The future of Alexander Technique teacher education

Principles, practices and professionalism

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Foreword to the pdf version of the thesis

This thesis, *The future of Alexander Technique teacher education: Principles, practices and professionalism*, represents the several years of research that contributed to my gaining a Doctorate in Education (EdD) at the University of Technology, Sydney, in September 2007.

My intention in producing a pdf version of the thesis is to allow for a wider distribution than would be possible in paper or CD form. This pdf version appears in four sections, the second of which is this foreword. The other three sections are the (1) cover page, (3) the introductory section, including table of contents, and (4) the main text with references and appendices A and B. Apart from the addition of this foreword and the deletion of Appendix 'C', what you are reading here is the completed thesis, just as it appears in the UTS library.

Appendix 'C' has been removed from this pdf version because it is a replica of the chapter titled 'The Evolution of a Technique' from Alexander's *The Use of the Self* (1932/1946). It seems both inappropriate and unnecessary to reproduce the chapter here — inappropriate for copyright reasons and unnecessary because most Alexandrians will either possess or have read a copy of this classic book. In any case, my analysis does not depend on this chapter being read in its entirety.

All three academic examiners gave this thesis the highest rating. One was Jim Garrison, Professor of Education at Virginia Tech and President of the John Dewey Society. He wrote: "The dissertation recovers the past into a present that anticipates future possibilities for the development of the Alexander Technique. It could lead to the establishment of a field that may someday be called Alexander Technique Studies".

A considerable number of Alexander Technique teachers and student teachers have contributed to this work over the years this project took to complete. Many did so by simply offering me their continuing support, and others by participating in the email interviews. Readers who know themselves to be in these groups, please accept my gratitude yet again.

I welcome comments and suggestions. Please contact me at
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Terry Fitzgerald
October 2007

Certificate of authorship/originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of candidate

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Katie and Frank Fitzgerald.

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Glossary of terms used in teaching the Alexander Technique

- Primary Control
- Inhibition
- Use
- Direction
- Means-Whereby[1]

Primary Control

The primary control is the relationship of neck, head and torso. The primary control is working well when the neck is free enough to let the head be dynamically poised on the top of the spine, the spine is lengthening (or no longer shortening) and the torso is free from contraction.

In F. M Alexander's terms:

> [T]here is a primary control of the use of the self, which governs the working of all the mechanisms and so renders the control of the complex human organism comparatively simple.… [It] depends upon a certain use of the head and neck in relation to the use of the rest of the body….
>
> *The Use of the Self,* 1932, pp. 59-60

> [The primary control is] a control that is primary in thought and action to all other forms of control.
>
> Letter 1951 (quoted in Fischer ed. 1995, p. 282)

Patrick Macdonald (n.d.), one of Alexander's earliest graduates, also calls it "wearing the head properly … [I]f this is done there follows a muscular harmony throughout the body".

Inhibition

Inhibition and habit come from the Latin *habere*, meaning to have, be constituted. To 'inhibit' may be thought of as to 'not-habit', that is, to not respond habitually to a stimulus; in other words, to stop and think.

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[1] Throughout this thesis I use upper case to indicate Alexander's particular terminology

In Alexander's terms:

> The word 'inhibition' [stands] for the act of *refusing to respond* to some stimulus (or stimuli) to psycho-physical action (not doing) … [It is used to name] *what we refuse to do* — that is, to name what we wish to hold in check, we wish to *prevent*. (Italics in original)
> *Constructive Conscious Control of the Individual*, 1946, pp. 87-88

Macdonald (1989, p. 49) writes:

> Inhibition is a 'pause before action'… [It] is essential for the possibility of changing the old habit patterns … Immediately following the inhibition, the pupil must begin to think the new means-whereby, to will the new orientation of the neck, head and back (Primary Control).'

Use

Use is both noun and verb. As a noun, Use may be understood as two distinct yet overlapping ideas which Alexander called Manner of Use and Conditions of Use. Manner of Use refers to the more overtly observable patterns of everyday movements that may be amenable to change through reeducation, including breathing and voice production. As a verb in an expression such as 'she uses herself well', Use means to coordinate intelligently one's Manner of Use.

Conditions of Use relates more to the internal muscular and neurological coordination of a person, especially as it concerns the Primary Control.

In Alexander's terms:

> [W]hen I employ the word 'use,' it is not in that limited sense of the use of any specific part, as, for instance, when we speak of the use of an arm or the use of a leg, but in a much wider and more comprehensive sense applying to the working of the organism in general.
> *The Use of the Self*, 1932, p. 4

Macdonald (n.d.) writes: "The use of the leg of of the eye is but a part of the whole use of the person. The idea can be conveyed by the word 'style', as in 'style of walking' or 'style of running'.

NOTE: A more detailed description of Use is given in Chapter 6 of the thesis.

Direction

To give Directions, or more simply to Direct, is to think in a particular way about a potential movement of the body. Direction also has a sense of spatial orientation, as in the expression 'to direct one's head forward and up'.

In Alexander's terms:

> When I employ the words 'direction' and 'directed' with 'use' in such phrases as 'direction of my use' and 'I directed the use,' etc., I wish to indicate the process involved in projecting messages from the brain to the mechanisms and in conducting the energy necessary to the use of these mechanisms
>
> *The Use of the Self,* 1932, p. 20

Macdonald (n.d.) writes: "[U]nless we deliberately direct the proper use of our body-parts through the employment of the Primary Control, a deterioration in such use may start without our being aware of it."

Means-Whereby

The Means-Whereby is the process of an activity. It may be thought of as a series of short-term ends or goals, the consequences of which can be intelligently managed at any time in the process. An example commonly used would be standing up from a chair while paying attention to minimising habitual neck contraction. This is distinct from the purposeful gaining of an end (or End-Gaining), such as moving into standing without due regard to how this movement might contribute to neck pain.

In Alexander's terms:

> The phrase 'means-whereby' … indicate[s] the reasoned means to the gaining of an end. These means [include] the inhibition of the habitual use of the mechanisms of the organism, and the conscious projection of new directions necessary to the performance of the different acts involved in a new and more satisfactory use of these mechanisms.
>
> *The Use of the Self,* 1932, p. 27

Macdonald (1989, p. 23) writes: "What is real is that means condition ends, directly, and that ends condition means, indirectly."

Acronyms

AT	Alexander Technique
AmSAT	American Society for the Alexander Technique
APTS	Alexander Professional Teaching Standards
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
ASAT	Affiliated Societies of the Alexander Technique
ATI	Alexander Technique International
AUSTAT	Australian Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique
CAHC	Complementary and Alternative Health Care
CMC	computer mediated communication
FTF	face to face
NOS	National Occupation Standards
STAT	Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique (UK)
UTS HREC	University of Technology, Sydney, Human Research Ethics Committee
VSR	voluntary self-regulation

Abstract

The practices of Alexander Technique (AT) teacher education throughout the world are still largely based on those initiated by F. Matthias Alexander in the 1930s and modified slightly by his successors. Through the lens of contemporary educational theory and Alexander's own holistic principles, this study examines whether these practices should continue in an era when the contingencies of professional education are very different from Alexander's time. No academically viable research has ever been conducted into the value of these practices, despite debates about them becoming increasingly contentious.

Over 75 years ago, John Dewey praised Alexander for being in the forefront of what scholars are now calling the emerging paradigm of learning. In line with this paradigmatic perspective, I argue for a research methodology that is consistent with both Dewey's pragmatism and Alexander's principles of body-mind continuity and practical reasoning. This conceptual work also posits exemplary US school teacher education as a cognate model for AT teacher education.

Using critical pragmatism as a subsidiary methodology, I analyse the mandatory time-specific, practices of AT teacher education and conclude that these practices are not only anachronistic, they are also flawed to the extent they are devoid of qualitative assessment standards. As well, I critique one of Alexander's most respected texts and produce alternative readings that more clearly locate it in the emerging paradigm.

The empirical work then focusses on interview data gained by email from twenty AT stakeholders world-wide who were asked about their desires for the

future of the field. I conclude that most of the research participants would like the following practices introduced into AT teacher education world-wide: (1) flexibility of attendance, (2) qualitative standards for beginning teachers, and (3) qualitative standards for teacher educators. While uncertainty still remains about whether participants would completely give up the existing time-specific regulations, I suggest an attendance structure which incorporates the first of these findings.

Following a review of exemplary US scholarship in the field of school teacher education and an analysis of three sets of AT teaching standards currently in circulation, I propose a provisional set of beginning AT teaching standards modelled on the holistic wording of the California Standards for school teachers. These proposed standards incorporate the conclusions drawn from the critical and empirical work done earlier. Subject to usage and further research, they should meet expectations of stakeholders for teacher education practices that honour Alexander's principles and meet public demands for professional accountability.

Chapter 1

Purpose and overview

> The technique of Mr Alexander gives to the educator a standard of psycho-physical health — in which what we call morality is included. It supplies also the 'means whereby' this standard may be progressively and endlessly achieved, becoming a conscious possession of the one educated. It provides therefore the conditions for the central direction of all special educational processes. It bears the same relation to education that education itself bears to all other human activities. I cannot state too strongly the hopes that are aroused in me by the information … that Mr Alexander has, with his coadjutors, opened a training class, nor my sense of the importance that this work secure adequate support. It contains in my judgment the promise and potentiality of the new direction that is needed in all education.
>
> John Dewey, introduction to *The Use of the Self* (Alexander 1932, p. xix)

1.1 Why this study?

Frederick Matthias Alexander began his system of professional education for teachers of the Alexander Technique (AT) in 1931, and even today, the practices of AT teacher education are largely based on that system. This study uses the lenses of contemporary educational theory and Alexander's own principles of 'psycho-physical re-education' to examine the appropriateness of AT teacher educators adhering to these practices in an era when the contingencies of professional education are very different from Alexander's time. The overarching research question of this study is, therefore: How can the practices of AT teacher education be reconstituted in ways that meet 21st Century expectations of professional accountability and, at the same time, continue to respect the principles of the AT?

The study is important for at least two reasons. First, never before in its 75-year history has AT teacher education been critically probed in any academically rigorous way. I contend that if AT teaching is to be taken at least as seriously as the profession of school teaching, then it needs to understand its teacher education practices in similar ways, not the least through extensive research. In this thesis I use an Alexandrian approach to organisational change in order to critically analyse the predominant practices of AT teacher education and the protocols that express them. I then reframe these protocols in ways that are consistent with the ethos of the AT itself and with exemplary standards of school teacher education.

The second reason follows from this. I see my thesis as providing a ground plan or a template for further research into AT teacher education. My wide-ranging purpose is to establish within the AT community a culture of scholarship and academic enthusiasm that will further transform its teacher education practices in the future. It is a search for forms of "stewardship" (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder 2002, p. 32) whereby the domain of AT teacher education may be invested with the best knowledge available while remaining in touch with the traditions, principles and practical wisdom of the AT itself. An intended result of the study is that other AT teachers will be motivated to pursue related projects.

Tasmanian-born Alexander (b. 1869, d. 1955) was a fore-runner for the organic, person-centred perspectives of learning and teaching now being encouraged by educational scholars. Beckett and Hager (2002, p. 146), for instance, call this perspective the "emerging paradigm of learning" and cast the American educational philosopher John Dewey as one of its earliest innovators. Dewey, like Alexander, rejected the Cartesian notions of mind-body separation that

were commonly accepted by educators a century ago and which still today affect the ways we differentiate between concepts such as thinking and doing, reason and feeling, theory and practice. Beckett and Hager (2002, p. 146) call this Cartesian perspective the "standard paradigm of learning".

I refer to these two paradigms of learning throughout this thesis. However, I shall use the term '*normal* paradigm of learning' instead of '*standard* paradigm of learning' because I also use the word 'standard' to mean educational criteria, as in the expression 'teaching standards'. In any case, the emerging and normal paradigms of learning should not be regarded as dichotomous opposites competing for educational primacy. From a Deweyan perspective, Beckett and Hager (2002, p. 147) suggest the normal paradigm be seen as "limited and special instance" of the emerging paradigm of learning.

Dewey, in fact, became a friend and pupil of Alexander's in 1916. Sixteen years later, when he praised Alexander's decision to start a formal training program in London for teachers, neither of them could have guessed that by the turn of the century there would exist an international network of at least three thousand people registered as teachers of the AT, with countless more trained to teach the AT but no longer registered. With the exception of just a few hundred, all of these teachers will have been educated according to the practices I am problematising in this study.

Personal perspective

I was certified to teach the AT in 1978 after completing three years of AT teacher education at the London training school of Patrick Macdonald (b. 1910, d. 1991),

who was one of Alexander's earliest graduates of the 1930s. This certification allows me teacher membership of the UK and Australian Societies of Teachers of the AT — STAT (UK) and AUSTAT (Australia) — both of which are organisational members of the international group of professional societies called the Affiliated Societies of the AT [1]. Since certification I have maintained a private practice as an AT teacher and taught on several teacher education programs in Sydney and London. In addition, as Chair for five terms of AUSTAT, I have been a lead player in AT policy creation in Australia. Between 1996 and 2006, I owned and directed a teacher education program, the Sydney Alexander School. As the Head of Training — the title usually given to directors of these programs — I have certified eleven graduates whose credentials are accepted world-wide by the Affiliated Societies.

The Affiliated Societies accept such credentials according to the rules initiated by the senior affiliate, London-based STAT, and since adopted by the other affiliates. The international application of these rules specifies that certification should depend on the Head of Training's assessment after a minimum time spent satisfactorily at a recognised AT teacher education program. There is no allowance in the protocols for shortening the duration of training by recognising advanced competence, prior learning or previous academic qualifications. Likewise, the only qualification Heads of Training are required to have is a minimum number of years experience as an assistant at a training program.

Like many other Heads of Training, I had no formal, university-recognised teaching qualifications when I began my teacher education program. In 1997,

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[1] STAT was formed in 1958 in London by a group of Alexander's graduates. AUSTAT was formed in 1985 by British trained, mostly Australian, AT teachers in response to the resurgence of interest in the AT in Australia during the early 1980s (see Fitzgerald 1987; Raff 1987).

with my Engineering degrees in the background, I commenced graduate studies in Adult Education at the University of Technology, Sydney, with the intention of using current educational theories to understand more about AT teacher education. During my MEd course it became clear that this field had scarcely been researched and many aspects of the field of were in need of critical appraisal. Doctoral research, for example, has never been undertaken into AT teacher education.

Even though AT teacher education has remained unexamined at this level, doctoral studies have been conducted into the physiological, psychological and pedagogical benefits of the AT itself. These sorts of studies into the AT are invariably conducted by AT teachers who may be practising scientists, philosophers and performing artists in their own right. Given that their research is predicated on them having first been educated as teachers of the AT, I believe AT teacher education needs to be prioritised and be given much more intellectual investment than it is currently receiving.

This is not to say that informal research has never been done into AT teacher education. Conscientious practitioners and teacher educators conduct informal research on a daily basis as they continuously improve their own teaching practices through experimentation and study. Even so, if one compares the academic literature of AT teacher education with, for example, the countless journals and books devoted to exploring better practice in school and vocational teacher education, then AT teacher education is academically invisible.

There are also some wider professional problems which structured research may also help resolve. In Australia, for example, anecdotal evidence suggests that not only is AT teaching losing its appeal as a possible professional career

(Moore 2006), there is also a high attrition rate among graduates of Alexander training programs. As well, for those who continue to teach there has been a reduction in pupil numbers and proportionate income. Even in the UK, in contrast to the expansion in recent years of the counselling and psychotherapy professions (Horton 1997; Eulert 2003), it seems that AT teaching may be on its way to becoming a predominantly part-time or casual occupation (Scott 1998). The result may be teachers having fewer opportunities to teach and therefore struggling to gain the experience they need to develop their skills and knowledge .

The contemporary pressures impacting on the profession of AT teaching are not only economic, they are also political and ideological. Governments are becoming increasingly accustomed to the idea of regulating professional groups and are demanding that practitioners be qualified according to industry-wide standards of competency. As a self-regulating occupation with long-established traditions and pedagogies, the AT profession has never before been faced with the need to justify its teacher education practices, nor to speculate on how they may be recast to satisfy these unfamiliar demands for accountability. In addition, as AT teachers discuss these issues at meetings and in the journals, polarising disagreements are arising about the nature of modern professionalism and its relevance to the essentials of the AT and AT teacher education.

Compounding these problems is the weakening of the affective and intellectual bonding that teachers would have experienced perhaps twenty years ago as members of a mostly anglophonic 'community of practice' (Wenger et al. 2002). As the gate-keeping senior AT teachers retire and die, and as the community spreads beyond the control of London, the continuing evolution of the AT will

depend not only on how today's practitioners identify themselves as teachers and business owners in this expanding community of practice, but also on how the Alexandrian discourses survive translation into other languages and cultures. In Japan, for example, AT teacher educator Jeremy Chance (2006) is planning to copyright for local consumption a brand name other than Alexander Technique. "This is easy to do," he writes, "because this is a foreign culture, nobody ever heard of AT anyway, so why translate a rather difficult name for marketing purposes? Why not just invent a new name that resonates with consumers?"

What is missing, however, in any of these debates into AT teacher education practices is access to academically viable research that may expand practitioner perspectives. There is none. As a member of the AT teaching community for 30 years, I contend that if we want to adapt enthusiastically to the public's increasing demands for epistemological sophistication and critical awareness in our work, then we need to examine and theorise more intentionally the pre-service training and continuing professional development of AT teachers. If we want AT teaching to be taken at least as seriously as professions such as school and vocational teaching, then we must bring the sorts of scholarship and research that sustain them into our own teacher education practices.

In the next section I will give a short introduction to Alexander and the AT. A description of AT teacher education will be presented in Chapter 2.

1.2 Meet Mr. Alexander

There is no shortage of information about the life and times of F. M. Alexander. Since I commenced this study, no fewer than three authoritative histories of

Alexander and the AT have been published (Evans 2001; Bloch 2004; Staring 2005). While these books are innovative in their own ways, they have also drawn on Australian sources which include AT teacher Rosslyn McLeod (1994), academic historian Michael Roe (1974, 1992) of the University of Tasmania, and the memoirs of Alexander's contemporaries (e.g. Westfeldt 1964/1986; Tasker 1978; Carrington 1996).

In addition to these biographical works, we have Alexander's own version of the events that led to his development of his Technique. This appears in a chapter called 'The Evolution of a Technique' in his third book, *The Use of the Self* (1932). Because I shall be critically reviewing sections of this in Chapter 4, I have included it as Appendix C. With these resources in the background, I shall summarise briefly Alexander's life.

Alexander was born at Wynyard, northern Tasmania, in 1869, the son of a blacksmith and the eldest of nine children whose grandparents had been convicts transported from England in the 1830s. Known professionally as F. Matthias Alexander, and to his friends as 'F.M.', as a young man he developed an interest in theatrical recitations. As his acting career developed in the 1890s, he travelled around south-eastern Australia and New Zealand. Problems with his voice and breathing allowed him extended periods of patient self-observation and reflection, during which he eventually saw the connection between his overall postural coordination and the two persistent conditions he was experiencing — recurring hoarseness when performing, and a habitual contraction of his neck and larynx. Without recourse to medical treatment, he developed a systematic way to improve and maintain his coordination and thereby solve and prevent further problems.

In parallel with his performing, Alexander started teaching his ideas to other actors. He moved to Sydney in 1900 and began the 'Sydney Dramatic and Operatic Conservatorium'. Here, his new system for improving breathing and posture caught the attention of the medical profession at a time when there was widespread concern about tuberculosis. In 1904, with the encouragement of a doctor friend, he sailed for London with the intention of propagating his theories of preventive education.

Several members of Alexander's immediate family soon followed him. His brother Albert Redden (b. 1874, d. 1947), known as 'A.R', and sister Amy (b. 1879, d. 1951), both of whom had already been helping him teach in Australia, continued as his teaching assistants in London. Alexander trained informally just a couple of other apprentices before initiating his first formal training program for teachers in 1931. Except for some periods living in the United States, Alexander remained in London and was actively involved in his teacher training program until a few years before his death in 1955.

