTs’ resilience and, in particular, “the capacity to manage the unavoidable uncertainties inherent in the realities of teaching” (Gu & Day, 2013, p. 39). Furthermore, resilience is the ability to adapt effectively in light of challenging circumstances – thus the capacity to ‘bounce back’ and recover (American Psychological Association n.d.; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990.) Papatraianou and Le Cornu (2014) found that teachers’ significant informal relationships developed over time within schools and that these play a key role in teacher resilience. Yet CTs may be involved in intermittent professional experiences across different schools, therefore have little opportunity to foster positive ongoing informal relationships with staff and students, which can support their resilience. Thus professional isolation may inhibit the development of a positive and supportive work environment. In our own experiences as CTs, we have observed that seating in some staffrooms may be very regimented and as CTs we have not been encouraged to sit alongside full time colleagues. It is even possible for a CT to pick up the wrong coffee cup in the staffroom and risk the censure from the other teachers. It follows that either this lack of attention or gaining the wrong sort of attention by these teaching colleagues can further

exacerbate CTs feelings of isolation, powerlessness and insignificance.

Casual teachers, through no fault of their own, can have insufficient knowledge about a particular school and its students, school policies and rules, classroom routines, professional practices and parent/carer community. Accordingly, even the most committed CTs may not always experience successful teaching encounters (Duggleby & Badali, 2007, p. 30). This situation, along with the requirement for CTs to have ‘extra skills’, can readily translate into an “emotional whirlpool” (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003, p. 347) for teachers, who must begin their careers in such a precarious way.

In light of the affective encounters that CTs frequently face, it is also important to recognise that CTs have different emotional experiences across schools, with social, historical and contextual factors influencing their emotions (Schutz, 2014). Positive emotions are usually deemed acceptable (Zembylas, 2003), whereas more adverse emotions can facilitate various degrees of tolerance or disapproval. For instance, frustration may be seen as more appropriate or socially acceptable within the context of schools, rather than anger (Schutz, 2014). Not containing and subduing some negative emotions, like anger, can be viewed as a teacher ‘losing it’ by the students or exceeding what is rational (Kenway & Youdell, 2011) by the executive, colleagues and parents/carers. Interestingly, Zembylas (2007, p. 15) points out that anger can be recognised as political and is “central to the exercise of power relations in the classroom”. Yet frustration can be viewed a more rational response, whereas anger can be perceived as overstepping what is professionally appropriate.

In 2001, Hargreaves noted that little recognition had been given to how teachers’ emotions could be affected by their work, and how these emotions in turn could influence relationships with students and colleagues within schools. Yet within the last decade or so, research in this area has been growing steadily (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014; Schutz, P., 2014; Taxer & Frenzel, 2015; Uitto et al., 2015). The deficit in this area until recently appears a significant omission given that the ‘emotional labour’ and high stress levels implicated in teaching in all its forms affects the quality of teachers’ work to varying degrees. In light of the complexity involved in CTs’ emotions and the CBTs’ experiences specifically, it is appropriate for initial teacher education programs to give consideration to casual teaching as a transition into the profession. Teacher educators could explore how to better prepare graduate teachers for what may be their initial teaching experiences as a CT. The nature of the early career experiences of BTs, with all their demands and benefits, can produce both positive and negative emotions. Nevertheless, CBTs’ emotions can negatively influence teacher identity, agency, vulnerability and ultimately the likelihood they may abandon the profession (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Lasky, 2005; Nias, 1996; Schutz, 2014; Uitto et al., 2015).

As we have highlighted above, teacher emotions are an important consideration in the profession, and particularly when employment is tenuous. We address this field through the analysis of our own narratives. In the following section, we outline the study on which this analysis rests.

## Method

We are four teacher educators who work in the broad teaching and learning area in a regional Australian university. The study we undertook endeavoured to explore the emotions that were enmeshed in our memories of our earlier work as CTs. Developed in Germany by Frigga Haug and others (Haug, 2008), memory work is a social constructionist and feminist group research method that involves the collective analysis of individual written memories (Onyx & Small, 2001). Our re-storied experiences ranged from three to 30 years ago when

we were CTs or BCTs. Two academics were CBTs and the other two, after years of classroom experience in permanent employment, undertook casual work to supplement higher degree research. We undertook ‘memory work’ as a reflexive process with a view to enhancing our preparation of pre-service teachers so that they were more likely to succeed in a range of work contexts – permanent, temporary or casual.

Methods for researching emotions have not been addressed in any comprehensive way to date (Kenway & Youdell, 2011). Through Kenway and Youdell’s research, we were introduced us to Boler’s (1999) work as the stimulus to other studies. These studies used “memory work to excavate embodied memories, the powerful feelings associated with their educational memories” (Boler, p. 132). In this study, memories were explored through investigating narratives of our time as CTs. The following key research questions guided the study and focus group discussions.

1. What are the enduring memories that we had as CTs?
1. Why were these experiences so memorable?
2. What effect did these memories have on us as teaching professionals at the time?

As thematic data the narratives were restoried accounts of practitioner experience. Once these memories were written, we met as a focus group to discuss them and they became a point of departure for focus group conversations. There were a total of two of these follow up focus group discussions, each with a duration of approximately 2 hours. These dialogues were audio taped and transcribed. The transcripts were compared to determine the shared and discrete issues that were prevalent in our responses to the restoried memories. During the dialogue about our memories of our casual teaching experiences, we actively listened and questioned each other’s responses. The significance of emotions for CTs was raised and confirmed and we reflected on the intensity of the experiences we had been inclined to disclose. This incidental comment, made by one of the focus group members, illustrates the centrality of emotions in casual teaching.

*I think possibly the emotion with each of our stories is actually what casual teaching is all about. It’s the emotion that makes you happy and sad, more sad and frustrated than happy and accomplished. I think emotion is at the core of all of this (Anna).*

We deployed content analysis of the recorded and transcribed discussions. Content analysis allows researchers to gain understandings of the phenomena they are exploring (Krippendorff, 2004); in this case it was casual teaching. The technique is utilised to “interpret meaning” from qualitative data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1277). This data communicates meaning and can include a range of text types – “verbal discourse, written documents and visual representations” (Krippendorff, 1989, p. 404). As a result, lengthy texts (the transcripts) were condensed into fewer categories based on similar meanings/connotations so as to make inferences (Weber, 1990). Three approaches to content analysis have been defined – the conventional, the directive and the summative. The qualitative study reported here employed the conventional, as firstly coding was carried out directly from the data (conventional), while the directive approach involves coding informed by previous theories or research findings (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1277). The summative approach involves quantifying the content with the intention to inform about the underlying meaning interpreted from the content. Content analysis also depends on the quality of the coding process. Basically, the coding process allows text to be reduced to a smaller number of inclusive categories (Weber, 1990), which we carried out from the discussion transcripts in line with categories based on similar emotions.

The examination of the transcripts allowed interpretation of emotions most prevalent in our memories and the reasons for these being so. Unfortunately, the majority of our CT memories raised and discussed reflected experiences that we responded to negatively through emotions such as fear, vulnerability and shame. Sutton and Wheatley’s (2003) research also



supports this outcome, which found that negative emotional teaching encounters (e.g. evoking anger), were more easily remembered. We tended to recollect these negative memories more readily, perhaps as casual teaching had proven so challenging and was not a desirable objective for any of us at the time. As we all had the ambition to be permanently employed, the constraints of casual teaching readily produced numerous adverse emotional responses for us. It is worthwhile to mention here that some teachers choose to work casually namely for the flexibility it can provide and may not experience the particular emotions alluded to in this paper.

A number of emotion-related themes were drawn from our narratives and the follow up discussions: anxiety and fear, sadness, shame, and frustration. We determined these themes on the basis that they provided an account of the experiences that we, as CTs and BCTs, experienced in schools. The following samples of data are drawn from dialogue that helped explore these emotions.