As Alexander gained fame and fortune in London as a teacher and author of several books and pamphlets, his system gradually became known as the Alexander Technique. He is best known for four books, which are still available after many editions and reprintings (see Fischer's 2006 web site). These four books are *Man's Supreme Inheritance* (first ed. 1910, revised ed. 1918); *Constructive Conscious Control of the Individual* (first ed. 1923); *The Use of the Self* (first ed. 1932); and *The Universal Constant in Living* (first ed. 1942). Another book, *Conscious Control in Relation to Human Evolution in Civilization* (1912) was absorbed into the 1918 edition of *Man's Supreme Inheritance*. The introductions to the 1918, 1923 and 1932 books were written by John Dewey, and the 1942 book was introduced by anatomist G.E. Coghill.

I shall explain more about the pedagogic importance of the 'four books' in Chapter 4, and about Alexander's connection to Dewey later in this chapter, but at this point I shall attempt a brief explanation of the AT itself.

1.3 The Alexander Technique: a brief explanation

> [N]o verbal description [of the Alexander Technique] can do justice to a technique which involves the changing, by a long process of instruction on the part of the teacher and of active co-operation on that of the pupil, of an individual's sensory experiences.
>
> Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means* (1937/1965, p.223)

The AT will have as many different interpretations and definitions as there are people who engage with it. As an experiential educational process, it challenges writers to find succinct explanations of how it works and why it has been so effective for over a century. Armstrong (1998), for example, gives a highly technical definition, but most teachers have a number of short, sharp explanations in answer to the question, 'What is the Alexander Technique?' My replies will vary according to the need of the person asking and the context of the question, but my three-sentence, dinner-party response will be something like the following:

> The Alexander Technique is a way of learning to think differently about the way we move and use our bodies. AT teachers observe their pupils' movements and teach them how to prevent harmful habits and then generate a better postural pattern based on the coordination of the head, neck and torso. Most people come for lessons in the Technique because they are concerned about their posture or are in pain from their occupational activities, or they might be recovering from accidents or illnesses and need to learn to sit, stand and walk more efficiently. [2]

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[2] This is also the explanation I give on my web site <www.alexander-school.com>. I use 'pupil' to refer to individual clients who pay for private lessons or group classes but are not interested in becoming teachers, and 'student' and 'trainee' to refer to those who are studying to becoming AT teachers.

I could reproduce here countless quotations that others have said to describe the AT. Dewey, for example, pithily called it "Thinking in activity" (cited in Alexander 1941, p. 112). To give the reader a better taste of the AT, though, I will draw on just a few short definitions given by senior members of the AT profession. I shall start with my own teacher educator Patrick Macdonald's (1989) description of the AT:

> It is the discovery by F. Matthias Alexander of the natural rhythm within the human body which exists in the sensory and motivating nerve circuits. This essential rhythm has become distorted in most people, and such distortion becomes the principal cause of most of the ill-health and distress of many so-called mental and physical diseases. The Technique sets out to re-educate the sensory and motivating nerve circuits of the whole body… .(p. xii)

For Wilfred Barlow, an English rheumatologist and AT teacher educator who wrote the popular book that first introduced me to the AT, namely *The Alexander Principle* (1973), a brief description of the AT is "a method of showing people how they are mis-using their bodies and how they can prevent such mis-uses, whether it be at rest or during activity" (p. 162). From the same era, American AT teacher and professor of classics at Tufts and Brown Universities, Frank Pierce Jones (1976), called it

> a method (a 'means-whereby') for expanding consciousness to take in inhibition as well as excitation ('not-doing' as well as 'doing') and thus obtain a better integration of the reflex and voluntary elements in a response pattern. The procedure makes any movement or activity smoother and easier, and is strongly reinforcing. (p. 2)

As a researcher on the scientific implications of the AT at the Institute for Psychological Research at Tufts University, Jones (1976) also wrote this more technical explanation in support of Alexander's theories:

> The evidence that I have assembled has been drawn from the careful observation of changes that have taken place in myself and others and a search for mechanisms that would account for them. I believe the

evidence fully supports the following hypotheses:

1. The reflex response of the organism to gravity is a fundamental feedback mechanism which integrates other reflex systems.

2. Under civilized conditions this mechanism is commonly interfered with by habitual, learned responses which disturb the tonic relation between head, neck and trunk.

3. When this interference is perceived kinesthetically, it can be inhibited. By this means the antigravity response is facilitated and its integrative effect on the organism is restored.

I submit that these hypotheses have face validity and are consistent with established principles of physiology and psychology. (p. 151)

I still find it easier to describe the AT if I have permission to use touch as well as voice to facilitate what Jones here calls the antigravity response. Using my hands makes it easier to show my pupils how to adapt the principles of the AT to their everyday moving and resting states. Manual contact in this technical way enables me to detect pupils' reactions to various stimuli as well as to guide them using touch and talk into more appropriate responses. As their new responses become progressively reinforced during lessons, and as they go about their daily activities, pupils become more aware of the consequences of those habitual reactions which interfere with what should be their natural poise. They learn to Inhibit, or restrain, these reactions and take the time to make more consciously considered responses. They are learning to improve what we call their Use of themselves[3].

In the paragraph above, I have just given a methodologically correct description of what the pupils should be learning when they come for AT lessons. In reality, many have no declared interest in learning anything at all; they just want to feel better in the short term and perhaps prevent any future recurrence of their problems. When satisfied, this group of pupils are as likely to forget completely the process they went through, along with their teacher's name and possibly

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[3] I capitalise Alexandrian expressions such as Use, in the manner of Dennis (2004).

the term Alexander Technique.

A second group consists of pupils who build an ongoing professional relationship with the AT or with their teachers and may return periodically for refresher lessons and for help if they have difficulty managing their problem. From among these pupils come those who develop a life-altering fascination with the philosophy and pedagogy of the AT. For some, this includes its seemingly arcane 'hands-on' manipulative technicalities. A third group, the minority, is made up of those who are stimulated enough to want to teach it because they see its value in helping other people and may also hope to make a living from their new career. As part of their continuing professional development, AT teachers are recommended to sustain this sophisticated interest in the work and apply Alexander's principles to their everyday lives.

As an AT teacher, my manipulative contact with a pupil is structured, precise and delicate. Teaching usually involves continuously touching the pupil's head, neck and torso in a way that both monitors and stimulates what we call the Primary Control, which is a dynamically balanced relationship of continuity between these parts of the body (Macdonald 1987). When the neck muscles are free enough to allow the head its dynamic balance on the top of the spine, the lengthening of the spine and widening of the rib cage come into play without muscular force. The torso is freer to expand and breathing tends to improve.

Depending on the reason for the lessons, I might then guide pupils to coordinate their arms and legs with this new balance. Where appropriate, I am also helping the pupil to sensorily reinforce this unfamiliar learning through repetition of the newly coordinated movements and by verbally encouraging them to recognise both the consequences of reverting to habitual patterns and

the benefits of not doing so. It is necessary that I also Use (that is, coordinate) myself well in this same technical sense for my touch to have the precision necessary for this work.

In the early stages of my training with Patrick Macdonald I was learning to reinforce my own postural coordination so that by the later stages I could satisfactorily make hand contact with other trainees and volunteer pupils without causing further interference with their Use. Mr Macdonald needed to know that I was competent enough to look after myself as a teacher while imparting the Alexander principles verbally and kinesthetically to my pupils. Even so, at graduation ceremonies Mr Macdonald would say to all his trainees that they would now learn much more about the AT as teachers than they had done as his students for three years.

The traditional form of teacher education requires attendance on an almost daily basis for a total of 1600 hours over at least three years. For example, when I was a student at Mr Macdonald's three-year training course in London in the late 1970s, I attended three hours daily between 2.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m., five days per week, for three academic terms each year. At the Sydney Alexander School teacher education program that I conducted more recently, the three year structure was arranged around an attendance pattern of four hours (9.00 a.m to 1.00 p.m.) per day, four days per week, 37 weeks per year.

In this thesis, I call these quantitative, attendance-based standards the 'numerical protocols' of AT teacher education. As will be described — and contested — in more detail later in this thesis, these protocols are the only criteria by which the Affiliated Societies recognises the qualifications of most of the world's AT teachers. It is expected that individual Heads of Training will have their own qualitative standards of competence by which to assess

graduating teachers, but the Affiliated Societies neither mandates such competency standards nor requires them to be made explicit. I will explain the numerical protocols in more detail in Chapter 2 and critique them in Chapter 4.

In the next section, I return to the research study and introduce the theoretical and methodological frameworks I adopted.

1.4 Introductory overview of theory and methodology

> My theories of mind-body, of the co-ordination of the active elements of the self and of the place of ideas in inhibition and control of overt action required contact with the work of F. M. Alexander, and in later years his brother, A. R. to transform them into realities.
>
> John Dewey, 1939 (quoted by Boydston 1986, p. 32)

For so broad a subject as the future of AT teacher education, I decided to take an interpretive approach to studying it and, therefore, to look for theoretical and methodological frameworks that were in harmony with the organic ethos of the AT, the emerging paradigm of learning and Deweyan educational principles. I would have preferred to fashion this study in terms of the AT itself, but the AT has no academic capital in the field of teacher education. Dewey, however, was an esteemed contributor to the intellectually rich history of school teacher education in the US, and his work became an obvious starting point for my choice of theoretical and methodological frameworks.

The current resurgence of scholarly interest in Dewey has also generated considerable access to his influence on school teacher education (e.g. Garrison 1997, 1999; Rodgers 2002; Boyles 2006). By extension, other theoretical resources include the more recent scholarship of American school teacher educators of the

Carnegie tradition, particularly Lee S. Shulman (1998, 2004) and Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle (1999). As well, the fact that Alexander and Dewey maintained a professional and friendly relationship over many decades provides grounds for asserting that Deweyan pragmatism is an appropriate approach for an inquiry into AT teacher education. I shall say more about this in Chapter 3, but for the moment, I shall explain a little more about the relationship between Alexander and Dewey.

John Dewey and F. Matthias Alexander

John Dewey had become a pupil of F. M. Alexander in the winter of 1916, when Alexander was living in New York (Bloch 2004). Some twenty-two years later he was still having AT lessons in the US with Alexander's brother 'A. R.', who had since moved to Boston (McCormack 1958). As already mentioned, Dewey wrote the introductions to the earliest three of Alexander's books and encouraged him to commence the first formal teacher training course in 1931. The quotation at the beginning of this thesis is reproduced from Dewey's introduction to Alexander's *The Use of the Self* (1932).

In Dewey's book of the same period *Human Nature and Conduct* (1930), he acknowledged his indebtedness to Alexander for the insights he had gained from Alexander on the nature of habit. Both of these educators held similar views on the continuity of mind and body. Alexander would write of Psycho-Physical Unity and Dewey of 'the body-mind' in their rejection of the Cartesian dichotomy that would cast mind and body as separate entities. Alexander (1923/1946) put it this way:

> The fact to be faced is that the human self was robbed of much of its inheritance when the separation implied by the conception of the organism as 'spirit,' 'mind,' and 'body' was accepted as a working

principle, for it left unbridged the gap between the 'subconscious' and the conscious. This gap still remains unbridged by the studies, scientific or otherwise, which have been stimulated by the conception of separation." (p. xxx-xxxi)

And in 'Body and Mind' (1928), Dewey wrote:

> F. M. Alexander has pointed out that until we have a procedure in actual practice which demonstrates the continuity of mind and body, we shall increase the disease in the means used to cure it. … The world seems mad in preoccupation with what is specific, particular and disconnected in medicine, politics, science, industry and education.
>
> We are reminded of happier days when the divorce of knowledge and action, theory and practice, had not been decreed… In Greece, there was a time when philosophy, science and the arts, medicine included, were much closer together than they have been since. One word described both art and science--techne.
>
> There are signs that we are perforce, because of the extension of knowledge on one side and the demands of practice on the other, about to attempt a similar achievement on our own account. … [But] the forces are still powerful that make for diverse education. And the chief of these is, let it be repeated, the separation of mind and body which is incarnated in religion, morals and business as well as science and philosophy. The full realization of the integration of mind and body in action waits upon the reunion of philosophy and science in the supreme art of education. (Reproduced also on Goldberg's 2006 web site)

Over the years since Dewey wrote these words, it is the American AT teachers who have done more than any other national group to foster study of the connection between Alexander and Dewey. Writers who knew them both and encouraged the study of this connection are Jones (1976) and Gummere (1988, 1989). The most useful web-based resource for studying Alexander's influence on Dewey is the web site *John Dewey and the F. M. Alexander Technique* maintained in the US by Goldberg (2006). In addition, the US professional society of AT teachers, AmSAT (2006a), publishes Murray's (n.d.) edited collection of contributions from various sources.

The most extensive academic review of the influence of Alexander on Dewey is McCormack's (1958) University of Toronto PhD thesis titled *Frederick Matthias Alexander and John Dewey: A neglected influence.* McCormack, a Benedictine priest but not an AT teacher, writes: "It is not … suggested that Dewey took over Alexander's notions wholesale; it is a question of selection and assimilation rather than of borrowing" (p. 67). The influence, though, seems to have been mostly one way, that is, from Alexander to Dewey. McCormack quotes from a letter he received from F. P. Jones: "It was a pity (Alexander) was not able to learn as much from Dewey as Dewey learned from him" (McCormack 1958, p. 235). In any event, Alexander's influence on Dewey is no longer neglected, and among the other non-Alexandrian academic writers who have since acknowledged it are Shusterman (1997; 1999; 2000), Wilshire (1990), Boydston (1986), Mixon (1980/1992) and Zigler (1980).

Chapter 3 goes into a more detailed description of the theory and methodology underpinning this study, but for the sake of completeness in this introductory chapter I will now give a brief explanation of how Deweyan pragmatism provides a conceptual framework for the research component.

Pragmatism in research

I argue in this thesis that before AT teacher education can be transformed we must deal with the fact that many of its discourses and practices unwittingly reinforce Cartesian dichotomies, despite them being antithetical to Alexander's beliefs. For the qualitative component of the research I have chosen therefore to use Deweyan pragmatism as the methodological vehicle (Biesta and Burbules 2003). As a particular process of "educational inquiry" (p. 79), Deweyan pragmatism has the capacity to open up educational practice by challenging the

unexamined assumptions and dichotomous thinking that keep in place traditional systems and discourses. This resonates with my personal standpoint for this study. Deweyan philosopher of education Jim Garrison (1994, p. 11) puts it this way:

> Educational researchers are scientific *re*-searchers of prior cultural meanings, for example, those provided by policy-makers. …[T]hey seek to produce warranted assertions that can be used to improve educational efficacy by guiding events toward desirable 'ends-in-view,' our shared vision of improved education. (Italics in original).

In the context of this view of research, I have used two subsidiary methodological approaches to frame the collection and interpretation of the data. These are critical pragmatism (Cherryholmes 1988) and 'phronetic' research. Critical pragmatism, as explained by Cherryholmes (1988 pp. 145-146), drawing on Rorty, is premised on the poststructural view that the discourses and practices of a field need continually to be reinterpreted and reconstructed against a background of no moral or objective certainties.

I use critical pragmatism as a lens with which to critique aspects of the AT field which have never before been analysed in depth. The key idea in these critiques is that Alexander's attempts to construct his discourses and practices according to his holistic belief in body-mind continuity were circumscribed by his needing to use the educational structures and intellectual language of the epistemological paradigm prevailing at the time. The result is that his followers inherited a set of Cartesian "discourses-practices" (Cherryholmes 1988, p. 15) that are becoming problematic in a postmodern world which increasingly expects professional practitioners to look at their work critically.

'Phronetic research' is a term I borrow from Flyvbjerg (2001) to combine his conceptual work with that of Beckett and Hager (2002). I also extend Garrison's

(1997) phronetic interpretation of Dewey to Alexander and suggest that this phronetic approach is relevant to qualitative research into the AT. In this study, I interviewed by email twenty AT teachers and student teachers from seven countries about the future of AT teacher education. Their answers were compared with published interviews with senior AT teachers. In the background, informing this empirical work, are my personal experience and observation, the literature of the AT and AT teacher education, and the literature of other professions, especially school teacher education.

Because email interviewing is a relatively new method of qualitative research I have given considerable analytical attention to the advantages and limitations I found when using it and to the interviewing procedures I adopted. If, as I hope, other AT teachers around the world take up research into AT teacher education in the future, they may find it useful to study my experience with email interviewing.

1.5 Overview of the thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters. In Chapter 1, I have so far introduced my rationale for undertaking this study into the future of AT teacher education. I have briefly introduced Alexander and his relationship with John Dewey and given a skeletal history of the AT and AT teacher education. This history will be fleshed out in greater detail as I draw together the cast of characters who have impacted upon the profession over the past 75 years. With regard to the interpretive research component of the study, I have given a short overview of the theoretical and methodological frameworks used and the qualitative methods I adopted. These, too, will be explained in greater detail in the relevant chapters.

Chapter 2 presents the background to the study and why it is an important contribution to the AT profession. I first explain that my thesis is the first academically motivated study to research the policies of AT teacher education. This accounts for the limited amount of research literature available on this topic. However, the literature on the history of the AT is more accessible, and I use it to highlight features of the professionalisation of AT teaching from Alexander's time to the present. Following an historical critique of the time-specific, numerical protocols of AT teacher education, I argue that they are flawed because they reflect anachronistic methods of professional education.

Chapter 3 begins with an extensive overview of the theoretical and methodological frameworks I adopted for this study. The theoretical framework is premised on two assertions I make about the AT — first, its underlying philosophy exemplifies the emerging paradigm of learning as explained by Beckett and Hager (2002) and reflected in Dewey's works; and second, AT teacher education is amenable to what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), in the context of school teacher education, call conceptions of knowledge-*for*, -*in*, and -*of* teacher learning. These two perspectives colour the theoretical analyses of this study.

The methodological framework is more specifically Deweyan and embraces Deweyan pragmatism as the research methodology (Biesta & Burbules 2003). In line with this, I have adopted two interpretive methods, namely critical pragmatism (Cherryholmes 1988) and 'phronetic' research (Flyvbjerg 2001; Beckett & Hager 2002). Critical pragmatism is appropriate for destabilising established discourses and practices and the assumptions and identifications underpinning them. Phronetic research provides an empirical template for the data collection and interpretation. The remaining part of Chapter 3 is a detailed

study of the reasons for, and methods of, collecting this data through email interviewing of AT teachers and student teachers world-wide.

Using the critical pragmatic approach, Chapter 4 begins with a critique from a theoretical perspective of the same quantitative, time-specific protocols that I examined from an historical perspective in Chapter 2. I conclude again they are flawed, this time because their formulation reflects the Cartesian paradigm of learning, which I call here the normal paradigm of learning. I then argue that there is no educational justification for maintaining the numerical protocols, although there may be administrative reasons for doing so.

In the remaining part of Chapter 4, I continue along the critically pragmatic path and problematise aspects of Alexander's writing style. This takes the form of a type of exegesis of a highly regarded section of his third book *The Use of the Self* (Alexander 1932), the autobiographical chapter "The Evolution of a Technique". In this analysis, I assert that even though Alexander tried to articulate his belief in the post-Cartesian principles of body-mind continuity, this seminal chapter continues unwittingly to reflect a body-mind dichotomy. This needs to be acknowledged if the future rhetoric of AT teacher education is to be consistent with Alexander's intentions for his work. By producing alternative readings of this text, I provide an example of how it may be located more firmly in the emerging paradigm.

In Chapter 5, I interpret the empirical data collected from the email interviews conducted with 20 participants world-wide who are either AT teachers or teacher trainees. The three main themes that emerged from the email interviews were compared with comments made by senior AT teachers on related themes. I then arrive at a tentative set of conclusions for the future of AT teacher

education which could be said to represent the desires of the majority of the participants, if not always most of the senior teachers.

In summary, the research participants would like (1) more flexibility in the time-specific structures of the predominant protocols, (2) the introduction of competency standards for beginning AT teachers, and (3) the introduction of competency standards for AT teacher educators, especially the Heads of Training. What is not so clear is whether most participants are willing to give up their attachment to the traditional accumulation of 1600 hours attendance at teacher education programs. The first of these three preferences can be handled at a policy level as soon as there is enough political will among AT stakeholders to do so. My critiques in Chapter 4 should go some way to assisting this. The second preference will require more complex negotiation due to the recent stalling of discussions begun in the UK some years ago that were related to the introduction of competency standards for beginning teachers.