### **Anxiety and Fear**

Anxiety and fear can manifest when casual teaching. CTs teach in a world of ‘uncertainty’ (McCormack & Thomas, 2005) where the job is both demanding and exhausting (Keller, Chang, Becker, Goetz, & Frenzel, 2014). Both the precarious nature of the work and the emotional labour of expressing organisationally “desired interpersonal transactions” (Morris & Feldman, 1996, p. 987), can create a sense of insecurity. Factors exacerbating uncertainty and anxiety include:

- uncertainty about whether they will have work tomorrow;
- if they do, which school they will be asked to work in;
- which classes/grades they will be teaching;
- which subject area/s they will be expected to teach, especially if the work has been left by the regular class teacher;
- which classroom and behaviour management issues will present themselves;
- if they will have time to have a break to eat lunch, photocopy or visit the amenities;
- how many playground duties they will be asked to do and how to locate them; and,
- whether the school executive and staff will be supportive or not.

There can be anxiety due to unfamiliarity with a schooling context. Apart from having to enter different schools daily, CTs often have to learn about a school and how it operates in double quick time. Firstly, they have to know where the classroom, the library and the sports facilities are, should they need them. Some classrooms may be locked so they need to know how to retrieve a key, thus allow the lesson to progress unheeded. School policies that dictate how behaviour and welfare issues should be carried out are often hard to find and digest before the school bell rings so that student behaviour can be handled according to school protocols. Essential details required to cater for students’ individual needs – such as learning difficulties and physical needs (e.g. partial sight and hearing issues) may be more difficult to determine in a short time, unless communicated to the CT. Such uncertainties and difficulties can inhibit the CT’s capacity to support effective classroom learning, facilitating anxiety, especially if the school has not provided comprehensive information through induction processes. Anxiety and fear is illustrated in Loren’s restoried memory:

*I often think back to when I was working permanently in a High School in a metropolitan area, the school was large with an extremely diverse population around 1200 students, still life seemed relatively comfortable then, even though the school was notorious and regarded as extremely challenging. Yet, here I was working in a small regional city, in a small high school of 350 students as a*

*casual teacher. I felt sick every morning as I rushed to get ready. So why did I feel this trepidation every school day? Well, I could never be sure what would happen on any given day. I could be left standing outside a locked classroom with no knowledge of how to go about finding the key. How silly did I look; meanwhile the students took their chance to rabble, which meant time was wasted in calming them down before I finally gained entry to the room.*

Even after many years of successful permanent teaching experience in another state, Loren felt constantly anxious when she took up casual teaching. Although this casual teaching work was in a less demanding context, she experienced anxiety due to the unpredictability of the job,

*I remember so well, the nerves in my stomach ...as I said I worked in really difficult schools and you know I had that a bit when I started the first year in that school because I had been teaching for many years before that too, so that first year was hard but after that my anxiety vanished. ...So I had recognised those feelings but it was constant, even though I got to work in the same school sometimes. It got less and less but I was always anxious....because I was never quite sure what would happen (Loren).*

Casual teachers can fear the possibility of having to confront challenging classroom behaviours. As alluded to above, they learn systemic protocols and determine appropriate responses for given behaviours, by particular students, at specific times. However, when induction processes are minimal, CTs are 'flying blind'. They do not have the time to become proficient with systemic practices or to establish relationships with students that enable them to act correctly, given particular sets of circumstances. These factors associated with the itinerant nature of casual employment can work against CTs. Accordingly, the executive, teaching staff, and parents at the school can make inaccurate judgments about their performance given their fleeting time 'on the job'. These perceptions could jeopardise their chances of gaining further work in the school as Addie points out. Addie felt vulnerable to the judgments of her colleagues:

*I was concerned about them getting out of control actually, and also concerned about teachers judging me and then never being able to get work there again. Because I think that it's basically what hangs over your head – the idea that we won't get work.*

Casual teachers can physically experience fear and anxiety. The following examples from the stories illustrate how physical anxiety could build. CTs often need to rush to get everything done in order to arrive on time at school (even though the phone call may have been made last minute by an executive staff member) and this can lead to a pressure from the outset of the day.

*Yeah, for me the emotions of the casual teaching are really big....From the moment the phone rang, to when I dropped the kids off, it was panic, panic to get there, you know then it was getting in through the Secretary, in to see the Deputy Principal, and getting the [list of] classes, and then it was finding where the students were and finding where the teachers' room was, or staffroom. (Loren)*

The pressure to appear in 'control' can cause angst. Anna knows that to manage relationships with her colleagues and students, a confident persona is required: *[S]ometimes some of those teachers could be helpful. Luckily the lessons were left often...but then it meant you had to stick to it too...so underneath and you're trying to look like "I've got good control", just juggle and your little feet are going like this (motions quick movement) ... I'm the expert here. I will handle this.*

Anna describes the physicality of her anxiety when she has a conflict with a student in her class.

*And I mean it's a very physical thing, that crushing chest pain that you can barely breathe, ... I think it was just such a high level of anxiety...*

### **Sadness – Due to Marginalisation, Disconnectedness and Disillusionment**

Throughout the focus group discussions, feelings of marginalisation and disconnection were prevalent. CTs who work itinerantly, in one school one day and another the next, can lack a sense of belonging or feel that they are not of value in the overall educational endeavour. We call this 'structural marginalisation and 'othering' and have expanded on this dimension of CT experience previously (Charteris, Jenkins, Jones & Bannister-Tyrrell, 2017). If the staff and school do not appear committed to them, then it can be more difficult for the CT to commit wholeheartedly to the organisation and its community (Latifoglu, 2016). Addie highlights this point in her comment: "*There is nowhere to call home...*" Anna also conveys a sense of disconnection in CRT work, '*Not being able to connect with the teachers, not being able to connect with the kids and this was a primary school, this was not high school.*'

CTs can feel worthless and disregarded by colleagues when they are given multiple jobs, such as the bus and playground duties, that other teachers do not want to undertake. Addie reflects, '*You just keep casuals on bus duty because nobody wants to go. Nobody wants to do bus duty, everyone wants to be cleaning up their classroom, especially in primary classrooms...*'

Being required to teach all day, as well as cover the majority of playground duty, which sometimes happens, results in little time to strengthen collegial relationships. The CT may feel exploited, with little time to eat, drink, ablute or use the photocopier. Addie's comment encapsulates this perspective.

*So you are at bottom of the barrel... [You] get the worst duty. Bus duty is the worst duty, and the other bad duty is first thing in the morning, but usually this is the sort of time where we get timetables and stuff, so you pretty well know that you get worst duty of the day, whatever was the hardest.*

In the staffroom CTs can feel 'left out'. Ruby found relief from the discomfort of marginalisation through being involved in playground duty.

*I think I preferred to be out in the playground where at least kids talked to you and you had some sort of interaction with people, then going back into a staff room where you didn't... it wasn't comfortable, for you to be welcome because you upset their everyday ways of doing things and having to make conversation, I didn't want to do that ...*

When asked about the marginalisation she experienced in the staffroom, Ruby observed:

*I think because they were taking time out from their classes, having a good joke and catching up and some of them were very friendly with each other, so they didn't want to put themselves out... [They were] very busy... you don't want to start to talk to some new casual there [who] might not be there again either, it may be a waste of invested time perhaps?*

It appears that there was no deliberate victimisation on the part of Ruby's colleagues, however the culture of the school did not encompass transitory CTs especially during busy periods. Casual teachers can experience disconnectedness when they are not regarded highly by colleagues. Addie describes her disconnection

when a deputy principal assists her with a management issue but does not engage with her.

*... Lack of, what's the word – respect – by the Deputy Principal! He was tired as well. You know, it was the end of the term, he was tired and he just you know, looked at me instead of taking time to turn and say, "It's okay! Look, you can't be expected to..." Just a kind word or even a smile, but I felt even more disconnected, and more alone because it's like, well you think I can't cope and you had to come out of the office.*

Although CTs may begin work feeling motivated, disillusionment can result if well-prepared lessons 'fall flat'. Although this can happen for all teachers, the permanent teacher has the opportunity to rectify the situation by formulating more successful lessons the next day. CTs who do not have ongoing work do not have the time to turn this around and so may be disillusioned due to an experience of failure.