In Chapter 6, I look into these discussions and then compare three published sets of AT competency standards currently in circulation using the theoretical perspectives outlined earlier. I then propose a framework of competency standards which might be acceptable to most AT teachers and their professional societies. This framework, which I call the Alexander Professional Teaching Standards (APTS), is based on the California standards for the school teaching profession (CCTC 1997/2006). The proposed APTS framework is necessarily tentative because there has been no professional input into them as yet. Combining this framework with the interim conclusions of Chapter 5, I propose some provisional protocols which may replace the numerical protocols of AT teacher education until additional research warrants the introduction of more sophisticated versions.

Chapter 7 is the final chapter of this thesis and brings together the several strands explored in the study. I suggest a number of activities which, along with the revision of the numerical protocols, should contribute to the healthy future of the AT profession as a whole. Foremost among these is building a culture of research into AT teacher education which prioritises care of the client-pupil. In line with this, I also recommend establishing a research centre for AT teacher education, either real or through the world wide web, to manage and store the information gathered. This centre could be attached to other research groups which are already interested in furthering the scientific aspects of the AT, if not necessarily teacher education. The thesis concludes with a call for AT stakeholders to research and engage with the practices of teacher education in the same critical spirit that Alexander encouraged individuals to study themselves.

Chapter 2

Background to the study

2.1 Introduction to the chapter

For the profession of AT teaching to bring itself into line with 21st Century expectations of professionalism and move strategically into the future, it first needs to be aware of how it arrived at its present condition. Chapter 2 examines the history of AT teacher education and how this history has shaped the ways many AT teachers see themselves as professionals. I briefly analyse the 75-year history of AT education to show how its current professional and organisational patterns developed. A connecting theme in this chapter is the parallel professionalisation of AT teaching and school teaching.

Starting with Alexander himself, I speculate that he used school teacher education as a cognate model for his early teacher training system in order to give it professional credibility. I also suggest that professionalisation of AT teaching is nothing new, and that successive generations of AT teachers have mirrored, consciously or otherwise, the ensuing trends in school teacher education towards greater professional accountability and self-regulation. I shall develop this theme further towards the end of the thesis when I explore the possibility of using some exemplary school teacher standards as templates for future AT teacher standards.

Chapter 2 also introduces the regulations governing the vast majority of AT teacher education programs around the world — what I call the numerical

protocols of AT teacher education. I shall revisit these protocols in Chapter 4, where I critique them as one of the problematic practices that need to be transformed if AT teaching is to take its place as a publicly accountable profession in the 21st Century.

2.2   The research literature on AT teacher education

Almost two decades ago, Chris Stevens (1988), a physiologist and AT teacher, distinguished the kinds of research individual AT teachers might undertake in addition to those conducted by scientists such as himself. He labelled them 'personal', 'our own teaching', 'philosophical', 'spiritual', 'multiple disciplines' and 'Alexander literature'. In one other category, which he called 'professional' research, he includes research into how to improve AT teacher training, "in other words looking in a collective way at what the Technique is about and what we are doing" (p. 4). Only recently, however, have there been any signals that the AT profession is at last interested in sponsoring such research into AT teacher education at an international level.

At the 2006 meeting in Germany of the Affiliated Societies of the AT, the following matter was put on the agenda for the 2007 meeting: "A request that member societies consider the question, 'Can Training Courses change without losing the essentials of the training of teachers of the Alexander Technique?'" (AmSAT 2006b, p. AR3). Notwithstanding that the 'essentials' have never been described or defined, this statement represents the profession's first formal, though tentative, call for research into AT teacher education. I will critique the Affiliated Societies' request in Chapter 7.

While much scholarly research has been undertaken into the relationship of the AT to performing arts, physiology, psychology and philosophy (see, for instance, the research links within STAT and AmSAT web sites), structured research into teacher education has received scant attention within the professional AT community. For example, of the 224 references listed in Sanfilippo's (1987) annotated bibliography of the AT, which is based on her Master's thesis, a total of only twenty books, monographs and articles are singled out as "applying the Alexander Technique to education" (pp. 37-51). Of these, none refers specifically to AT teacher education. Subsequent to Sanfilippo's publication, there has been no other annotated bibliography published.

The most comprehensive academically inclined document on the AT produced recently is Jeroen Staring's (2005) self-published doctoral thesis *Frederick Matthias Alexander 1869-1955: The origins and history of the Alexander Technique*. Staring, who is not an accredited AT teacher, has pursued what he calls a 'non-hagiographical' agenda regarding Alexander's early works with the intention of problematising them on historical grounds. This, he says, is in the interest of promoting a more professional attitude among AT teachers by demolishing an uncritical, guru-like fascination he sees many of them having with Alexander and his writings.

Subtitling his thesis 'A medical historical analysis of F. M. Alexander's life, work, technique, and writings', Staring critiques from the perspective of an historian rather than an educator. Even so, he does claim that his 671-page historiography is relevant to AT teacher education because it "may make a contribution to the Alexander Technique professionalization process and Alexander Technique teacher training and may offer a means of establishing

groundwork for further steps in Alexander Technique professionalization" (p. 14). I would make a similar claim for my study, albeit from the perspective of an AT teacher educator rather than a historian.

Staring (2005, p. 334) lists among his references 24 masters theses and 26 doctoral dissertations related to the AT, with publication dates ranging from 1954 to 2003. While the subject topics of these research projects cover an eclectic range and some of them have direct implications for teaching the AT, none of their titles refer to AT teacher education. In addition to these, I have identified three Masters theses (Nicholls 2003, Mowat 2003, Brennan 2004) which are relevant to teacher education but do not appear in Staring's extensive bibliography, presumably because they appeared after his dissertation was completed. All three were written in the UK and offer insights into improving AT pedagogy, but they do not deal directly with the policies affecting AT teacher education. Even so, of the three, Nicholls's thesis has the most ramifications for the scholarly development of AT teacher education in the future.

Fortunately, Stevens's concept of 'professional research' has not been so neglected at less formal, non-academic, levels of investigation. Within the anglophone professional AT societies I have studied[4], there have been some non-academic moves, most notably by the British society of teachers, STAT, towards researching teacher education and the accrediting roles of the teaching societies. STAT commissioned Scott (1998) to conduct an 'operational review' of many of its structures, not just teacher education. The findings were based on interviews with the 10 per cent (75 teachers) of the STAT membership who

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[4] In the course of my study I was sent a detailed report in German by teacher educator Michael Fortwangler (2003) which he said was relevant to my research. Unfortunately, I have not been able to have it translated into English.

responded to his invitation, these interviews having been conducted either face-to-face, or by phone, fax and email.

Scott (1998) recommended that training programs should be open to the possibility of external validation and assessment. In summary, he wrote, "Training is currently extremely confused … Although the Technique is an art, a craft that is difficult to assess other than by a period of continuous assessment by an experienced teacher, some greater degree of conformity between courses is clearly essential" (p. 8). Scott's results showed that there was a reluctance within STAT to consider changes to training and assessment, even though a significant number of newly qualified teachers were unhappy about the efficacy of the training programs they attended. In fact, STAT (1998) subsequently disagreed with Scott's recommendation that proper academic standards be applied to AT teacher education and links be forged with a university or training 'validator' to produce a recognised external qualification.

Another important source of information for my study has been a collection of published interviews conducted over the past two decades or so with the surviving members of the generation of AT teachers that was trained by Alexander himself. Examples relevant to teacher education are Barlow and Allan Davies (2002); Carrington and Carey (1986); Carrington and Carey (1992); Gounaris, Tarnowski and Taylor (2000); Kettrick (2002); C. Nicholls (1988); J. Nicholls (1988); Oxford (1994); Park (1982) and Schirle (1987). Other commentaries and monographs relevant to teacher education which have been produced either by or about these and other senior teachers are David Alexander's (1988) interview with Judy Leibowitz; Barlow (1978); Binkley (1993); Carrington (1994, 1996, 2005b); Conable's (ed. 1989) book on Marjorie Barstow; and Macdonald (1987).

Of the above-mentioned references, Gounaris et al.'s (2000) *Six interviews with first generation teachers of the Alexander Technique on Alexander teacher training* has proved to be invaluable for my study. The aim of their book, say the authors, is "to gather the views and visions of these teachers as a body of reference for future teacher trainers. … We hope that these interviews may further provide clues as to how to tackle the future course of the profession" (p. 7). These face-to-face interviews were conducted in the UK between 1996 and 1998 according to a template which included:

- teaching the AT — the essence of the work
- the roots of the profession
- the concept of a three-year training course
- the concept of teacher training as a profession
- the concept of apprenticeship as an educational model
- small- and large-scale training courses
- length of training
- other aspects of basic training
- qualifications for teacher trainers
- professional bodies (pp. 7-8)

I have used Gounaris et al. (2000) as supplementary data because these ten themes cover many of the issues raised in the participant interviews I conducted for my study. Kettrick's (2002) published interviews have also been useful in this regard. To be able to include the opinions of these elderly teachers is appreciated, not only because they are a direct link to Alexander himself, but also because to interview them myself would have been impossible from Australia. As it has turned out, five of those interviewed by Gounaris et al. (2000) died during the time I was writing this thesis.

The journals and newsletters of the professional AT societies have been another valuable source of information. Of those I accessed, the most comprehensive are *STAT News* and *AmSAT News*, the newsletters of the British and American societies respectively. Another important reference has been the independently

produced journal *Direction*, which ceased publication in 2005. Being unaligned politically, *Direction* allowed teachers to express a wide range of opinions on policy matters.

In the next section I shall give a brief historical analysis of the development of AT teacher education. In addition to the literature just mentioned, I draw on the various references already introduced in Chapter 1 in regard to the life story of Alexander himself.

2.3 A short history of AT teacher education in England

I mentioned in Chapter 1 that prior to commencing his first structured training program in February 1931, F. M. Alexander had trained only four other teachers, among them his brother Albert Redden ('A.R.') and his sister Amy, both of whom had been his assistants in Australia. He trained the other two assistants, Ethel Webb and Irene Tasker, a dozen years after his arrival in London in 1904. Each of the four was declared competent after an apprenticeship of indeterminate length. In fact, 'A.R.' is reputed to have learnt to teach after having only six lessons with his brother (Jones 1976, p. 18).

By the late 1920s a number of constellating factors had contributed to Alexander's decision to start his formal three-year training course. According to Bloch's (2004) biography, these were, first, the devastating effect of the Great Depression on Alexander's finances, which left him with fewer private pupils, a drastically reduced income and, consequently less domestic help; second, a growing interest in his work worldwide; and third, the persuasiveness of a number of influential supporters, including John Dewey and a group of medical

friends, who were concerned that the work might perish upon Alexander's death. As a school teacher educator, Dewey believed the professional education of teachers should be on par with the education of other professionals, especially physicians (Shulman 1998), and I presume he held the same aspirations for AT teacher education.

Bloch (2004) suggests Alexander needed such encouragement from his friends because, at age 62, he feared he might lose control of his life's work were it to spread around the world. Erika Whittaker, one of the first to join his course, has spoken about Alexander's reluctance to commence a formal training program:

> [Alexander's] doctor friends talked him into it because they were all traditional doctors, and if you want to be a doctor you have to have training. The Alexander people wouldn't be trained like doctors. But it was understood that if you learned something for a *certain number of years*, then you'd got it, and you'd practice it. … That was the way they thought. And F. M. [Alexander] had a jolly good idea that that was *not* what his work was about. But in the end he gave up; gave in rather. And he thought, "Alright, we'll start a training course." (Whittaker, in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 131, italics in the original)

By this account, Alexander could see, if not articulate clearly, the paradox of using traditional didactic approaches to professional education to train teachers for a milieu which would be practical, organic and person-centred. After he had 'given in', though, the norms of professional education of the era would have required him to model his training program, at least nominally, on a fixed number of years of daily attendance. As it is still for many professions, time-specific training of this sort would have been seen as the indisputable reference point for quality within an occupation (Eraut 1994).

If, as Whittaker suggests, Alexander did not want his training course to resemble medical education, a more appropriate cognate professional model for

him would have been the training of school teachers. However, school teacher education in the UK, which had traditionally involved apprenticeship, was also going through considerable change around this time. Historian of education H.C. Dent (1977) reports that since the First World War there had been mounting objections to the pupil-teacher form of apprenticeship for young (as young as 13 years old) school teachers that ran in parallel with more conventional two-year training courses. By the 1920s there was a gradual extension of these two-year teacher training courses to three years. This was seen to guard standards and professionalism. By the 1930s in England, school teacher education had become a predominantly full-time certificate course, although three-year courses were not made compulsory until 1960 (Dent 1977; Harnett & Lee 2003). Even so, there remained in the UK a conception that school teaching was an apprenticeship-based occupation rather than a reflective profession (Grimmett & Mackinnon 1992).

Alexander would have been aware of the politics of English education leading up to this period. One of his pupils was baronet Sir Charles Trevelyan, who became President of the Board of Education — effectively the Minister of Education — in the UK Labour government elected in 1929 (Carrington & Carey 1986, p. 43). Trevelyan had campaigned successfully for better teaching of physical education in schools and training colleges (Dent 1977). In 1927 the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust had offered to meet the capital costs of "a national institution for training of expert male instructors in Physical Education" (cited in Dent 1977, p. 106), which eventually opened as a one-year postgraduate program in 1933.

By the early 1930s, women's Physical Education colleges, which were all private institutions, were offering three-year courses (Dent 1977; Fischer ed. 1995).

Considering how Alexander (1910, p.13) was sceptical of the value of "physical-culture", in contrast to his own methods of "psycho-physical re-education", it is conceivable that his decision to start a training program at that time was also intended to discount the popularity and credibility of 'physical education' as a teaching occupation. Marjory Barlow (in Oxford 1994, p. 19) tells us that later in the decade Alexander supplied a flier advertising 'A New Profession for Women'. She might be referring, however, to the article written by Alexander's medical friend Andrew Rugg-Gunn for *Women's Employment* of June 1931 titled, 'A New Profession' (Staring 2005). Alexander (1932, p. viii-ix) expressed his gratitude to Rugg-Gunn for pointing out "the advantages for young people of taking up this work as a professional career".

These educational and political trends of the late 1920s and early 1930s, combined with the encouragement of his medical acquaintances and other supporters, could well have stimulated Alexander to announce, despite his reservations, the commencement in 1931 of a three-year teacher training program. Sir Charles Trevelyan's son George, later Sir George, who had begun lessons with Alexander as a Cambridge undergraduate in the late 1920s, was one of the first to join Alexander's program (Trevelyan 1991).

Alexander published *The Use of the Self* (1932) as a manual for his new group of trainees (Carrington 2005b), and in his 'Open Letter to Intending Students of Training Course' of 22 July 1930, which was reprinted in that book, he reproduced supporting documents from some of his medical friends and other notable people, including John Dewey. The Open Letter explains that training in his work requires not only conceptual preparation for teaching, but also, and more importantly, the willingness to meet the existential demands specifically related to the AT. Alexander writes:

> … I must point out that would-be teachers of my work must be trained to put the principles and procedures of its technique into practice in the use of themselves before they teach others to do likewise. Herein lies the difference between the proposed training and all other forms of training. For students may take courses of training in medicine, physiology, theology, law, philosophy or anything else without the matter of the use of themselves being called onto question. But in the training for this teaching a considerable amount of work must be done on the students individually so that they may learn to use themselves satisfactorily, and it is only when they have reached a given standard in the use of themselves that they will be given the opportunity for practical teaching experience. …[I]n addition to this individual work, class work will be necessary. (Alexander 1932, p. 125-133)

Alexander makes the distinction here between conventional academic training for the professions, which would have had examinable standards of cognitive proficiency (Sutherland 2001), and his proposed form of training, which would require existential self-work and take both time and effort. It is worth noting the value Alexander placed on the students reaching 'a given standard in the use of themselves' and how 'class work' seems to be of less importance.

Around the time Alexander would have been contemplating opening his course, William F. Russell (1929), a US school teacher educator wrote about the administration of English school education. This administration was sufficiently decentralised to allow local authorities control of what was taught in their schools, and how it might be taught. The "mental and spiritual" aspects, which Russell (1929, pp. 17-23) called the "interna" of teaching, seemed best left to the discretion of those working directly with the children. The "externa", by contrast, are the "material" aspects over which the Central government insisted on keeping control, for example, school buildings and their maintenance, term times and rules of attendance. To read the accounts of his graduates, Alexander's interest would have been with the 'interna' of his training program, on the satisfactory Use of his students, rather than on managing its

administrative structure.

There is no evidence that Alexander ever spelt out in writing for his trainees just what he would expect the 'given standard in the use of themselves' to be after they had spent their three years with him. He would have told them to read his books, but effectively he had no competency descriptions or other requirements such as formal examinations, assignments and assessment procedures. In fact, Lulie Westfeldt (1964/1986), a member of the first cohort of eight trainees, says that when Alexander began his teacher training program he had difficulty with both communication and teacher education. She writes of a colleague saying:

> A part of [Alexander] doesn't care whether we learn or not, or doesn't believe we can learn. He was pressed into starting a training course by influential people who wanted his work to live, so he said to himself, 'All right, I'll have a training course, but I doubt if any of my students will really master my technique'. (p. 57)

And Carrington (in Carrington & Carey 1986) says about Alexander:

> a self-taught person — an autodidact — is always likely to be a poor teacher, because anything one has worked out for oneself, is different from anything learned from somebody else. This automatically leads to difficulties in teaching and explanation". (p. 14)

It is important to remember that Alexander had no prior experience of teacher education in a group environment, and his primary guidelines would have been what had been useful for him as the master to four apprentices he trained decades earlier. Whittaker (in Gounaris et al. 2000) remembers her first day as one of the initial cohort of trainees in 1931:

> F. M. [Alexander] took us into the other room and we a had a chair each. And he said, 'I have never done this before. It's the first time for all of us. Let's see what happens.' No rules and regulation. No time table. Nothing. There never was. Never. (p. 131)

In effect, these trainees, like the four trained informally before them, were apprentices learning at the foot of the master. The difference now was that this and future cohorts of students would now wait at least three years to be certified. According to Carrington (in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 36), three years "was the sort of 'laid down' thing". As it turned out, most of the first group of eight trainees were required to attend for a fourth year, without paying additional fees, because Alexander did not think they were ready to teach after the required three years (Bloch 2004). Whittaker (in Gounaris et al. 2000) suggests the reason for asking them to stay the extra year had also to do with Alexander's desire to stage during that year a production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* with the trainees and himself as cast members.

A number of trainees in the first cohort were distressed by Alexander's lack of direction for their process as trainee teachers. Westfeldt (1964/1986), for example, who had already studied at university, saw the lack of 'externa' as a flaw that held back the spread of his work. In her first year at the course she realised that, despite Alexander's genius,

> what took place in traditional educational circles had nothing to do with him. His mind did not concern itself with that type of problem. …The great thing was that he had started a training course; we had a chance to learn his work. It was up to us to understand and fit in with him enough to be able to get what he had to offer. …He had never handled people in groups nor had any experience in the kinds of problems that groups presented. He was in no way fitted to this kind of work. People and circumstances had edged him into this position. (pp. 64-65)

In contrast to Westfeldt's uncomfortable experience, all seven of the senior teachers interviewed in Gounaris et al. (2000) report that their years spent training to be teachers with Alexander were pleasant ones and that he provided a supportive environment in his training rooms. Of these, Whittaker (1997), a classmate of Westfeldt, says that after her graduation she taught the AT to

private pupils at Alexander's London studio, but

> he never supervised us or asked us how we were getting on — not for neglect, but for making us secure in our own decisions in working with a pupil. So we each developed our own individual potentials in the same basic technique. (p.1)

Alexander also allowed some variation in the attendance pattern. He permitted Anthony Spawforth (in Gounaris et al. 2000), for example, to attend the training course for only 90 minutes daily in his first year because that was all he could cope with. By the same token, Spawforth's training was extended to five years because he was assessed as not competent to teach after three. It was completed by Walter Carrington after Alexander's death in 1955 when "Walter suddenly said, 'I think you're ready to start teaching.' And in fact he gave me a pupil" (Spawforth in Gounaris et al. p. 105). What Spawforth does not describe here are the standards used by Carrington, and Alexander before him, to arrive at such assessments.

Such stories from the senior teachers illustrate how Alexander seems to have had fluid pedagogic relationships with his students and an 'interna' which took into account individual needs and variable learning capacities. Regular, daily attendance seems to have been required, but his educational style was organic and student-focussed, reflecting an attitude of "Everyone is an individual" (Spawforth, in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 107).