*Yeah that's just one thing that you can't control... I had this idealised view ... I wanted it to mean something to them. I wanted them to discover something about themselves, what was hidden within them... [B]ut the actual fact is a whole myriad of opposing forces are playing out against you because you don't know them well. Because they start the day, as children do, with so many things that have gone on before they even arrive at your door... (Anna).*

If the CT does not experience job satisfaction within a reasonable amount of time, then they can become very disillusioned and sad. They can begin to see their work as a battle to survive each school day. Furthermore, as the comments from Anna, Addie and Loren highlight, they can regress back to a survival stage (Katz, 1972) each time they cross the border into a new class and/or new school.

*[I]t's like you play the game. You worked out you can't fight it! You just got to do it! (Anna )*

*No. You got to basically survive six hours or five and a half hours, you've just got to survive. (Addie)*

*Now, beginning teachers are in the survival stage ...but every time you have a new context, you start again in the survival. So this is where casual teachers are often? (Loren)*

## **Shame and Vulnerability**

During the focus group dialogue it was apparent that the memories of being a CT were not often shared with anyone, certainly not a teaching colleague, as to do so would mean admitting failure, and feeling ashamed. Anna provides an account of her sense of shame:

*...[I]t has made me realise that I really haven't shared them [the memories], because sharing them is an admission of weakness or not coping so you just have to hold it inside you... I think it's that same sense that being found wanting.... about being found wanting that somebody is going to catch you out ...I think it is just the ultimate humiliation.*

Like Anna, Loren kept her sense of vulnerability to herself.

*I think, I'm a bit like Anna in that I was a casual teacher after having been an experienced teacher within a system for an interstate system for a long time, and then suddenly realising how marginalised and vulnerable I was, and then keeping that all to myself...*

Loren was very aware that even though she had been an experienced teacher in another state, as a CT she had become vulnerable and there were no colleagues she could

confer with even if she wanted to.

The status of CTs was low in schools where Addie taught. She points to how expendable CTs are, as schools do not need to employ them more than once.

*The kids couldn't look up to you, and they know you can't do anything about it. You know like even if you go and complain, you are only a casual, because in those four years there were lots of casuals around, casual jobs. Yeah, there was that, 'We can do whatever we want to do, you know?'* (Addie).

CT performance may be under scrutiny from students, the teacher in the class next door, teachers in the staffroom and on playground duty, the school executive, the school administrative staff and parents/carers. When issues arise, which inevitably occur in any teacher's working life, this level of surveillance can lead to the CT feeling exposed among the teaching community, as illustrated in Ruby's comment below. For the permanent teacher, issues arising can be addressed quietly and with collegial support. Ruby feels prominent as a CT and vulnerable, having her practice continually overseen.

*It was a constant feeling of surveillance... The glass walls everywhere and you know ...you know you are only partially responsible for what's going on. You can only deal with what you've got to teach, the experience that the students' experienced with the previous teacher, how you establish yourself really quickly in that environment and negotiate all the expectations of the kids and of the senior management. And you do something wrong and they are telling everybody else...*

Being perceived competent is of importance to Ruby. When things go astray in the classroom, she describes it as professionally shameful.

*And the shame and doubt, I reckon it's the professional shame of being seen as incompetent. You know that's enormous to me.*

In contrast to Ruby's experience, Addie observes that there is an element of safety in being visible to colleagues. Inherent to feeling safe as a teaching practitioner, is to be of consequence to the executive and colleagues in the school. Visibility can offer a form of protection in an 'at risk' situation. Addie uses an aviation metaphor to highlight the importance of collegial guidance. Not feeling noticed or valued by the school teaching staff and/or executive could make a CT feel unsafe given the nomadic nature of work life.