In the next section I shall describe and critique AT teacher education as it exists today, 75 years after Alexander set up his first organised class. This analysis points to how the predominant form of AT teacher education in the world today is oriented less towards the organic, individualistic nature of Alexander's training ethos and more towards administrative convenience and antiquated notions of professionalisation.

2.4 Seventy-five years later

There are now two main vehicles for accreditation as AT teachers — (1) time-specific attendance on a daily basis over three years and (2) competency-based assessment, often on the basis of an apprenticeship. I shall begin this section by describing first the time-specific model and then the competency-based model. I will also examine the relationship of time to teacher education, my intention being to distinguish whether or not the time-specific model is still an appropriate vehicle for AT teacher education.

Time-specific AT teacher education

Time-specific AT teacher education continues today under the auspices of the UK professional society, STAT, which was formed in 1958 by a group of Alexander's graduates after his death (Barlow in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 86). STAT was the first, and is still the largest and most eminent, of the national societies of AT teachers to have sprung up around the world in the past thirty years or so. As already mentioned, when these societies adopt STAT's quantitative rules on AT teacher education they are reciprocally eligible for 'affiliation' with STAT and, by extension, STAT's other affiliates. This combined group of international societies is called the Affiliated Societies of the AT.

The Affiliated Societies comprises the professional AT societies of fifteen nations. Collectively it has approximately 3000 teacher members who would have studied at training programs which are regulated by each local society to effectively conform to the Affiliated Societies' quantitative rules regarding teacher education (ASAT 2006). Each Member society of the Affiliated Societies agrees to grant reciprocal accreditation to teachers certified by any other

member society. To illustrate with a personal aside, I became a teaching member of STAT when I graduated as an AT teacher in London in 1978, but through the reciprocity rules I am now a member of the Australian Society (AUSTAT) and and an international member of the US Society (AmSAT). Although I live and work in Australia, membership of the British and American Societies expands my network of colleagues and entitles me to access the journals and web sites of these two groups, the largest in the English-speaking world.

In the next section I shall describe and critique the quantitative requirements of the Affiliated Societies. As already mentioned, I call these requirements the 'numerical protocols' of AT teacher education, and my critique here will be from an historical perspective. Later in the thesis, in Chapter 4, I include the numerical protocols among the problematic practices that I believe need transforming if the continuing professionalisation of AT teaching is to be assured, and I shall critique them there from a theoretical perspective.

The numerical protocols of AT teacher education

In summary, the Affiliated Societies' numerical protocols require AT teacher education programs to adhere to the following quantitative standards (ASAT 2001, with amendments, p. 6):

- A training course shall consist of at least 1600 total class hours over a period of at least three years
- 80 per cent of class hours shall consist of practical work in the Alexander Technique
- Each working week shall consist of between 12-20 hours of classes and at least 4 days with each day consisting of 3-4 hours of classes
- The ratio of teachers to trainees shall not be less than 1:8 during practical work, all such teachers being certificated by the local society or another affiliated society. Non-affiliated teachers do not count towards the ratio.

- A training course must have either (i) a co-director who satisfies the requirements for a Director of Training or (ii) a main assistant who has been a certificated and practising member of the local society (or another affiliated society) for at least five years
- A Director should be present to teach for 75% of the time, or two Co-Directors for 100% of the time.[5]

These quantitative standards represent the minimum that all the participating societies have been able to agree on. The protocols ensure that teacher certification granted by any national society is necessarily recognised by all of members the Affiliated Societies by virtue of the requirement that all trainees spend the same amount of time at teacher education programs and meet the other numerical criteria. Beginning AT teachers around the world who have been educated according to these numerical protocols may regard themselves as equally 'certified' in the Affiliated Societies' terms.

Despite being equally certified, however, these beginning AT teachers have no reason to assert they are equally competent. It is important to note that competency standards are not mentioned in the numerical protocols. None have been agreed upon internationally by the Affiliated Societies as a whole, although each national society is free to to insist on additional qualitative standards for teachers trained within its purview. The Affiliated Societies (ASAT 2001, p. 3) affiliation agreement emphasises: "It is not the intent of affiliation to limit the raising of standards, nor to imply that the standards set down … are ideal. …Therefore, an affiliated society may at any time choose to set its standards at a higher level….".

As well, Heads of Training are able to set competency standards for their

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[5] Within the Affiliated Societies system, the Director of an AT teacher education program is also called the Head of Training. There is usually one Head of Training for each program, although occasionally partnerships are permitted.

individual training programs, even if these standards are only implicit. In a tradition established by Alexander himself when he had sole control of his own work, Heads of Training are responsible for assessing their graduates' competence. Assessment is usually continuous over the three-year time frame and so is to a large extent personal and organic. However, Heads of Training are not required by the Affiliated Societies to either articulate the qualitative standards they expect their trainees to meet or build transparency into their assessment systems.

Flexibility of attendance scheduling is also precluded by the numerical protocols. While professions other than the AT are increasingly accommodating the needs of students for flexible attendance at practitioner education programs, the numerical protocols of AT teacher education state that all trainees must attend a recognised teacher education program according to the universally mandated structure. This includes a minimum of 1600 hours over three years at prescribed numbers of hours and days per week, regardless of any other considerations.

These 'externa' of AT teacher education, as expressed in the numerical protocols, provide a semblance of unified standards and are convenient for teacher educators' scheduling and other policy planning, but they say nothing about the competence of the beginning teachers. As a teacher educator and owner of an AT teacher education school, I can see the administrative value of some of these regulations, but I do not accept that it is appropriate to claim solely on the basis of this quantitative framework that there is an equivalence of teaching standards within the Affiliated Societies network. By way of a disclaimer, however, I should add that despite my disagreements with the rationale of the quantitative criteria, my graduate teachers have been educated

according to the numerical protocols and are eligible for Affiliated Societies accreditation on that basis.

Another weakness of the numerical protocols is that they allow for no recognition of prior learning. Recognition of prior learning is becoming a commonplace in modern professional education, yet the Affiliated Societies allows AT trainees no credit for the knowledge, skills and abilities they might already embody before joining a teacher education program. For example, neither teaching experience in other disciplines nor medical training may be acknowledged. Even prior experience of the AT as a pupil is excluded. In other words, under no circumstances are trainees allowed to be deemed certified in less than the minimum attendance time of 1600 hours and at least three years. Implicit in these protocols is the idea that all trainees will start at the same level of inexperience of the AT and finish after 1600 hours with comparable levels of expertise as teachers.

At this point, it is worth revisiting the history of AT teacher education in the UK to see how the numerical protocols came into being. In 1960, around the same time as STAT began instituting these quantitative regulations for AT teacher training programs in the UK, the British government mandated three-year training programs for school teachers. This was part of a growing trend toward professionalisation of school teaching. Dent (1977, p. 138) quotes from a Ministry of Education booklet of 1957: "It is important for the health of the teaching profession as a whole that three-year training should give a considerable proportion of teachers an academic standing and confidence which will enable them to take their places alongside graduates".

I have already suggested that Alexander modelled his three-year attendance

model of training on that of school teaching as a way of setting a minimum professional standard for the teaching of his work. Daily attendance would have been expected, but there is no evidence that Alexander demanded 1600 hours attendance over the three years, contrary to Staring's (2005, p. 333) unsubstantiated assertion that he did. Most of the interviewees in Gounaris et al. (2000) say they spent just two hours per day at Alexander's school in a structured way and additional periods working together in self-teaching, either at the school premises or in their own homes. The scheduled time trainees spent with Alexander would have amounted to perhaps 1200 hours over three years, which is much less than the 1600 hours mandated by the numerical protocols today.

The 1600-hour rule was introduced by Alexander's followers. Carrington (in Gounaris et. al. 2000, p. 43) reports: "Well, I can't really say exactly when [the time-specific rules] came in, but certainly soon after F. M.'s death [1955], I would say". British AT teacher educator Adam Nott (personal communication 1 August 2006, with permission) says that in the 1960s STAT specified the minimum weekly attendance time for the three-year course AT training course to be 15 contact hours per week in order to satisfy the British Home Office's condition for student visas being granted to overseas trainees. Although uncertain how 1600 hours came to be specified for AT teacher training, Nott suggests it was partially in response to the London County Council's consideration of financial grants to students. Spawforth (in Gounaris et al. 2000) also alludes to this.

Taking this historical evidence into account, the 1600-hour component of the numerical protocols seems much more likely to have been instituted to satisfy a government bureaucracy than for reasons Alexander himself would have

approved. Even so, despite its lack of pedagogical significance, this quantitative measure of 'sixteen hundred hours' has now entered the folk tradition of AT teacher education and become, to some, almost archetypal in importance (e.g. Dunningham 1996). Spawforth (in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 107) tells of a British AT training school he encountered where "[trainees] were rather hauled over the coals: you had to keep to your 1600 hours to get your certificate". At this school, he suggests, the fulfillment of the time-specific regulations has become a goal of AT teacher education, an end in itself. One might say the 'externa' of such a course has become more important than the 'interna'.

Qualifications of Heads of Training

The quantitative criteria of the Affiliated Societies specify that an applicant for Head of Training status should have had the equivalent of one year, full-time (533 hours) experience assisting at other training programs (ASAT 2001). Each national society has sole responsibility for accrediting the Heads of Training at its registered schools, and for this some societies gather qualitative evidence of a Head of Training's suitability through interviews with a panel of senior teachers in addition to the core quantitative evidence of teaching experience (e.g. NASTAT 1997). Bloch (2004) likens this tradition to an apostolic succession within a church heirarchy whereby all Heads of Training can trace their lineage back to F.M. Alexander himself. By this process, every Affiliated Society recognises the accredited Heads of Training of all the national societies.

In most cases, the Head of Training also owns the school and is personally liable for its finances and the hiring and firing of the teaching staff. This means the school is run as a business with the Head of Training as chief financial

beneficiary. More importantly from a power perspective, the Head of Training also chooses the students who will be admitted to the school and which of them should leave or proceed to certification. The Affiliated Societies does not demand transparency in the certification process, with Heads of Training traditionally having sole authority to assess their own students and certify them as beginning teachers of the AT.

In the light of the discussion above, I assert the following statement on Affiliated Societies' web site (ASAT 2006) is misleading:

> [The member societies] maintain and assure training standards which originated with F. M. Alexander. These standards include a minimum of 3 year training courses with an average of 36 weeks per year, of 5 days a week, 3 hours per day. All training course directors and assistants are certified to have the necessary skills and experience to train other Alexander teachers. All of the societies maintain and enforce a code of professional conduct.

This statement is misleading in two respects. First, it says that the training standards originated with Alexander himself. As I have shown, Alexander's expectations of attendance would have been more fluid than implied by these figures. Second, in regard to training course directors being 'certified', there are no internationally agreed skills-based standards (ASAT 2001).

When discussing the perceived competence of teacher educators, it is useful to remember that Heads of Training have never been required by the Affiliated Societies to have any formal educational qualifications other than the time-specific, AT-related certifications already mentioned. I suspect this stems, in part, from the fact that Alexander himself had no qualifications of any sort. While many AT teacher educators have degrees, including doctorates, in a variety of fields, and some will be qualified as teachers in other areas, such as school teaching and performing arts, few would have formal qualifications as

teachers of vocational and professional disciplines. Even when they do, such qualifications are irrelevant to the Affiliated Societies.

Independently of the Affiliated Societies, within some nations there is a growing trend towards AT teachers having a minimum educational certification which is publicly recognised. I will say more in Chapter 6 about British and Australian moves in this direction. As regards the qualifications of teacher educators, however, I know of only one school, David Moore's School for F.M. Alexander Studies in Melbourne, Australia, which requires its senior faculty to have a Certificate IV in Teaching and Assessment in order that its graduates be eligible for the government-accredited Advanced Diploma in AT teaching. By contrast, Heads of Training and faculty of the Australian AT education programs that have no government accreditation are not required to have formal teaching qualifications.

Competency-based AT teacher education

Alexander Technique International (ATI) is an internationally constituted teaching society administered from the US which grants certification and membership based on competency rather than time-specific attendance at a school. Having no local or national chapters, ATI membership applies universally and appeals to AT teachers in countries such as Japan and Hungary where there is no Affiliated Societies presence (Chance 2005).

Student teachers may attend traditional programs of AT teacher education or they may undergo a form of cognitive apprenticeship (Farmer, Buckmaster & LeGrand 1992) where they progressively model their teaching skills on those of

a senior teacher educator who may or may not be part of a 'school.' They are then assessed by 'sponsors' independently of their Heads of Training and of the manner, location and length of time of their teacher education (ATI 2006). Unlike the Affiliated Societies, ATI does not regulate how schools are structured, staffed or scheduled.

ATI was founded as an outcome of a decision made by the Affiliated Societies affiliate in the US, (now called the American Society for the AT, AmSAT) to disallow membership to AT teachers who had trained in the apprenticeship style or who had otherwise not fulfilled the attendance criteria at an AmSAT-recognised or other Affiliated Societies' teacher education program. As ATI member Graham Elliot (2005, p. 14) puts it: "[ATI sponsor's] assessment of new teachers calls for judgement, not measurement. It was STAT's [time-specific] measurement system that led to ATI's founders being excluded". ATI's competency standards will be presented and briefly analysed in Chapter 6.

ATI allows two avenues for teacher certification and membership: (1) beginning teacher competency as assessed by three independent sponsors according to ATI's agreed competency standards, and (2) pre-existing membership of one of the Affiliated Societies. By approaching ATI accreditation through the first path — competency assessment — beginning teachers do not need to accumulate a set number of hours, weeks and years in formal training. In fact, by not accumulating these hours, most ATI members would be ineligible to join an Affiliated Society, other than by special arrangement.

The second path to ATI membership is the one I took in 2004. Through its policy of 'inclusivity', ATI allows membership to teachers who are already qualified according the Affiliated Societies' time-specific system. In other words, ATI

grants accreditation on the basis of the measured time teachers have spent at Affiliated Society schools and presumes their competence without them having to undergo additional competency assessments by ATI sponsors. Contradicting Elliott's statement, measurement, rather than judgement, becomes the assessment tool here. This aspect of ATI's inclusivity policy therefore perpetuates the flaw it is intending to correct.

In the ATI system of AT teacher education, which is mostly apprenticeship-based, Heads of Training are not required to be accredited as such before ATI will consider accepting their trainees as teaching members. As mentioned earlier, ATI accredits 'sponsors' who then have the task of assessing potential candidates in a transparent process that is independent of their teacher educator. The appointment of sponsors is ratified by the ATI general membership (ATI 2007, p. 13). This makes them and their assessments directly accountable to the international membership, unlike the situation within the Affiliated Societies, where the accreditation of Heads of Training, who are invariably the main assessors, need not be ratified even by the membership of the relevant national society.

Voluntary self-regulation

Beginning in the early 1990s (Goodliffe 1991), and coming to a head in 2004 and 2005, there has been considerable debate among STAT members on the value to be gained by STAT pursuing professional voluntary self-regulation (VSR). Included in this debate is the adoption of competency standards for British AT teachers. STAT went to considerable effort to compile drafts set of beginner teacher competencies, which it circulated among members for comment (STAT Competence Draft B 2004). The intention of these drafts was to inform the

broader conversation for the possibility of adopting in the UK a generic framework of competency descriptions called National Occupation Standards (NOS). It is worth noting at this point that these calls for the introduction of qualitative competency standards have not been met with any suggestions to modify the quantitative requirements of the numerical protocols of AT teacher education; their continuing existence seems to be taken for granted. I will briefly summarise the debate.

The British government is encouraging VSR of the AT profession in the UK and wants to include it in the Complementary and Alternative Health Care sector (CAHC) of that nation, rather than the education system. CAHC is defined to include "all such practices and ideas self-defined by their users as preventing or treating illness or promoting health and well-being" (quoted in Kjeldsen 2005, p. 13). AT teachers were invited to participate in the VSR process because, by self-definition, the AT promotes health and well-being. In commenting on the possibility of being included in the education sector, rather than the health sector, STAT's Chair said the UK education system "would not suit our methods of teaching" (STAT Chair's meeting notes 03 November 2005, p.5). As will be discussed further in Chapter 6, the British educational standards for school teaching have been criticised in recent years for being overly prescriptive and regulatory (Reynolds 1999).

With input from contributing professions, the UK government agency Skills for Health adapts the NOS framework to suit each profession's requirements, although neither the basic NOS template nor its linguistic structure is changeable (St.Clair 2006). The debate about the value of adopting VSR/NOS has encouraged a number of STAT teacher educators to write in favour of the principle of adopting purposive competencies, even if they disagree with the

exact wording of the 2004 STAT or the NOS drafts. Carolyn Nicholls (2005), for example, supports the principle of adopting competency standards. She writes:

> It may be simply that the mass of teachers has reached a point where, because we are no longer of one tribe, we need signs and tokens by which to acknowledge each other's abilities.… Would it serve us to come together and produce a written description of our abilities and activities, and of how they are assessed? I think it would. (p. 14)

Other stakeholders, most notably Walter Carrington, the most senior teacher educator in the UK until his death in 2005, threatened to retire from STAT rather than accept the draft competency standards as proposed by the society. For Carrington (2004 a,b), a hasty or inappropriate adoption of collective competencies for the profession could undermine Alexander's emphasis on the importance of the individual and diminish the artistry of AT teaching by reducing it to a curriculum, a set of routinised behaviours which are reproducible and accountable but not respectful of individual differences in teaching. Carrington (2005a) also writes:

> In view of the fact that the fundamental principle of our Technique is Prevention, that we specialize in teaching people what not to do and how to avoid doing it, a document that sets out, as this does, to describe 'training outcomes' must give a totally misleading impression. Our teaching cannot be said to lead to 'outcomes' in the commonly accepted sense. (p. 12)

> I do not see what useful purpose [the competence document] serves; but I do foresee all kinds of illegitimate purposes for which it might come to be used … If it does not tell teachers how and what to teach, it will soon be read in that light. It is surely at variance to what is set out in Alexander's four books because it is reminiscent of the instructions for 'painting by numbers'. It rouses my concern that anybody should think such a paper appropriate or desirable. (p. 13)

Statistics are available as well, but they have not resolved the issue one way or another. A straw poll of hundred or so members present at the September 2004 AGM of STAT showed a two-thirds agreement against the adoption of the draft

competency standards, although the proxy votes were 80 per cent in favour (J. McDowell, personal correspondence 8 January 2007, with permission). A short time later, the results of questionnaire sent to STAT members in June-July 2005 show two-thirds of the respondents in favour of VSR (STAT 2005b). This implies agreement in principle with the adoption of NOS competency standards. From these mixed polling results, it is evident that the STAT membership is so divided over the question of competency standards that reaching consensus either for or against them will take some time. In any case, democratic consensus would be moot if STAT members were to heed Carrington's (2005a, p. 13) direction: "… do not allow a majority view to prevail over the minority. A majority opinion is nearly always wrong, or at least, highly suspect".

As I read from Australia the literature on these British debates, it seems that an important cause of the dissent among STAT members is the UK government's relegation of the AT to the health care sector, rather than to the educational sector. This creates an ontological dilemma for 'teachers' in a field which has historically protected its educational mission from being seen as a therapy, when this term implies handing over personal control to another (Tucker 2005). In any event, I believe this teacher or therapist distinction reflects a Cartesian dichotomy which contradicts Alexander's ethos of mind-body continuity.

It is possible to step outside these restrictions, however. Teacher educator Carolyn Nicholls (2006), for example, has recently developed through the UK Open College Network a government-accredited 'Level 4+' program which acknowledges the AT as a teaching modality and operates in parallel with her conventional three-year, STAT-approved course. Her model for gaining government recognition for AT teaching within an educational framework may prove to be a way of avoiding the teaching vs. therapy conundrum.

2.5 The professionalisation of AT teaching

I have already suggested that Alexander modelled his teacher training program of 1931 on the system of school teacher education then prevalent in the UK. I will continue to explore this cognate theme throughout the thesis as I argue that if AT teachers want to be regarded as professionals then they should take another look at how exemplary standards of school teacher education can be applied to AT teacher education. A word needs to be said at this point, though, about the words 'profession' and 'professionalism'.