*Oh yeah, I want safety when I'm flying into an airport. I want to know that those guys can see me. I need the visuals and that we can land safely, safety is essential...*

*[S]ome teachers feel more safe in the beginning, perhaps knowing, if they don't feel under the threat of surveillance.*

## **Frustration**

Many teachers begin their teaching careers as a CT, and if they remain in the job and are not subject to early attrition, frustration can build. Addie knew that she could illustrate her professional prowess if only given the chance to work in her own class and school. This plea from the educator below describing the end of her casual teaching career, sums up the frustration, which many CTs suffer.

*Fatigue, fatigue and loneliness ... especially after four years. This was towards the end because I knew, I had this feeling, that I had the competence. And I just wanted to be given a chance. Just someone give me a chance! Just let me stay in one place at one time!*

Over time, CTs may have to endure feelings of loneliness, not feeling valued by particular colleagues or executive in schools. During the focus group dialogue, Ruby reiterates Anna's point about being a CT who is a person of "no consequence".

*You said twice before, 'no credibility, no consequence' and then you said, 'not having presence, no consequence again'. So that seems to be saying, 'I am of no consequence' is that it?*

Having explored the emanating themes of particular emotions evoked through the re-storied memories of casual teaching, the remainder of the article further elaborates on the link between casual teaching, the tenuous nature of beginning teachers as precariat and implications for higher education.

## Discussion

This exploration of four teacher educators' previous casual teaching experiences with memory work as a point of departure for follow-up focus group discussions, gave rise to negative emotions. In addition to Sutton and Wheatley's (2003) research, which linked teachers' emotions and teaching, they discovered that negative memories were more easily remembered. This finding is also in line with the psychology of negative bias, sometimes known as the negativity effect, where negative issues impact on our psychological state more so than positive experiences (Krendl, Kensinger, & Ambady, 2012). It is therefore not surprising that we associate highly charged emotional experiences with our CT involvements. Sutton and Wheatley's conjecture is particularly relevant for both BTs and CTs given their tenuous participation in the profession, which can translate into a double jeopardy for BCTs.

It is important to articulate that this study reports on the subjective memories of a small group of teacher educators, who were once casual teachers. As the memories tended to be adverse this gives rise to the need for a wider exploration of narratives from a wider range of CTs and BCTs both in the present and from the past.

As illustrated in the focus group data, teachers' work is emotionally demanding, with a fluctuating array of emotions experienced each day as a result of hundreds of interactions. Teaching involves emotional practices, which prove broader than the traditional notions of teaching comprising simplistically of "knowledge, cognition and skills" (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1051).

Kelchtermans (2005) emphasises the significance of the teacher's context in influencing teacher emotions. For example, teachers can often feel vulnerable if they have little control over their employment conditions, such as the development of professional relationships and the nature of the school environment. As "teachers' emotions are embedded in the conditions and interactions of their work" (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1058), the often demanding context of casual teaching can produce specific lasting emotions that, in this article, were re-storied years afterwards. The need to express emotions appropriately, as a response to the particular organisational display rules, and the emotional acting required to appear competent in appearance (Brown, Vesely, Mahatmya, & Visconti, 2017), also place considerable pressure on CTs, and BCTs.

The data above suggests that the nature of the casual teaching environment impacts on CTs' and BCTs' abilities to execute their job confidently and competently. We surmise that if these teachers are treated as if they are "of consequence", they would feel more self-assured. However, if they do not experience support from colleagues and school executive, then they may feel devalued, apprehensive, and even anxious. Furthermore, as there is virtually no research featuring the connections between teachers' emotions and learning to teach (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Uitto et al., 2015), it appears that teacher educators and researchers

should explore this focus in greater depth. Doing so would facilitate more effective preparation of pre-service teachers for casual teaching.

Although vulnerability is prevalent in many teachers' lives, the itinerant nature of CTs' work can make it more so. It has been posited that vulnerability is a "structural condition" rather than an emotion (Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 998), yet we would argue that it is both. Experiencing minimal agency makes one feel vulnerable to the whims of employers, in particular those exercising power within school organisations. It has been suggested that those who should be supporting CTs may be rendering them powerless (Hastings, 2008, p. 509). In fact, the lack of help by colleagues, whether teachers or executive staff, can exaggerate the CTs' adverse emotional experiences if they do not receive anticipated assistance (Hastings, 2008), thus they can feel even more vulnerable. This is exemplified in Addie's story where a Deputy Principal demonstrated a lack of respect by taking over and directing the students. Appropriate structural conditions are warranted and Hastings (2008) makes the point that "[t]eachers need support mechanisms to assist them to reconstruct and reaffirm their identities when faced with situations where they become diminished" (p. 510). It follows that collegial and wider school back up is necessary, if not essential, for CTs and CBTs in order for them to feel like, and act like, a teacher.

Potentially, initial teacher education is a significant scaffold for the effective preparation of all teachers who enter the profession. Yet to do so in a holistic way, "a broad theoretical understanding of the complexity of emotions in teacher education is needed" (Uitto et al., 2015, p. 133). Having analysed over 70 articles that linked emotions with teaching, Uitto et al. were able to discern that despite the expanding interest in these areas, teacher education was only mentioned in general. Ongoing research in the development of initial teacher education curricula and approaches pertaining to the emotional work of teachers is justified. As teachers are always interacting with students, colleagues and/or parents/carers on a daily basis, their emotions are central to their practice. Students are very aware of their teacher's emotions and can be markedly affected by them. Accordingly, initial teacher education that recognises and supports awareness of teachers' emotions, the part they play in practice, and their influence on students' behaviours, is important. These findings can provide some long term hope, but also some frustration for CTs, as being able to achieve their goals for students within what can be a very small window of opportunity (e.g. one lesson, one day) can prove almost impossible. Given that stronger bonds between teachers and students can facilitate higher quality learning (Hargreaves, 2000), then it is desirable to provide specific strategies to address the time constraint disadvantage that CTs and CBTs have to build trust in classroom relationships.

As Hargreaves (2001) acknowledges, "emotions are central to teaching" (p. 1075) and, as we have demonstrated, casual teacher work can be intensely emotional. It is therefore appropriate for initial teacher education programs to promote awareness that teaching requires expertise in working through emotions. This could take the form of strengthening self-awareness. Programs focusing on reflective practice could target enhanced understanding of one's own emotions as a beginning teacher and possibly one of the precariat (Standing, 2014). Potentially, this could ameliorate and reduce the experience of negativity CBTs may face. Furthermore, for those teachers who do gain permanent and/or longer contract work, such initial teacher education would help them understand and offer the effective support required by their casually employed colleagues in schools (Jenkins, 2013).

Initial teacher education programs could also promote discussion of issues arising from casual teaching, and support problem solving to address practical issues related to such employment. This practical material could include advice on seeking information from the administration office and the executive on entering the school for the first time. Information could be provided on department of education websites across sectors, and on other sites that

warehouse teaching resources for lessons and units of work. Further guidance could be furnished on where and how beginning casually employed teachers can gain and maintain work, given that this can prove elusive in the first instance (Jenkins et al., 2009).

Our small study, written from our perspectives, indicates that the lack of time that CTs have to build rapport with their students, especially if they have to teach in a number of other schools, may facilitate the likelihood of negative emotions. Therefore, negative teacher emotions facilitated by difficult and challenging circumstances due to the nature of casual work can impact on the students and the classroom environment. Conversely, “emotionally positive classrooms are likely [to be] successful classrooms. Pleasant emotions enable teachers to best fulfill their teaching responsibilities and to maintain their emotional well-being and health” (Frenzel et al., 2009, p. 148).

## Conclusion

In closing, there appears to be an unmet demand for teacher educators to appropriately realign and adjust their programs to prepare graduate teachers for an informed and effective transition into a profession where they are likely to be a precariat. Recognition in initial teacher education programs of the complexity of the emotions in teaching and casual teaching potentially can support graduates facing employment uncertainties, whether they have secure permanent, temporary or casual work. Although emotions in education is now a growing area of research, its potential to impact teacher education is only in its initial stages, but it is likely to become substantive.

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