So far I have used the words profession and professional in the taken-for-granted way that many other AT teachers do. However, when one looks at the recent debates described above among British AT teachers on the matter of professional self-regulation of AT teaching, it is possible to see that their disagreements remain unresolved, in part, because interpretations of 'professionalism' and 'professionalisation' can vary widely (Friedson 1994, 2001). Depending on how these interpretations are played out, they have the capacity to limit or expand the future of AT teacher education.

David Moore (2004) is an example of a teacher educator who argues that self-regulation and government accreditation should be encouraged in order to professionalise the AT. He emphasises the difficulty many AT teachers have in maintaining a livelihood and how essential it is for the AT, as a profession, to "articulate to governments what it is that they do, … demonstrate that [its] members have had a comprehensive and professional training, and that there is some level of self-regulation in place within the profession" (p. 37-38). I align with Moore in the need to professionalise AT teaching through the introduction of self-regulated standards which are publicly recognised and accepted. At the

same time, as with other teaching, these regulations should acknowledge the humanism and practical wisdom of the AT itself and encourage the intuitive artistry required to teach it (Furlong 2000).

A number of AT teachers oppose this view and suggest that professionalisation, which they also identify with self-regulation, would be bad for the AT. Sly (2003), for example, has warned of the dangers of letting AT teaching become so professionalised as to create the "social closure to be found in true professions such as law or medicine"(p. 33). In an analysis reminiscent of Illich's (1977) socio-critical approach, Sly recommends that "we should reject calls for greater respectability, and choose to remain on the 'fringe' where our work will have greater power and credibility as a force for real change" (p. 35). Carrington (2004 a,b) supports Sly's stance and, as mentioned previously, has inferred that professional self-regulation and the adoption of competencies would diminish the artistry of AT teaching. Ackers (2004) also endorses this view, fearing that professionalisation would interfere with her autonomy as an AT teacher.

These opposing views disregard the fact that the numerical protocols of AT teacher education were no less a form of professional self-regulation when they were originally established in the 1960s. If my analysis of the history of these quantitative rules is correct, they were constituted in order to satisfy UK government regulations of their era. In other words, professionalisation of the AT is not a new phenomenon. To expand on this further, I shall present an overview of the evolution of AT professionalisation using a template suggested by Hargreaves (1994, 2000) in his discussion of the history of the professionalisation of school teachers. This template provides a backdrop to the parallel professionalisation of AT teaching.

Hargreaves (2000) suggests that at one end of a spectrum of professionalism we have those teachers who see themselves as primarily artists or craftspersons who learnt by apprenticeship and now quietly get on with their solo craft work. This is how Alexander and his early group of teachers would have set up their practices. Hargreaves sees this as a characteristic attitude towards school teacher professionalism up to the 1960s and labels it "pre-professional" (pp. 151 -182). Since that period, teacher professionalism has moved through the "autonomous" age (1960s to mid-1980s), during which teaching was characterised by its individualism and teachers by their isolation. In the AT community, this period was marked by the emergence of STAT in the UK, but of very few other collaborative networks.

The next stage is the more collaborative, "collegial" age — 1980s and 1990s — in which "many teachers are starting to turn more to each other for professional learning, for a sense of direction, and for mutual support" (Hargreaves's 2000, p. 162). Evidence of this latter stage also happening in AT teaching may be seen in the proliferation of local and international professional societies, including the expansion of the Affiliated Societies; the popularity of the four-yearly International Congresses; and the rapidly increasing spread of AT-related web sites and email lists.

Hargreaves (2000) identifies two possibilities for the future of school teaching. One possibility is an impending, uncertain period ahead which he calls the age of the "post-professional" (p. 167). This age is characterised by social and political forces that could easily diminish the professionalism of school teachers either by forcing them back to pre-professional attitudes or by over-regulating them through narrowly conceived competence frameworks. Within the AT profession, too, it seems that teachers such as Sly, Carrington and Ackers are

trying to avoid such an over-regulated future by arguing for a return to 'pre-professionalism'.

An alternative future, which would expand rather than diminish teaching as a profession, is described by Hargreaves (2000) as a "reinvigorated post-modern professionalism" (p. 176). AT teachers who see their work in this light will counter the contemporary de-professionalising trends by setting and self-regulating an exacting set of standards. This, in turn, will allow the building of more collegial frameworks, not just with colleagues but also with other relevant stakeholders. I concur with Hargreaves when he writes, "If teachers want to become professionally stronger, they must now open themselves up and become more publicly vulnerable and accessible" (p. 176). There is an echo of Alexander in this statement.

Chapter 3

Theory, methodology, and data management

3.1 Introduction to the chapter

The previous two Chapters have set the scene for this theory and methodology chapter by introducing the personal and professional relationship that F. M. Alexander had with John Dewey from the time of their first meeting in 1916. I have also introduced the idea of linking AT teacher education and exemplary school teacher education. In this Chapter, I extend this Deweyan theme into the research component of the study by first arguing for a theoretical framework which reflects the emerging paradigm of learning, of which Dewey and Alexander were forerunners, and the conceptual work of Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) on the education of school teachers. For the interpretive research, I then argue for an overarching methodological framework I call, following Biesta and Burbules (2003), Deweyan pragmatism.

I then introduce the two subsidiary research methodologies, critical pragmatism (Cherryholmes 1988) and phronetic research (Beckett & Hager 2002; Flyvbjerg 2001). In Chapter 4, I will adopt a critically pragmatic approach to critiquing some of the problematic discourses and practices of AT teacher education, and in Chapter 5, I will use phronetic research as a organising principle for the empirical work of conducting email interviews with AT teachers and trainees world-wide.

Meanwhile, the last part of Chapter 3 reports on the techniques I developed for conducting these email interviews and processing the replies, along with a summary of the advantages and limitations I encountered when using this relatively new research method.

3.2 Theoretical framework

> My theories of mind-body, of the co-ordination of the active elements of the self and of the place of ideas in inhibition and control of overt action required contact with the work of F. M. Alexander, and in later years his brother, A. R. to transform them into realities.
>
> John Dewey, 1939 (quoted by Boydston 1986, p. 32)

'Inhibition' and 'control' are two of the words that feature prominently in the discourse of the AT. To Inhibit and Control means, first, to stop doing what is no longer desired and, second, to intentionally generate more appropriate behaviour. The pedagogy of AT teaching includes bringing to awareness reactive or habitual patterns (Dewey's 'active elements of the self'), showing how they may be stopped, and then indicating an alternative course of action while the habitual patterning is kept in check. In *How We Think* (1933, p. 119 -131), Dewey describes this process as learning "judgement", which is to creatively interweave analysis and synthesis in the understanding of an experience. Starting from a situation of "doubt or controversy" (p. 121), we define and elaborate conflicting claims, study the facts surrounding them, and finally make a decision about what to do. This decision serves as a principle for future similar situations. I shall say more about this in Chapter 4.

A corporate self, no less than an individual self, also has 'active elements' which require judgement to coordinate them when doubt and controversy arise. As mentioned in Chapter 2, doubt and controversy are very much the condition of

the AT profession now. One might even say the AT profession needs Alexander's principles to guide it through the change process it is facing (Cox 1991). While I doubt Dewey had the AT in mind when he wrote the following in *Experience and Education* (1938/63), these words could well apply to the AT profession today:

> It is not too much to say that an educational philosophy which professes to be based on the idea of freedom may become as dogmatic as ever was the traditional education which is reacted against. For any theory and set of practices is dogmatic which is not based upon critical examination of its own underlying principles. (p. 22)

Michael Gelb (2004), in the most recent edition of his classic book on the AT, *Body Learning*, suggests the principles of the AT — "Alexander's operational ideas" (p. 139) — may be used when a corporation or organisation is undergoing the sorts of changes that have become required in recent years, but which are often resisted through key individuals' fear of how they will be judged by others. The first step in organisational change, he recommends, "is questioning habitual modes of operation while recognizing that choice is possible" (p. 140). This inhibitory mode sets the scene for the Alexandrian concept Direction, the organisational equivalent of which is "systems-oriented strategic planning in the context of a shared sense of vision, mission and values" (p. 142).

Alexander's operational ideas may make sense to Alexandrians, but they do not have enough academic capital to support the research I am attempting with this study. For such support I will draw on contemporary scholars of education whose works have a Deweyan flavour which, I presume, Alexander would approve. Dewey therefore becomes an important link connecting these scholars back to Alexander. Both the theoretical and methodological frameworks for this study have a broadly Deweyan perspective.

The theoretical framework draws mainly on two parallel approaches to professional learning. The first is 'the emerging paradigm of learning', as explicated by Beckett and Hager (2002), and the second is Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) conceptualising of how teacher knowledge and practice are related.

The emerging paradigm of learning

> There is seen to be but one issue involved in all reflection upon conduct:
> The rectifying of present troubles, the harmonizing of present
> incompatibilities by projecting a course of action which gathers into itself
> the meaning of them all.
> John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct (*1922/1983, p. 146)

Alexander espoused the continuity of mind and body in learning and means-ends, procedural thinking. He coined the expression Psycho-Physical Re-Education to characterise the way these principles may be learnt. Beckett and Hager (2002) also allude to these principles of "holism/organicism" when, drawing on Dewey, they write about the "emerging paradigm of learning" (p. 123). The hallmarks of this paradigm are concepts such as the evolution of social, sociocentric selves, embodied personhood, interdependence, process and becoming (p. 95). Such qualities relate to practical reasoning and a values-driven approach to education.[6]

The impact of this 'emerging paradigm' in education generally has been impeded by a lingering attachment to the 'standard paradigm' of learning, which I call here the 'normal paradigm'. This older view would have linear

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[6] The concept of paradigms has only recently begun showing up in the AT literature. Yeager (2007) suggests a paradigm shift is needed so that the AT may be seen as a process-oriented health modality. In respect of AT teaching, Chance (2005) uses the word paradigm to mean differences in approach to pedagogy, rather than in the Kuhnian sense of revolutionary conceptualisation that I adopt in this thesis.

logic be the path to truth, theory be superior to practice, and mind rule the body (Beckett & Hager 2002, p. 52). From a training perspective, pedagogy and assessment would be 'front-end', that is, individualised, decontextualised and instructor-centred.

The normal paradigm follows from the predominantly Cartesian epistemology of the rational, unitary and individualised self, of a self which is unchanging, constant and private (Beckett & Hager 2002, pp. 95 -107). From the perspective of the emerging paradigm, these ontological qualities are seen as limitations to learning, which, rather than being dismissed, are incorporated as a sub-set of a newer and larger range of practical possibilities (see also Morgan 2007). Or to borrow something Dewey (in Ratner 1939, p. 635) said about science and art, "there is no opposition, although there is a distinction".

The emerging paradigm of learning reflects an epistemology of practice which was revolutionary in the early 1900s when Dewey and, in parallel with him, Alexander were teaching and writing about the continuity of body and mind as they attempted to dissolve the Cartesian dichotomies that were the intellectual inheritance of the traditional education system. Both Dewey's instrumentalism and, as Dewey (in Alexander 1932) acknowledged, Alexander's concept of Psycho-Physical Unity would have the potential to transform education by integrating the theoretical with the practical, the personal with the social, and science with art. Alexander (1910) wrote in his first book, *Man's Supreme Inheritance*:

> I cannot but express my admiration for the direction in which the swing of the pendulum [of medical thought back to conceptions of mental and spiritual healing] is setting, at the same time expressing also my regret that it is being held back by all the old encumbrances and rigidities of academic preconception and scientific methods. (p. 129)

And Dewey (1916), in his classic *Democracy and Education*, wrote:

> A person must have experience, he [sic] must *live*, if his artistry is to be more than a technical accomplishment. He cannot find the subject matter of his artistic activity within his art; this must be an expression of what he suffers and enjoys in other relationships …. There is a tendency for every distinctive vocation to become too dominant, too exclusive and absorbing in its specialized aspect. This means emphasis upon skill or technical method at the expense of meaning. Hence it is not the business of education to foster this tendency, but rather to safeguard against it, so that the scientific inquirer shall not be merely the scientist, the teacher merely the pedagogue, the clergyman merely one who wears the cloth, and so on. (p. 360, italics in the original)

Dewey's and Alexander's century-old contributions notwithstanding, the sophisticated epistemologies of the emerging paradigm of learning have been seen by educators of school teachers and other professionals as 'new' for only about three decades. In that time, there has arisen a vocabulary similar to Beckett and Hager's (2002) to describe this paradigmatic shift from the traditional, overly technical styles of training to the more inclusive, self-reflexive forms of education. Argyris and Schön (1974), for example, call these 'old' model-I, and 'new' model-II behaviours respectively. Handy and Aitken (1986) cite developments in the European Economic Community to argue for the need for teachers to accommodate their teaching to "a powerful movement away from traditional approaches" and "a product of education [which] is a process of growth within the human being" (p. 118).

From a more critical perspective, Goodson and Hargreaves (1996, pp. 20-21) set out the seven components of what they call "post-modern professionalism", which, as alluded to earlier, emphasises the importance of practical and moral wisdom in school teaching. Goodson (2003) also calls this sort of professionalism "new" and "principled" (pp. 131-132). Cochran-Smith (2000) draws together a number of researchers to variously describe the emerging

view as "a new paradigm for professional development", "new frames for teacher learning" and "a new collaborative relation that replaces the expert-novice relationship … [and features] inquiry as stance across the professional lifespan" (p. 17). The importance of lifelong learning in the emerging paradigm is also reinforced by Edwards and Usher (2001), who see it as a postmodern condition of continuing professional education.

The Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE 2004) suggests that "lifelong" (throughout life) and "lifewide" (in various settings) learning are features of "new learning", which is "less about imparting defined knowledge and skills and more about shaping a kind of person … [who] is open to autonomous, assisted and collaborative learning". "Old learning", by contrast, is focused on fixed content knowledge and technical skills that are meant to remain unchangeable through life; "it fosters a rigid way of thinking which will be counterproductive for the workers, citizens and persons of the future" (pp. 21-22). For Shulman (1998) the reformed perspective is "an emergent new view of education in the professions, and of [school] teacher education" (p. 522). He refers to these increasingly familiar practices as "commonplaces of professional learning" (p. 522).

What is common to these emerging perspectives is the veering of professional educational practice towards holism, organicism and appreciation of the body-mind continuum. Experience is also valued, not only the experience of individual practitioners but also of the collectives to which they belong. Within this view, Shulman (1998; 1999) identifies six attributes that characterise all professions, including the profession of school teaching. These attributes are:

- service to others; the pursuit of moral and social ends that are also technically grounded; for educators, the challenge is to impart knowledge and skills to guide their charges towards responsibility and virtue

- scholarly foundations for professional practice; an understanding of theoretical knowledge bases, including the capacity to critically engage in empirical research
- acting with and through the practices, skills and strategies of the profession; the testing of knowledge claims in practice
- judgement under uncertainty; the appreciation that real professional work involves dealing with accidents, chance and the unforeseen
- learning from experience; individual professionals and the professions themselves use judgement to prudentially reflect on both practice and theory and develop new knowledge bases
- contribution to the building of professional communities of practice; helping fellow professionals by sharing with them the attributes of the profession as a whole. (Shulman 1998, pp. 515-518)

Broadly, these qualities are also attributes of the profession of AT teaching, though I have yet to see them formulated as such. With AT teaching, however, one of these attributes has never been fully realised, namely that relating to scholarly foundations for professional practice and engagement in empirical research. This thesis is a step in the direction of establishing some 'scholarly foundations' in the field of AT teacher education.

Knowledge-*for*, -*in*, and -*of*-practice

The second theoretical framework used for organising this thesis is Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) paper 'Relationships of knowledge and practice: Teacher learning in communities'. These American researchers distinguish three relationships between knowledge and practice in school teacher learning that they conceptualise as (1) knowledge-*for*-practice, (2) knowledge-*in*-practice, and (3) knowledge-*of*-practice. Broadly, these three conceptions may be identified with the perspectives that Carr and Kemmis (1986, pp. 35-41) call respectively the technical, practical and strategic views of teaching, and Chappell, Gonczi and Hager (1995, pp. 175-187) call the objectivist, humanistic and critical approaches to competence.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999), knowledge-*for*-practice conception refers to the knowledge and skills that may be gained from the theoretical discourses of a profession, that is, from the experts and scholars who have gone before and who set out their advice as information to be digested by inexperienced beginners. In this conception of teacher learning, "teaching is understood primarily as a process of applying received knowledge to a practical situation: Teachers implement, translate, use, adapt, and/or put into practice what they have learned of the knowledge base" (p. 257). Competence to teach, then, is assessed according to how a teacher appears in the eyes of the expert trainers to enact this process, no matter how decontextualised it may be from the real world of teaching.

The second conception of teacher learning, knowledge-*in*-practice, draws on the work of Donald Schön (1983/1991), and before him, Dewey, to connect teachers' professional learning to a craft-like ability to reflect on their teaching practices. Within this conception, teachers are encouraged to complement the technical and theoretical information they need by seeking out mentors from whom they can learn the tacit knowledge and artistry embedded in the daily practice of teaching. "Good teaching can be coached and learned (but not taught) through reflective supervision or through a process of coaching reflective teaching" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999, p. 269). Practical wisdom in teaching, or what many educational scholars, following Aristotle, call *phronesis,* is emphasised in this conception of teacher learning. I shall give a more detailed analysis of this topic in Section 3.3.

Within the knowledge-*in*-practice conception of learning, professional competence is seen as being more than the acquisition of technical-rational knowledge-*for*-practice. Competence is therefore best assessed, either post-

certification or during student practicums, by tools that authenticate practitioners' judgement as well as their practical and reflective abilities. In the assessment of school teachers, these tools may include portfolios, journal writing, and videotaping of teaching as it occurs.

In AT teaching, a similar distinction between these knowledge-*for*-practice and knowledge-*in*-practice conceptions of teacher learning is alluded to by Walter Carrington (in Carrington & Carey 1986), who suggests teaching the AT involves judgement in finding the right mix of theory and practice according to the pupil's needs. He says:

> The ordinary stereotype of a teacher doesn't apply at all. [Teaching the AT] is a learning situation in which both student and teacher are involved. In teaching the Technique, I find that I'm learning from my pupils all the time, and that's what makes the whole thing interesting … It's a special type of learning process which makes it different from a school where a teacher has an established body of knowledge to impart and which the pupil is expected to learn. The Technique isn't like that at all; people come to it for practical help in accordance with their needs. It's not good, therefore, for the teacher to off-load on to them theoretical considerations — however valid and interesting the teacher finds them — if they're not immediately relevant to the situation. (p. 73)

Carrington is identifying AT teaching with the knowledge-*in*-practice conception of teacher learning. By implication, the 'stereotype of a teacher', which I presume him to mean school teacher, is identified with the knowledge-*for*-practice conception. Two decades later, this statement reflects a view of school teaching which may no longer apply. It is also anomalous in its hinting of a dichotomy which has the second conception of teacher learning be superior to the first, rather than them both being part of a theory-practice continuum. When theoretical knowledge is accorded epistemological primacy over practical knowledge, or vice versa, knowledge-*for* and knowledge-*in*-practice are often mistaken to be dualistic opposites (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) third conception of teacher learning, knowledge-*of*-practice, is an integrative perspective which acknowledges the value of the other two conceptions yet transcends them. It is based on assumption that "through inquiry, teachers across the professional life span — from very new to very experienced — make problematic their own knowledge and practice as well as the knowledge and practice of others and thus stand in a different relationship to knowledge" (p. 273). In this view of teacher learning, beginning and experienced teachers construct their knowledge socially by coming together as equals in collaborative communities. There is a critical, transformative thrust to this conception that would have teachers continuously interrogate the interplay of power and participation, whether it be inside or outside their immediate educational environments.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999, p. 288) adopt the postural metaphor "inquiry as stance" to depict the democratic agenda of the knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning. Stance implies not only grounding but also orientation, the way one sees. It is both social and political — "the term *inquiry as stance* [describes] the positions teacher and others who work together in inquiry communities take toward knowledge and its relationships to practice (pp. 288-289, italics in original). This thesis is a form of inquiry as stance. The metaphor is apt for an inquiry into the teacher education practices of the AT, which deals so much with both posture and perspective.

Drawing on the AT community as a resource for this inquiry, my aim is to problematise AT teacher education and the long-held assumptions that undergird them. Consistently with the knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning, I intend to develop a framework of AT teacher education standards which resonates with Alexander's ethos and incorporates current

approaches to professional teacher education.

In the next section, I shall describe how Deweyan pragmatism has been used in the methodological component of this study.

3.3 Pragmatism as a methodological framework

For this research study I adopt a methodological framework which is grounded in pragmatism. Pragmatic approaches to social science research are increasingly being seen as a 'third way', a way of mediating between qualitative and quantitative research programs. To some, for example Morgan (2007), the 'pragmatic approach' is even being heralded as a third paradigm that subsumes the positivist and interpretive paradigms of research that have come to the fore in the past three decades (see also Carr & Kemmis 1986; Garrison 1994; Chappell, Gonczi & Hager 1995).

Biesta and Burbules (2003) extend more specifically the idea of Deweyan pragmatism to educational research. They suggest Deweyan pragmatism is an appropriate educational research vehicle for "un-thinking certain false dichotomies, certain assumptions, certain traditional practices and ways of doing things, and in this it can open up new possibilities for thought. It is … a resource that can help educational researchers make their research activities more reflective and — to use one of Dewey's most favorite words… — more *intelligent*" (p. 114, italics in original). Since this quotation could also summarise the ethos of the AT, and because of the intellectual and personal relationship that Dewey had with Alexander, I consider Deweyan pragmatism to be a research approach particularly consistent with the AT.

The question then arises, was Alexander a pragmatist, in the technical sense of that word? Dewey thought not in 1918, when he wrote:

> Mr Alexander's book [the second edition (1918) of *Man's Supreme Inheritance,* to which Dewey wrote the introduction] is not concerned with setting forth instrumental, pragmatic or evolutionary philosophy… His critical contention is that the remedial ills from which humanity suffers on the physical side (with the intellectual and moral ills that result) are due to disassociation of the 'higher' nervous structures and functions — those which are the basis of our conscious life — from the 'lower' — those which are involved in the execution of bodily postures and movements. (Letter to Randolph Bourne, quoted in McCormack 1958, p. 123, and in Goldberg 2006)

More recently, Deweyan scholar Richard Shusterman (1997) has made a claim for the AT being of pragmatic value. Calling the AT a 'somatic discipline', Shusterman writes: "[P]ragmatism still advocates that [everyday experience] can be bettered through intelligent means. Somatic disciplines claim to provide such means and therefore warrant pragmatist consideration." (p. 233)

Whether or not pragmatism might be termed a research methodology is questionable, at least in the sense that methodology is traditionally related to epistemology. Biesta and Burbules (2003) suggest that the pragmatic approach to understanding knowledge might be considered more an "anti-epistemology" because it is not built on the "dualism of mind and matter" (p. 10). In any event, for want of a better word, I will continue in this thesis to call pragmatism a methodology. It is an inclusive methodology which permits an eclectic choice of data collection methods from a variety of epistemological frameworks (Biesta & Burbules 2003) and which is also consistent with the holistic and integrative approach I adopt in this study. Patton (2002) puts it this way: "Being pragmatic allows one to eschew methodological orthodoxy in favor of *methodological appropriateness* as the primary criterion for judging methodological quality,

recognizing that different methods are appropriate for different situations (p. 72, italics in original).

In line with this eclectic view, I include the following two main data sources in this study:

- participant interviews by email
- published interviews with first generation teachers, including senior teacher educators

These two sources will be interpreted against a background formed by the literature of the AT and AT teacher education, some of which was mentioned in Chapter 2, and my personal experience and observation as an AT teacher and teacher educator.

Within this general view of pragmatism as a research methodology, I have used more specifically two subsidiary research methodologies. These are 'critical pragmatism' (Cherryholmes 1988), and 'phronetic research' (Flyvbjerg 2001; Beckett & Hager 2002). Critical pragmatism is the lens through which I problematise some aspects of the AT and AT teacher education that remain mostly uncritiqued. Phronetic research is a qualitative approach to collecting and interpreting data from various sources. I will now describe how I use these approaches.

Critical pragmatism

Critical pragmatism, as explained by Cherryholmes (1988 pp. 145-146), drawing on Rorty, is premised on the poststructural view that the discourses and practices of a field need continually to be reinterpreted and reconstructed against a background of no moral or objective certainties. Critical pragmatism

results "when a sense of crisis is brought to our choices, when it is accepted that our standards, beliefs, values, guiding texts, and discourses-practices themselves require evaluation and reappraisal" (Cherryholmes 1988, p. 151). In this view, Alexander's work in challenging the established Cartesian attitudes of his time might rightly be called critically pragmatic. In his first book, *Man's Supreme Inheritance* (1st ed. 1910), we see an indication of his early criticality in statements such as:

> I know that I shall be regarded in many quarters as a revolutionary and a heretic, for my theory and practice, though founded on a principle as old as the life of man [sic], are not in accord with, nor even a development of, the tradition which still obtains. But in thus rejecting tradition I am, happily, sustained by something more than an unproved theory. Moreover, on this firm ground I do not stand alone. Though my theory may appear revolutionary and heretical, it is shared by men of attainment in science and medicine. (pp. ix-x)

And around 1949, Alexander (in Fischer ed. 1995) was still claiming:

> …in the field in which I have worked I am the pioneer… My life's work as revealed in my books has been the teaching, on the lines of the educator, of a technique I evolved for changing and improving the manner of use of the self…." (pp. 213-214)

While the term poststructuralism might not be appropriate to describe his sometimes self-serving criticality, Alexander, the 'revolutionary and heretic', was enough of a critical pragmatist to continuously question the process he was engaged in. By holding up a mirror to his own and others' habitual behaviours and beliefs, he attempted to produce alternative discourses and practices that centre on his holistic understanding of Psycho-Physical Unity, and of personal and social responsibility.

Alexander was circumscribed in his quest, however, by needing to use the intellectual language and educational structures of the same Cartesian

paradigm he was attempting to subvert (Zigler 1980). A consequence is that his followers have inherited a set of "discourses-practices" (Cherryholmes 1988, p. 15) that remain largely unframed for a postmodern society which expects practitioners to look at their professional work more critically. Critical pragmatism is a way of deconstructing and reconstructing these discourses-practices so that Alexander's rhetoric may be accorded a 21st Century reading.

According to Cherryholmes (1988), analyses performed in the name of critical pragmatism themselves may become forms of 'vulgar pragmatism' if we stop studying them through the lens of criticality. Vulgar pragmatism may be seen in professions which accept unquestioningly and refuse to reflect on their established standards, rules and conventions — "[it is] socially reproductive, instrumentally and functionally reproducing accepted meanings and conventional organizations, institutions, and ways of doing things for good or ill. " (p. 151). Whereas Alexander's early work may be seen as a form of critical pragmatism, the education of AT teachers risks becoming a vulgar pragmatism unless it maintains a continuous critique of its discourse and practices. Marjory Barlow (b. 1915, d. 2006), who was Alexander's niece, one of his earliest graduates and a long-time teacher educator, has put the problem in these terms:

> The greatest danger to the Alexander Technique is arrogance — the feeling that we have some special knowledge which makes us superior to everyone else. [Alexander], though he had great certainties about certain things, was never arrogant." (Barlow & Allan Davies 2002, p. 315)

Whether it be due to arrogance or ignorance, it is ironic that so few of Alexander's followers have maintained a similar level of criticality to his work and to the organisational structures and professional habits that have accreted around it over the years as Alexander himself did to the practices of other professions. This lack of criticality applies particularly to discourses-practices of

AT teacher education. While not referring specifically to Alexander, Dewey (1929, in Ratner ed. 1939) identified this sort of difficulty in the following terms:

> Anybody can notice today that the effect of an original and powerful teacher is not all to the good. Those influenced by him often show a one-sided interest; they tend to form schools, and to become impervious to other problems and truths; they incline to swear by the words of their master and to go on repeating his thoughts after him, and often without the spirit and insight that originally made them significant. (p. 634)

My intention in this thesis is to interrogate such imperviousness within the field of AT teacher education. I take the view that, to the extent that AT stakeholders defer critical examination of the discourses-practices of AT teacher education, they delay the full recognition of the AT's role within the emerging paradigm of learning.

With pragmatism as the overarching research methodology, in Chapter 4 I use a critically pragmatic lens to analyse how aspects of the pre-Alexandrian, normal paradigm of learning, that is the Cartesian viewpoint, remain embedded in one of the discourses and one of the practices of the AT profession. Meanwhile, I will discuss the concept of phronetic research, which is the methodological basis of the empirical component of my study.

Phronetic research

Phronesis is one of Aristotle's three forms of knowledge; the other two are *episteme* and *techne*. *Episteme* is the form of reasoning that is theoretical and propositional; it is correlated to the form of activity called *theoria,* or intellectual propositions. *Techne* is instrumental craft knowledge and is correlated to *poeisis*, or production. *Phronesis* means 'prudence' and 'practical common-sense', and is

correlated with the Aristotelean form of activity called *praxis*, which manifests in the contingent world of action. For Aristotle (1976, p. 209), "… it is thought to be the mark of a prudent man to be able to deliberate rightly about what is good and advantageous for … the good life generally". Dispositions related to this concept of *phronesis* are means-ends reasoning, understanding, sympathetic judgement, situational perception, and insight (Noel 1999; Garrison 1997; Dunne 1993).

Dewey reconstructed Aristotle in a way that allows for the distinction between Aristotle's forms of knowledge yet rejects the Enlightenment dualisms they have generated, such as between mind and body, reason and emotion, theory and practice. He rejected belief in the supremacy of *episteme*, and with it the idea of universal, eternal and fixed truths (Biesta & Burbules 2003; Garrison 1997). To Dewey, *episteme*, *phronesis* and *techne* are all forms of *phronesis*; or as Garrison (1997, p. 92) summarises him, "all inquiry is practical reasoning and all reason is instrumental … for restoring harmony to our lives".

An increasing number of scholars are drawing on this understanding of *phronesis* and its correlate *praxis* to emphasise the importance of practical reasoning, judgement and perceptiveness in educational and social science research. Examples in education are Birmingham (2004), Beckett and Hager (2002), Hager (2000), Korthagen and Kessels (1999), Noel (1999), Thayer-Bacon (1999), Garrison (1997,1999), Beckett (1996), Carr (1995), Wilson (1994), Kessels and Korthagen (1996), and Carr and Kemmis (1986). Examples from other social sciences are Flyvbjerg (2001) and Clegg (2001).

Carr and Kemmis (1986) recommend researchers adopt a phronetic approach to those theoretical concepts that have become "habits of mind … yesterday's

good ideas" (pp. 42 - 43), and to problematise them dialectically so that contradictions may be revealed and resolutions attempted. This approach resonates with the critical pragmatism of Cherryholmes (1988) mentioned earlier and is consistent with the emerging paradigm of learning. In this study I argue that the phronetic perspective may also be used in research about the profession of AT teaching, the organisational habits of which need to be interrogated dialectically if it is to continue building its future within the emerging paradigm of learning. When Garrison (1997, p. xix) writes "There is a strange and unnatural silence in theory and research on [school] teaching. The vocabulary of practical reasoning is largely missing", he could be talking just as accurately about theory and research on AT teaching.

Phronesis and the Alexander Technique

Hubert Dreyfus (in Flyvbjerg 1991) says in his discussion on *phronesis*/process and *techne*/product that the former has to do with people and the latter with "getting things done" (p. 103). In this view, the word 'technique' in the name Alexander Technique is a problem because it creates confusion between the craft meaning of technique as an orientation to production, and the overarching intention of the AT, which is concerned with process of the individual learner (Weed 1989). Erika Whittaker (1988) told the second International Alexander Congress in Brighton, UK:

> … the word 'technique' is not appropriate. Alexander used it, but he used it in a more flexible way, and by now it has become a rather rigid label, something recognisable as a fixed format, and is relegated to the list of alternatives now in fashion. 'Technique' implies some measurable efficiency and some final achievement at a future date — something to strive for, something to master and ultimately be judged by some higher authority. But how is such a process possible when you are concerned with a principle whose very nature goes against conformity and rigid authority? (p. 10)

Whittaker is drawing attention to the way fixations have developed within the AT pedagogy which portray the work as craft-like, technical and measurable. In Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) terminology, this would be the AT teacher's knowledge-*for*-practice. While this is certainly an important part of what Shulman (1987) calls teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, the processes of teacher education should encompass a broader range of professional possibilities, not all of which may be measureable. These possibilites include the affective and social as well as the cognitive and technical (Beckett & Hager 2002; Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999).

Dewey extended the idea of 'technique' in a way that fits with Whittaker's recommendation for flexibility. I shall revisit a quotation from the Introduction to *The Use of the Self* already used in Chapter 1. Dewey wrote:

> The technique of Mr. Alexander gives to the educator a standard of psycho-physical health — in which what we call morality is included. It supplies also the 'means whereby' this standard may be progressively and endlessly achieved, becoming a conscious possession of the one educated. It provides therefore the conditions for the central direction of all special educational processes. It bears the same relation to education that education itself bears to all other human activities. (in Alexander 1932, p. xxi)

Here Dewey is endorsing the AT for the moral, that is, prudential-phronetic, value it gives the teacher as well as the student. Both teacher and student learn to use the Means Whereby to achieve a standard 'progressively and endlessly', which is to say both teacher and student strive towards an educational accomplishment whose end is not "an end or finality in the literal sense, but is in turn the starting point of new desires, aims and plans" (Dewey 1926, in Archambault ed. 1964, p. 155).

Even though the AT helps individual pupils and teacher trainees develop a certain artistry and coordination in the way they move, their transformation is more appropriately assessed by how they engage with the process of learning rather than by what they will have produced by the supposed finish of their education. Williamson (1989) points to the late Marj Barstow's unique apprenticeship style of AT teacher education as an example of this process: "One's rate of progress is determined entirely by one's ability to take risks in independent thought. And perhaps because Marj never gave me the impression that there was a point of adequacy to be reached which was good enough, I experience the practice of the Alexander Technique as a continuum of learning without an end" (p. 57).

From this Deweyan perspective, the 'technique' used by Alexander and his close colleagues, may be seen as an educational *praxis*, and his methods of inquiry as phronetic. Perhaps a more appropriate name should be Alexander Practice. Even so, I have yet to find any theorists who overtly relate the concepts of phronesis and praxis to the AT, although Burkitt (2002) has written a stimulating paper that connects Aristotle's *phronesis*, Bourdieu's *habitus*, Foucault's 'technologies of the self', and Dewey's and Alexander's conceptions of habit. However, Burkitt seems to underestimate the influence of physiological and psychological factors influencing postural patterning, such as injury, illness and emotional trauma, when he suggests postural habits can be changed by altering the social conditions and situations by which they are instilled in us (Dennis 2003).

'Phronetic' research as an organising principle

In this section I draw on two qualitative approaches to research that I call

phronetic because they both draw on the concept of practical reasoning in the study of social phenomena. One comes from a Deweyan educational perspective and the other from a critical theory perspective. Brought together, these phronetic approaches have an Alexandrian tone to them that makes them appropriate for use as an organising principle in the sourcing and interpreting of research data.

The first of these phronetic approaches is built on the work of Australian philosophers of education Beckett and Hager (2002), who draw on the concept of *phronesis* to posit four questions in order to set the scene for what they call 'organic (whole person) learning'. These questions are:

1. What are we doing?
2. Why are we doing it?
3. What comes next?
4. How can we do it better? (pp. 30-31)

The second approach is that of Danish social scientist and urban designer Bent Flyvbjerg (2001), who overtly calls his concept 'phronetic research' because its purpose is "to contribute to society's practical rationality in elucidating where we are, where we want to to go, and what is desirable according to diverse sets of values and interests" (p. 167). Flyvbjerg, whose interest is more in institutions than education, extends *phronesis* into critical social sciences research by also asking four questions:

1. Where are we going?
2. Who gains, and who loses, by which mechanisms of power?
3. Is it desirable?
4. What should be done? (p. 145)

There are similarities between these two sets of questions. Flybjerg's questions 1, 3, and 4 have the same tone as Beckett and Hager's, but his question 2 deals specifically with the Foucault's notion of power, which is something "exercised

rather than possessed" (quoted in Flyvbjerg 2001, p. 117). I have put these two phronetic approaches together as an organising principle for the empirical part of my research. To frame both the interviewing and the interpreting I used the following template of eight paired phronetic questions:

- What are we doing? Where are we going?
- Why are we doing it? Who gains and loses, by which mechanisms of power?
- What comes next? Is it desirable?
- What should be done? How can we do it better?

These questions provide a lens through which to study both the participants' email interviews and the published interviews with senior AT teachers. I do this in Chapter 5, where I also suggest some interim measures that will then feed into the more concrete recommendations of Chapter 6. It is also worth observing the correspondence between these phronetic questions and the five stages of reflective thought that Dewey articulated in the first (1910) and second (1933) editions of *How We Think*. I shall say more about this in Chapter 4, in my reframing of Alexander's autobiographical chapter from his *The Use of the Self* (1932/46). In the next section, meanwhile, I continue the methodological thread by describing in some detail my use of email for interviewing the participants.

3.4 Using email in world-wide qualitative research

There are two purposes for this section of the thesis. The first is to outline the reasons I chose email interviewing for the study and to present a range of considerations that future researchers of similar topics might like to take into account. The second purpose is to highlight some of the salient methodological

features I came across when using email interviewing in this study. These include the advantages, limitations and ethical considerations that I had to deal with beforehand or reflect upon subsequently.

As a research method, email interviewing already has considerable use in market research and for other quantitative purposes. However, as a qualitative method it is still in relative infancy (Mann & Stewart 2000). Any description of how email interviewing has been used as a tool in a qualitative research project can therefore only contribute to its methodological value. As well, if AT stakeholders continue to research AT teacher education from an international perspective, they may find my experiences useful.

Why email interviewing?

An important part of this study involves sourcing and interpreting the opinions of a range of AT stakeholders about the future of AT teacher education. Personal, face-to-face (FTF) interviewing is the usual way of gleaning information for these sorts of qualitative projects. However, several difficulties became apparent when I considered the prospect of FTF interviewing for this study. The prime difficulty was that FTF interviewing would have limited me to the relatively small pool of less than fifty teachers and trainees living within reach of my home in Sydney, Australia, many of whom I had either taught or had professional dealings with during my career as an AT teacher and teacher educator.

Another important factor is that I did not want to be accused of either seeking out or avoiding participants whose opinions I might already predict through their past personal associations with me or their current political profiles within

the AT community. Nor did I want to approach novice teachers directly lest they feel that I, as a well-known teacher educator, might be judging or evaluating their work or opinions. I wanted to find a way of letting such colleagues volunteer for the project without feeling any pressure from me to do so. The most convenient arrangement would be to have a research participant cohort of self-nominating volunteers from around the world.

It soon became apparent that the best way of recruiting such people would be to use internet technology, or 'computer-mediated communication' (CMC) (Bampton & Cowton 2002, para. 1). Two main methods of interviewing by CMC then presented themselves — synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous interviewing would mean being able to interact with participants in present time, but it would also require expensive and technologically abstruse web sites as well as a considerable learning curve for me as the generator and host of the web sites.

After discarding this idea of synchronous CMC, I opted for the less demanding method of interviewing participants asynchronously by email. This meant that my communications with participants would occur whenever we chose to write, rather than being simultaneous. Taking the lead of Bampton and Cowton (2002), I shall use the useful neologism "e-interviewing" (para. 1) to describe this style of interview. And following Crystal (2001, p. 21), I shall also insert the 'e-' prefix before a variety of related terms, for example, 'e-write' and 'e-text'.

With the approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at UTS, I decided not to approach any colleagues directly but rather to advertise for e-interviewees in the newsletters, email lists and web sites of as many international AT professional societies and groups as I could find, including

those in Australia. In this way I could be open to receiving an unpredictable number of responses and a diverse range of opinions from a large selection of countries.

There were risks associated with this strategy too, including the danger that nobody might respond at all and that the quality of their experience, or at least their ability to write about it, would be insufficient for my analysis. Thankfully, neither of these happened. In addition, this form of 'convenience sampling', as distinct from 'probability sampling' of a targeted population, would make it difficult for me to infer that the resulting interpretations represent the opinions of the AT profession generally (Schonlau, Fricker & Elliot 2002).

I recruited all but the last of the participants using this email advertising method. This participant volunteered after a personal conversation at an AT conference in Australia. All together, I e-interviewed a total of 20 participants — fourteen women (W) and six men (M) — from seven countries. They include teacher trainees, teachers and teacher educators. The numbers of participants from each country are:

- Australia = 2 (1W, 1M),
- Germany = 2 (2W),
- Israel = 1 (1M),
- New Zealand = 1 (1W),
- Switzerland =1 (1W),
- United Kingdom = 8 (4W, 4M),
- United States = 5 (5W).

Beyond this cohort of twenty participants, seven other people made contact initially but either withdrew or stopped their involvement. Of this group of seven, two were from the UK and one from each of Australia, South Africa, Germany, The Netherlands and the USA. All communications and e-interviews, including the preliminary advertising and recruiting, were in the English

language, which is the only language I write in. Of the participants from non-anglophone countries, with only one did I have some difficulty understanding their written English to the point where I needed slight clarification.

In the following sections I shall reflect on my experience of using email interviewing in this study. This will be in the nature of a report on only those benefits, limitations and ethics considerations I found relevant. More general information on these and other issues may be found in the literature I cite.

Benefits of email interviewing

Accessibility

As a research medium, CMC is certainly cheaper and more convenient than FTF contact involving long-distance travelling or phoning. E-interviewing means the interviewer does not have to deal with background noise on either audiotapes or telephone (Opdenakker 2006). It also allows a researcher to contact participants at any distance and at times when even phone calls would be inconvenient, for example, during the night, while they are at work, and even while they are on holiday. As Bampton and Cowton (2002) put it, CMC allows researchers to extend their "geographical reach" (para. 25). In my case, I would also call this an overcoming of the 'Australian tyranny of distance'. It was also a convenient way to advertise my research project and to recruit participants (Clarke 2000).

With e-interviewing, it is fair to presume that correspondents will have taken their time to reflect on and edit their replies off-line before sending them. Many of the participants in this study, including several from non-anglophone countries, took the opportunity to write quite thoughtful and creative

responses. In the case of those whose first language is not English, perhaps e-writing allowed them to be more relaxed and unconcerned about spoken incoherence than they would have been in FTF interviews. This could make up for a possible lack of the spontaneity that would be more likely in FTF interviews (Clarke 2000).

E-texts can be stored and archived easily using a computer. The HREC's requirement that I use the University's server for all research related CMC means that the e-texts are still accessible even if my personal computer were to break down. The texts of all questions and replies, along with dates and times of sending, are immediately to hand via the email server (Mann & Stewart 2000). As well, e-interviewees "provide their own transcription as a natural by-product" (Bampton & Cowton 2002, para. 20), unlike FTF interviewing where researchers usually have to spend time or money transcribing the data. Cutting and pasting excerpts from the replies, along with some of the coding and sorting, can be done on the computer before printing out.

Recording the e-textual voices of participants
Of the twenty participants who completed their interviews, I had met personally only five by the time I began the study. Two of these are Australian colleagues I meet periodically at AT events. Another I had met briefly some eight years before and the remaining two I had last met over twenty years before. In effect, the majority were strangers, although a small number had significant professional reputations and had contributed to the AT literature through books or journal articles.

I felt it important to find a way of giving each participant an identifiable 'voice,' considering how I might never get to know them as personally as I might have

done in FTF interviews. To attempt this, I decided not to change grammatical errors in the e-texts, although I have altered some spelling and typographical errors in order to make the extracts more readable. Even so, depending on how the e-text was formatted and transmitted, some of the participants' paragraphing was not always clear, although the words and punctuation tended to remain intact. Many times I had to reframe the e-texts to make them look like familiar transcriptions when printed — unconstrained by angle brackets, indentations and vertical lines along the left-hand side of the page (Crystal 2001).

Another aid I developed in order to maintain a sense of participants' uniqueness was to allocate to each a differentiable font. Their emails were copied and saved verbatim in their respective fonts so that excerpts could be readily identified as coming from a particular participant and be recognisable amongst other data. Initially, this technique was simply an archiving and a tracking device, but when I began using the different fonts, they became part of the analytical process and I decided to include them in the text of the thesis. I shall say more about this in Chapter 5.

Limitations of e-interviewing

Participants writing in the English language

In the advertisements I sent to the various AT media, I explained the nature of the research and that communication would be by email. Interested people were asked to contact me at my UTS email address, which is obviously in Australia. The advertisement was in English since that is the only language I can use, and this implied that replies to it would also need to be in English. This use of a single language is a limitation on the scope of such research

because analyses can only be made of the input from respondents who are literate in the same language. In fact, most of the world's AT practitioners do live in anglophone countries — UK and USA predominantly — and so the majority of AT teachers would speak English. German and Hebrew would be the next most important languages, reflecting the relatively large numbers of teachers in Germany, Switzerland and Israel.

Allocation of pseudonyms to non-anglophone participants was also an interesting problem. I wanted to indicate each person's gender, but I did not want to invent culturally inappropriate names that might either offend the individuals concerned or identify the country where they live. In the end, I allocated each participant a gender-relevant anglophone first name from an arbitrary list unrelated to the research topic. This strategy replaced my original intention of asking participants to nominate their own pseudonyms.

Potential for bias

In qualitative interviewing, the potential for bias is always present, either on the part of the interviewer or the interviewee (Kvale 1996). In FTF interviewing the bias may be against such things as appearance, gender, age, ethnicity and voice. While an advantage of e-interviewing may be to reduce the potential for such biases, in CMC there is the potential for prejudice based on writing skills, even when the interviewer and correspondents know very little about each other's personal characteristics (Bampton & Cowton, 2002).

Another sort of bias I am more aware of perpetrating in my study is related to technological sophistication. Interviewees need to have both access to CMC and the skills to use it (Clarke 2000). This would imply a level of income and technological experience which, although difficult to imagine a professional

person lacking these days, might be beyond the grasp of some AT teachers I know. I am thinking here of elderly colleagues who would very likely have had constructive comments to make in FTF interviews yet would not be able to participate in the CMC project because of its technological demands.

Technology problems

Equipment failure contributed to delays in my research process. More than one participant commented that computer crashes had caused the loss or misplacement of the e-text I had sent them. After waiting some time for replies I would then have to prompt these interviewees. Eventually I would receive a response after resending the questions. Fortunately, no one stopped participating through loss of internet access, although it was temporarily distracting when some changed email addresses (Clarke 2000).

Another unforeseen distraction was the phenomenon of spam proliferation, which makes legitimate messages difficult to discern among unsolicited incoming emails. Fortunately, I received research related emails through the University server, which is spam free. Had I been collecting emails on my personal server, as would my interviewees, some of the correspondence could easily have been deleted mistakenly along with the many spam messages.

Impersonal communication

The irony of using the disembodied internet to record the opinions of participants who engage in a body-mind practice is worth noting (Dreyfus 2001). As mentioned earlier, both researcher and participant in FTF interviews can take into account each other's physical characteristics as well as more subtle emotional cues from body language such as impatience, humour and sarcasm. E-interviewing, by contrast, relies entirely on written text, and unless the writers are particularly adept at discerning emotional signals in the texts there

will be little opportunity for interpretive interplay between them (Kivits 2005; Bampton & Cowton 2002; Clarke 2000; Mann & Stewart 2000).

FTF communication also allows another sort of emotional connection for qualitative researchers. FTF researchers who transcribe their own audiotaped interviews might remember not only the faces and body language but also the tone and timbre of participants' voices, thereby adding vitality to reflection and interpretation. This is possible in e-interviews only if a researcher has already met participants previously, or at least spoken to them by phone. I found I related more empathetically to the e-texts of those in my cohort I have met in the past. To some extent this was remedied after the interviews were complete when, in 2004, I attended the 7th International Congress of the AT at Oxford, UK, and made a point of introducing myself to as many of the participants as were there.

Although gender might be determinable in CMC from first names if they are based on the same language, certain names are non-gender-specific, an example being "Chris" (Mann & Stewart 2000, p. 171). Within my cohort of participants, only one person has a name which I would not normally have recognised as male or female, being based on a non-European language. Identifying gender, though, was not a problem here because I had already met this person. In this context, my own name, Terry, is also non-gender-specific and has led to confusion in the past. So, while not wanting to make too overt a reference to my gender in the e-writing, I was careful to include 'he' in both the advertising material used to recruit participants and in the HREC documents they were sent. In any event, several of them would have known me by reputation, if not by acquaintance.

The rapport between researcher and participant could be enhanced by sending photographs and autobiographical details. In my case, having only our e-texts to connect us, I felt slightly estranged from participants. Presumably, the ethics of this strategy would need to be addressed in the HREC application.

Time negotiation

In FTF interviewing the length of time for the meetings can be negotiated beforehand and time allocated for immediately following up peremptory or unclear replies. As well, either party can choose to defer a response, probe for more information, and explicate new ideas. With e-interviews, however, participants may curtail their replies according to their mood as they sit at their computer. The interviewer will never know how much time or enthusiasm an interviewee has given to the project.

I suspected that a few of the participants were unused to writing at length and were fatigued even after giving even relatively brief replies (Bampton & Cowton 2002). Although keen at first to participate, they seemed to have miscalculated just how much time it would take to collect their thoughts and then to write. They appeared glad to press the send button and have the matter off their desks. This made any prompting problematic, lest they became annoyed at having to be questioned again (Kivits 2005). From the majority, however, I was invited, although not always overtly, to contact them again should I needed further clarification. As it turned out, most responded with clear answers, and some sent thoughtful essays.

Of all the limitations of e-interviewing I experienced, the waiting for replies was the most frustrating. A small number of the cohort withdrew midway through the e-interviewing project because of other commitments requiring their time, examples being their wedding or a heavy work schedule. One participant said

she had lost interest. The difficulty for me in these situations was that while participants had every right to withdraw from the study, they did not always inform me until some time later.

Lack of Spontaneity

The ability to reflect on e-replies before pressing the send button can be a two-edged sword. While the researcher would be right to presume answers and comments have at least been reflected upon before being sent, a degree of spontaneity might also be lost while they are being edited and corrected, even if only for grammatical or spelling mistakes (Clarke 2000). Several participants began their replies with introductory comments like "here goes", as though they had spent enough time thinking about what they were going to write and just wanted dive in and get it over with.

Problems with lack of spontaneity also apply to the e-interviewer. As I reflect on these interactions, it becomes obvious how the form of my written questions influenced the quality of the responses. These questions are shown in Appendix A. With hindsight, a few questions were poorly expressed, and it is not surprising that replies to them were short and sharp or were barely contributive 'yes' or 'no' answers. Had I the same control of the conversation as I would have in FTF interviews, deeper probing of responses would have been possible. Yet once an email was sent, there was no way I could revoke or rephrase my questions to elicit more meaningful replies. That said, most participants' replies were rich in reflection and self-disclosure.

As will be discussed further in Chapter 5, after I hand coded the first set of replies and the identification of some preliminary themes (Wolcott 2001), I then sent the whole cohort a second set of questions that I hoped would expand on

these themes. An advantage of this form of interviewing is knowing that each participant would read the same questions and that my analysis might be easier as a result. When I sent the first round of questions to the whole participant cohort I fully intended to respond personally to each participant, addressing their specific issues in the context of the concerns raised by the group. I was hoping to generate a personal relationship with them, particularly those I had never met before (Beck 2005), but some replies took so long to arrive that to sift through the combined data from all participants would have extended the analysis time considerably.

Because of this time factor, I chose not to delay the completion by writing twenty personal replies. In other words, I sacrificed the possibility of sustaining personal relationships in order to maintain the momentum of the project. Even so, at the beginning of the second round of e-questions I did acknowledge briefly some aspects of each participant's first reply.

Ethics considerations

In FTF interviews, a researcher might offer a participant the written ethics consent form and collect it when signed. In my case, the HREC allowed my e-interviewees simply to type their name on an emailed ethics form and return it to me by email. For everybody involved this saved the time, effort and expense of sending a letterheaded printed form by regular mail. The emailed HREC ethics consent form is attached as Appendix B.

The HREC also wanted a sample of the questions I would be asking participants and to see how I would deal with the matter of interviewing participants I might know, or even be teaching. In response I said that were any local colleagues to volunteer, I would reassure them that all information is

confidential and that I would not hold any of their opinions against them should I ever employ them or otherwise have a position of authority over them in the future. As it turned out, only three Australian AT teachers volunteered and none of them raised this issue with me. One of these did withdraw from the project quite early for reasons that had more to do with discomfort about our professional relationship than the project itself.

I also told the HREC I would not interview my own teacher trainees lest it be seen that I was exerting undue influence on them. Students from other Australian teacher education programs were to be reassured that I would have no influence on the outcome of their training. In any event, no Australian trainees came forward.

The HREC required that I use my UTS email address for all correspondence related to the project, even though I thought initially it would have been easier to use my personal email account at home. This ruling has a number of advantages: (1) it gives participants the reassurance of a more supervised structure; (2) I can keep research correspondence separate from personal or other business emails, which, as mentioned above, means they will be less likely to be confused with nuisance mail in the then climate of spam inundation; and (3) the email correspondence is stored separately on the University's system and is therefore safe in the event of my computer crashing and losing data.

At the time of submitting my application to the HREC, I had not anticipated analysing contributions made to an AT listserv that I have been subscribing to for many years and saving the correspondence electronically. The listserv addresses have changed over that time, being initially alextech-

list@alextech.net, then alextech-list@smartgroups.com, and more recently alextech@googlegroups.com. Writers on the ethics of CMC generally (e.g. Mann & Stewart 2000), and archived material in particular (Sixsmith & Murray 2001), point to the contentious nature of confidentiality and of accreditation when citing and quoting from listserv mailings.

Special difficulties arise if an extracted text is part of a 'thread' which also involves input from other members of the listserv, not all of whom may permit quotation outside the context of the thread itself. Paraphrasing of mailings may be possible, but as Sixsmith and Murray (2001, p. 428) put it, "… for qualitative researchers, such an approach can be seen to impoverish the data because paraphrasing the content of email posts may undermine the researcher's interpretive purchase". In order to be fair to alextech contributors, I decided that should I need to excerpt any correspondence verbatim from the listserv I would ask the original writers for permission. If they could not be contacted or if permission were withheld then I would not quote them.

Chapter 4

Problematic discourses and practices of Alexander Technique teacher education

4.1 Introduction to the chapter

This Chapter does the conceptual work of that part of the research methodology I call, following Cherryholmes (1988), critical pragmatism. Critical pragmatism provides a way of deconstructing and reconstructing the 'discourse-practices' of the AT so that they may be given sophisticated interpretations more suitable for a 21st Century profession. I critique first the practice of using time-specific numerical protocols in AT teacher education. This is followed by two exegetical analyses of the Alexandrian discourse 'The Evolution of a Technique'.

Drawing on the history of AT teacher education and contemporary theoretical work of school teacher educators, I argue that the practice of using time-specific training is flawed because it is based on 19th Century approaches to professional education which prioritise administrative ends rather than organic, person-centred means. By extension, I also claim the numerical protocols of AT teacher education resonate more with the normal, Cartesian, paradigm of learning and, therefore, are antithetical to the AT itself.

The first exegetical analysis of Alexander's chapter also centres on the problem of its unintended Cartesianism, as represented by his use of metaphors of body-mind separation. After describing the attachment many AT teachers have to Alexander's 'four books', despite their complex syntactical structures, I discuss

the confusion his dichotomous language potentially creates for readers. I then offer a phronetic reconstruction which would see Alexander's concept of rationality through a Deweyan lens.

In the second analysis of 'The Evolution of a Technique' I produce an interpretation which is heuristic rather than historic. My point is to destabilise the supposed truth of Alexander's story so that it may be given alternative readings that locate it more firmly in the emerging paradigm of learning. I begin my critique of the numerical protocols with an explanation for my use of the term 'teacher education' rather than the more traditional 'teacher training', and a brief critique of time as a feature of educational practice.

4.2   Critique of the numerical protocols of Alexander Technique teacher education

Teacher education and teacher training

In the literature of school teacher education, the move toward using the expression 'teacher education' rather than 'teacher training' is part of the shift in the direction of the emerging paradigm of learning (Cochran-Smith 2000). The word 'training' has come to imply the acquisition of technical and practical skills at a discrete point in time. Beckett and Hager (2002, p. 99) call this the "front-end model" of vocational preparation. 'Front-end' typifies the training approaches of the normal paradigm of learning in its implication that trainees need a minimum period of training before they are deemed qualified by their occupational gate-keepers and that their learning should be complete by the time they finish the formalities of their courses.

The time-specific numerical protocols were shown in Chapter 2. When seen through the lens of contemporary teacher professionalisation in combination with the term 'training', these protocols portray AT teacher preparation as a front-end system. A person reading these protocols would have every reason for presuming that AT teacher preparation has yet to fully claim its place within the emerging paradigm of learning. Being a body-mind process, AT teacher 'training' may not be as disembodied as traditional school teacher 'training' (Mulcahy 2000), but if AT teaching it is to be taken seriously as an educational profession in the future, stakeholders in AT teacher preparation need to re-examine the traditional front-end system and engage with the emerging view of professionalism that school teacher education has begun to embrace. Attending to the implication of 'training' in Alexandrian discourse may be a start[7].

In the next section, I continue my critique of the time-specific, numerical protocols of AT teacher education by problematising the commodification of time.

The trouble with time

Hargreaves (1994) addresses the issue of time as a factor in the professional lives of school teachers and school administrators. Though not specifically referring to teacher education, his analysis may be applied nonetheless to any structured educational situation, including the conduct and management of teacher education programs. The teachers of teachers are no less subject to the contingencies of what he calls the "Faustian bargain" (p. 95) between the quality of time needed and the quantity of time available to complete their work satisfactorily.

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[7] I use 'teacher education' as much as possible in this thesis, but because the words 'training' and 'trainee' have become so embedded in the AT lexicon, I find it convenient to revert to them occasionally.

Time quality and time quantity, while not polar opposites, are reframed respectively by Hargreaves (1994) as 'subjective time' and 'objective time'. Subjective or 'phenomenological time' is "where time is lived, where time is an inner duration which varies from person to person" (p. 100). Subjective time is more likely to be the dimension in which teachers and students operate when working together organically and relationally in a schoolroom. By contrast, when time is objectified it may also be managed in the technical-rational ways favoured by administrators who are less concerned with students' needs than with optimising measurable industrial outcomes.

To further this distinction, Hargreaves draws on anthropologist Edward Hall's (1983/1989; 1976/89) work on polychronic and monochronic time frames. These frames represent distinct dispositions towards time keeping and time management. The polychronic time tends to be subjective, organic and people-oriented, and is more often the mode in which smaller, leader-focussed, organisations operate. Personal relationships, rather than scheduling, are foregrounded within polychronic cultures, sometimes to the point of overdependence on a leader to sort out problems.

Polychronism is a feature of the emerging paradigm of learning, and examples of polychronic educational processes would be traditional craft apprenticeships and the smaller-scale tutorial classes at university. The 'interna' of instruction processes would be prioritised here. As Hall (1983/89, p. 53) puts it: "Any human being who … is naturally drawn to other human beings and who lives in a world dominated by human relationships will be either pushed or pulled toward the polychronic end of the time spectrum. If you value people, you must hear them out and cannot cut them off simply because of a schedule".

The monochronic time frame, on the other hand, is linear and oriented towards schedules and procedures — the externa — and is more likely to be the frame adopted by administrators and managers of larger organisations. Monochronic time can be produced, bought and sold as though it were a commodity. It is also "arbitrary and imposed; that is, learned. … Yet it is not inherent in man's [sic] own rhythms and creative drives, nor is it existential in nature" (Hall 1977/89, p. 20). Monochronic organisations can easily lose sight of the humanity of their members, an extreme example being the didactic, time-tabled teaching and administration often associated with large and amorphous University classes (Wilshire 1990). This monochronic view of education resonates with the normal paradigm of learning.

Both Hargreaves (1994) and Hall (1983/1989) generalise that women in Western cultures tend to be more polychronic than men. This can lead to misunderstanding and conflict when a monochronically inclined male administrative culture attempts to deal with a group of polychronically inclined females. Such conditions often occur in feminised professions such as school teaching, although Harnett and Lee (2003) suggest that the feminisation of school teaching may be due more to the willingness of many women to accept lower pay and professional status than to inherent gender traits.

The latent polychronicity of feminised occupations is also worth studying further in the context of AT teacher education because AT teaching is no less a feminised profession than school teaching. A cursory study of teachers' lists in the UK, USA and Australia shows female teachers outnumber males by more than two to one, with a similar ratio presumably applying to teacher trainees (see also Stephens, Heenan & Martin 1999). There is a similar proportion of female and male Heads of Training in the USA but not in the other two

countries, where there are approximately equal numbers of male and female Heads of Training. There are, however, more male authors of books on the AT, a trend which, borrowing from Michelson (1996), I have called elsewhere the 'invisibility of women' in the public presentation of the AT profession (Fitzgerald 2001).

As was discussed in Chapter 2, Alexander's apprenticeship method of teacher training, prior to his first structured training program of 1931, was craft-based. His training process would have been polychronic, although it is fairly clear from the stories of his early graduates that he discouraged his students from being dependent on him. Even post-1931, he seems to have had a casual approach to students' attendance at his three-year programs. Whittaker (1987) tells us "I think the very fact that there were no rules and regulations encouraged us to make use of the time together in a much less restricted way, and when we felt like doing crazy things for a change, there was no one to remind us of time or place" (p. 23). For Whittaker, Alexander's first training course "was like no other, there could be no measuring and 'finishing' as in other courses, as our work was concerned with change" (p. 27).

Dewey also had something to say about time and education. In *Experience and Education* (1938/1963), he wrote:

> What, then, is the true meaning of preparation in the educational scheme? In the first place, it means that a person, young or old, gets out of his present experience all that there is in it for him at the time in which he has it. When preparation is made the controlling end, then the potentialities of the present are sacrificed to a supposititious future. When this happens, the actual preparation for the future is missed or distorted. The ideal of using the present simply to get ready for the future contradicts itself. It omits, and even shuts out, the very conditions by which a person can be prepared for his future. We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are prepared for

doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything. (p.49)

Dewey here tells us how being in the continuous present is the key to manifesting a future. In other words, focussing on the 'controlling ends' to be gained in that future deprives us of an appreciation of the means we might intelligently use to get there. Alexander called this End-gaining, which means not paying sufficient attention to the process of an activity. Dewey is pointing to the End-gaining nature of traditional forms of education, the professional version of which Alexander was trying particularly to avoid in his first teacher education program.

In this view, current educational models which demand a minimum amount of preparation time but do not recognise any authentic methods for predicting and assessing student learning — Dewey's 'potentialities of the present' — may also be accused of End-gaining. Eraut (1994, p. 217) points out that when professional training is time-based one must ask if expectations of graduate competency are designed around the minimum training time or are determined rather by the needs of the occupation itself. This view fits with my suggestion, given earlier, that the gradual introduction of the time-specific numerical protocols into the practices of AT teacher education since Alexander's death has had less to do with any educational needs and more with the monochronic administration and regulation of an expanding profession.

An accusation of End-gaining may therefore be made against the time-specific protocols of AT teacher education, which mandate three years or 1600 hours of teacher preparation but do not prescribe any credible teaching competencies. As AT teacher Williamson (1989, p. 57) puts it, such a system grants "a diploma suggesting only time passed rather than abilities [that were] acquired".

To conclude this analysis, I assert that the time-specific, numerical protocols of AT teacher education are flawed from the perspective of the emerging paradigm. Being more concerned with the 'externa' than the 'interna' of teacher preparation, with administrative ends than educational means, the protocols are monochronic reflections of the normal, Cartesian, paradigm of learning and are antithetical to the polychronic, pupil-centred, qualities of the AT itself. I shall give an example in Chapter 6 of professional standards for beginning AT teachers that I believe are more appropriate to the polychronic nature of the work.

In the next section, meanwhile, I continue my critically pragmatic analysis of the discourses-practices of AT teacher education by problematising one of the seminal texts in the AT anthology, Alexander's autobiographical chapter, 'The Evolution of a Technique', from his third book, *The Use of the Self* (1932 / 1946). I begin the section by explaining the difficulties many readers seem to have with understanding Alexander's writings.

4.3 Critique of Alexander's writing

> … in spite of the frequency with which I have stressed in my previous books the concept of the indissoluble *unity* of the human organism, some readers still adhere to the concept of *separation* in interpreting what I have written, as if the procedures of my technique and their results in practice could be labelled separately 'physical' or 'mental'.
>
> Alexander 1942, p. xxxv, italics in the original

More about the Four Books

Staring's (2005) doctoral thesis on the history of the AT has already been

referred to in Chapter 2. One of Staring's stated intentions is to destabilise the hagiographic entrancement he detects many AT teachers have with Alexander's writings. His agenda is to put these texts into perspective so that readers can see the historical lineage of Alexander's ideas and thereby realise that Alexander might not have been so innovative as many of his followers believe. While I do not believe all of Alexander's followers are as collectively naive in this regard as Staring would paint them, I agree with him that more critical scholarship regarding the texts is warranted. I shall attempt my critique from the theoretical perspectives introduced in Chapter 3, namely the emerging paradigm of learning and Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) conceptions of teacher learning.

An important indicator of how AT teacher education has yet to frame itself fully in the emerging paradigm of learning (Beckett & Hager 2002) and the knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999) is the ideological dependence many practitioners have on Alexander's four books as the core canon of the work. I introduced these books in Chapter 2. While these books surely need to be respected as fundamental to his work, they have become fundamentalised in varying ways. As American AT teacher educator Ron Dennis (2005, p. 16) puts it, "among Alexandrians … there remains a tendency toward adulation of [Alexander's] person and uncritical acceptance of his thought".

Alexander is reported to have said to his graduates, "When I am dead you will have the books" (cited by Kelly 2005, p. 15). Just how much his books are revered is reflected in the many teaching certificates I have seen that declare, without any other qualifying statements, the graduand 'has completed three years training in this course for teachers of the F. Matthias Alexander technique

and is now qualified to teach the technique as outlined in Alexander's four books'. I include in this category my own from Patrick Macdonald and those I issue my graduates. This is the only competency statement many AT teachers will have ever seen.

The implication of these certificates is that trainees at AT teacher education programs will have read and understood the four books by the time they graduate. In my experience, very few have ever done so, mainly because training programs are only ever able to provide a cursory familiarity with the professional literature. There are a number of reasons for this. One reason is that as Staring (2005, p. 6) points out, the books were out of print between 1957 and 1985, a period when many of today's teacher educators, myself included, were themselves studying and having to collect second-hand volumes whenever they could be found. In fact, I graduated in 1978 without ever being required to read any of the four books, although there were copies available to study at the training school I attended.

A second reason is that, even though they are in print today, three of Alexander's four books remain expensive to buy, the exception being *The Use of the Self* , which is still available as a relatively cheap paperback. I agree, therefore, with Spawforth (in Gounaris et al. 2000) that all AT teacher education programs should have a school lending library containing at least Alexander's books. Finally, and most importantly from the point of view of professional preparation, many AT teacher educators lack the exegetical skills to critically interpret Alexander, and they necessarily skirt over the complexity of his texts. I shall now say more about his idiosyncratic writing style.

Syntax and sentence structure

Over the years I have heard many AT trainees complain that Alexander's syntax and sentence structure make his writings difficult to understand. Like other AT teachers and teacher educators (e.g. Kettrick 1991a, 1991b; Price-Williams 1988), I tend to agree. This is not to accuse Alexander of being completely unconscious of his literary limitations. Carrington (in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 61) tells us that he took "infinite trouble in his choice of words". As well, he had professional assistance with some of his writing, including extensive help from Dewey in the checking of his second book (Bloch 2004; Staring 2005; Carrington & Carey 1986). Even so, AT teacher educator Ted Dimon (1986, p. 8) is able to say, "as hard as [Alexander] tried to make things clear in his books, he often failed to see that what was obvious to him would not be obvious to us".

When Alexander began writing in the early 20th Century, an author intent on gaining intellectual credibility would have been expected to use established Western literary and rhetorical styles (Zahn 2005). This could also explain Alexander's combination of long sentences, complex syntax and a somewhat technical manner. A possible exemplar for him in the educational domain would have been Herbert Spencer (see, for example, Spencer's *Education* 1860/ 1929), whom Alexander cites appreciatively in *Man's Supreme Inheritance* (1910, p. 43). By contrast, Alexander could also bring a warmer, more engaging attitude to his personal teaching. This can be seen in the transcript of the lecture he gave to physical education students at Bedford in 1934, where we can almost hear him speaking intimately and clearly for his audience of young women (Alexander 1934/1995).

Another explanation for readers' difficulties may be gained from Thomas Kuhn (1970), whose pioneering work established the concept of paradigm transition. During paradigm transitions, writes Kuhn, there will be "a large but never complete overlap" (pp. 84-85) between the problems that can be solved by the old and by the new paradigms. Alexander's early work exemplifies such a transitional movement between the normal and emerging paradigms of learning.

As a young man without much formal education, he was attempting to explicate the new paradigm not only by extending the vocabulary of older and more familiar ideas, but also by generating new concepts linguistically. Kuhn suggests these tasks come more easily to younger people entering a profession — or in Alexander's case, initiating a profession. The price, however, "is often sentences of great length and complexity [as] many additional research results can be translated from one community's language into the other's" (Kuhn 1970, p. 203).

Alexander (1942) himself wrote with insight into the problem of expressing emerging ideas and experiences:

> It is comparatively simple to express some idea or experience in a short sentence in several short sentences if the idea or experience represents something specific, of something that can be done or gained by the *direct method*, for this involves the concept of separation and disconnectedness. But ideas or experiences concerned with unified phenomena and which involve the *indirect method* for general, instead of specific, application can only be fully expressed by a sentence that conveys the meaning of such ideas and experiences so that there can be no doubt that the concept on which they are based is that of a co-ordinated indivisible whole. (pp. xxx-xxxi, italics in the original)

Irene Tasker (1978), who was one of Alexander's earliest apprentices and worked with him on editing his first three books, draws attention to the

transitional nature of his complex writing style by quoting a note made by one of her pupils in 1967:

> In any assessment of writings such as Alexander's it is important to remember both how slowly new discoveries are assimilated into the main stream of thought, and also how strong a force against their practical application in everyday life is not only the inertia of established habits of thought, but also the positive resistance of those who see themselves or their organisations threatened by new knowledge. So it was with Copernicus and Darwin, so it was with Freud and Jung and Teilhard, and so with Alexander." (p. 18)

Despite Alexander saying "None of you know how to read" (quoted by Barlow in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 73), I've not seen any record of him specifically educating his trainee teachers to read his texts analytically. He seems not to have appreciated how his complex writing style might contribute to his readers' misunderstandings of his holistic ideas, with any problems of understanding being inherent in the reader, not the writer. For example, Alexander (1942) writes:

> Another source of misunderstanding has arisen through my choice of words for which I have often been criticised. … I have always found in my critics a tendency to read into other people's words meanings which fitted in with a particular construction that they were accustomed to put upon them, and I suggest the habit and the misunderstanding are closely connected. … My conception of the human organism or of the self is thus very simple, but can be made difficult by needless complication resulting from the preconceived ideas which readers bring to it. (p. xxxvi)

As already mentioned, even if trainee teachers and their teacher educators have access to Alexander's books and are keen to read them, many would lack the philosophical, exegetical and linguistic skills to study them in great depth. Fortunately, a number of teacher educators have published ideas on how to make the books more stimulating to new generations of teachers. AT teacher and linguist Kettrick (1991a, 1991b), for instance, shows us how to break

Alexander's complex sentences into linguistically negotiable units and to analyse his books accordingly. And Armstrong (2000, p. 24) recommends compiling a "compendium" of conceptual references from Alexander's writings which would provide a fair basis for assessing "particular aspects of either the concepts or the terms that signify them in the event of a need to restate, reformulate, or dispense with any or all parts of them".

'The Evolution of a Technique'

The metaphor problem

The chapter in Alexander's canon that tends to receive much reverence but scarcely any critique is titled 'The Evolution of a Technique' from *The Use of the Self* (1932). This chapter is held in high regard within the AT profession because it purports to describe autobiographically how Alexander worked out the principles that later became the essence of his Technique. AT teacher trainees are often recommended to study this chapter in detail so that they can recreate 'Alexander's story'. In line with the critically pragmatic approach adopted in this study, I shall now problematise Alexander's use of metaphor in 'The Evolution of a Technique' and then offer two alternative readings as possible ways of interpreting the chapter other than literally. A copy of the chapter from the 1946 edition of *The Use of the Self* is provided as Appendix C.

Metaphors allow us to draw on our experience of one thing to describe and conceptualise other, sometimes very different, things. For example, philosophers of cognitive science, Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 235), tell us that a primary Western system of metaphors for mind is 'The Mind is a Body'[8], from

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[8] Lakoff and Johnson (1999) use the upper case to highlight the metaphor.

which thinking may be mapped as physical functioning such as moving, perceiving, manipulating objects, and eating. Despite the mind being seen as a type of body, these metaphor systems also reflect the Cartesian and Kantian views of the disembodied mind, with reason needing to take control of wayward affectivity and feeling.

Western languages incorporate such Cartesian metaphors so consistently that most of us barely realise we are using them in everyday speaking and writing, let alone in educational discourse generally (Hager 2005; Gonczi 2004; Vick 1996) and AT teaching more specifically (Bruce 2005). According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), while we may understand in principle that mind and body are inseparable, it is virtually impossible to describe this inseparability in Western languages without recourse to metaphors that inherently contradict the notion of unity of mind and body, of subject and self. About mind and body they write: "The concept of a mind separate from the body is a metaphorical concept… The concept of a disembodied mind is also a natural concomitant of the metaphorical distinction between Subject and Self" (pp. 561-562).

Alexander understood to some extent this problem as a scientific and philosophical one. He quotes from a letter to him from a student, Mrs Alma M. Frank (in Alexander 1942):

> Here is the rub: can we get rid of the dichotomy of mind and body through the so-called sciences, when the sciences themselves [e.g. psychology and physiology] are dependent for existence as separate sciences upon that same dichotomy… inherited from Descartes…. [We need] new principles to be applied in all fields of research, principles which will not only deny the dichotomy of mind and body…, but will free us from continuing our research with the same concepts, labels, and separatistic tools that were born of the dichotomy we wish to be rid of. (p. 173)

An example of Alexander's struggle to reconcile the language of mind and body may be seen in this extract from his second book:

> The term psycho-physical is used … throughout my works to indicate the impossibility of separating 'physical' and 'mental' operations in our conception of the working of the human organism … [T]he two must be considered entirely interdependent, and even more closely knit than is implied by such a phrase. … I wish, therefore, to make it clear that whenever I use the work 'mental,' it is to be understood as representing all processes or manifestations which are generally recognized as not wholly 'physical,' and vice versa the word 'physical' as representing all processes and manifestations which are generally recognized as not wholly 'mental'. (Alexander 1923/2004, pp. 4-5)

These incomplete descriptions of body-mind continuity in Alexander's discourse have led to what AT teacher Mark Arnold (1993) alludes to as an "Alexander dualism which is central to the way Alexander teachers are obliged to think … [It] really must be thrown out and a more coherent understanding established" (p. 15). Arnold (1994) recommends the AT profession form more appropriate ways of conceptualising what Alexander was attempting to say about body-mind continuity (see also Wall 1991, and Kjeldsen's 1994 reply to Arnold). AT teacher educator Ron Dennis (2006) includes Alexander's notions of theory and practice in this dualism and suggests that, to the extent the dualism remains unacknowledged by practitioners, it continues to be propagated in contemporary descriptions of the AT.

For AT teachers who have had no special training in epistemology or cognitive science, this dualism problem also arises when they attempt to describe the philosophical complexities of the AT without understanding that their Alexandrian argot contains contradictory Cartesian metaphors (Zahn 2005). Just as Alexander seems to have been unaware of the tacit Cartesianism in his metaphors, I suggest it has caused confusion for many of his readers by sending incomplete messages about body-mind continuity. This confusion then tends to

anchor the discourses of the AT deeper in the normal paradigm of learning.

In order to illustrate how Alexander used these metaphors, I will now present the following four examples from the chapter, 'The Evolution of a Technique' in *The Use of the Self* (Alexander 1932/1946). I have chosen these passages because they summon up images of mastery through conflict, in this case between Alexander's 'reasoning direction' and what he calls his 'instinctive direction' or 'feeling'. It should be noted that the noun Use, while also a metaphor of control and containment, is employed here as a synonym for body-mind coordination (Kettrick 23 July 1999, *alextech list* email, with permission). AT teachers often talk about a person *having* 'good Use', for example, rather than saying the person moves well according to the principles of the AT. Another complex technical word is Direction, which is sometimes called Ordering; it is used metaphorically to connote command and spatial orientation, as well as "flow of force" within the nervous system (Macdonald 1989, p. 67). In the extracts shown here the italicised words are metaphors that I will refer to later.

The four passages from 'The Evolution of a Technique' are:

> There was no question about this. I could see it actually happening in the mirror. This was clear proof… my instinctive direction *dominated* my reasoning direction" (Alexander 1932/1946, p. 18)

> In trying to *employ* a conscious, reasoning direction to bring about a new use, I was… *combating* in myself [that] tendency which causes us all at critical moments to *revert* to instinctive direction and so to the familiar use of ourselves that feels right… (p. 21)

> … I now saw that if I was ever to succeed in making the changes in use I desired, I must *subject* the processes directing my use to a new experience — the experience, that is, of being *dominated* by reasoning instead of by feeling…. (p. 22)

> … I was becoming able to *defeat* any influence of that habitual wrong use

> … and that my conscious, reasoning direction was at last *dominating* the unreasoning, instinctive direction associated with my unsatisfactory habitual use of myself. (p. 24)

My italicised words highlight examples of two of the metaphor systems that Lakoff and Johnson (1999) distinguish, namely the Social Self metaphor, with the Subject and Self cast as adversaries (p. 278), and the Society of Mind and Moral Authority metaphors, in which Reason is cast as the Strict Father whose role it is to rein in bodily inclinations (pp. 415-427). The verbs *dominate, employ, combat, revert, subject*, and *defeat* convey adversarial, dualistic, images of reason subjugating affectivity, of mind militarily colonising body. In this view mind and body are not united as equals; mind is always superior and controlling (Arnold 1994, 1993; Wall 1991). Even in the title of the book, *The Use of the Self*, we see an instance of what Lakoff and Johnson (1999) call Self Control is Object Control (p. 270), which is a way of saying The Subject, which is conceptualised as a person, forcibly controls, moves or possesses (uses) the Self as though it were a physical object.

Deweyan philosopher Richard Shusterman (2000) is critical of the mind controlling body metaphors embedded in the pedagogy of the AT, and he refers particularly to the verticality of the head above the torso as "the evolutionary metaphor of ascent" (p. 173).[9] An example of this metaphor would be the AT teaching expression 'the head leads and the body follows', which is commonly used to refer to the physiological primacy of the skull in relation to the rest of the body but could also be a metaphor of reason dominating affect. Shusterman (2000, p. 181) comments: "Alexander often sounds too much like the harsh and

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[9] While Shusterman suggests this is a dualistic concept and a weakness of the AT, he also comments "I do appreciate the importance of the question of 'professional identity' for Alexander teachers, who are not really standard therapists nor traditional academic teachers but are certainly educators in an important sense". (Personal correspondence, 14 September 2000)

haughty voice of a self-centred, dictatorial reason, the negative white male voice of one-sided, willful control. Though this may be the traditional voice of philosophy, can we still take it as the true one?". From a feminist post-structuralist perspective, the symbolism of (masculine) rationality leading, controlling and rescuing (feminine) affect may also be construed here (Fitzgerald 2001; Michelson 1996; Lloyd 1993).

Drawing on Schön (1979, p. 254), I suggest a possible explanation for Alexander's use of metaphor is that he meant them to be explicit, or "surface" metaphors, designed purposely for "new perceptions, explanations and inventions". Even if this is so, it is unlikely Alexander fully appreciated their tacit, or "generative" (p. 267), Cartesianism. In other words, he did not recognise the extent to which Cartesian metaphors are embedded in his own texts (Zigler 1980). Being able to distinguish these metaphors and then reconcile them with Alexander's overarching holistic project is an important step towards completing the AT's transition from the normal to the emerging paradigm of learning (Vadeboncoeur & Torres 2003).

Having now identified some of these Cartesian metaphors, I shall attempt such a reconciliation using two conceptual frameworks. The first is a phronetic reconstruction, and the second examines their story-telling, heuristic, value.

A phronetic reconstruction

Alexander is not alone in his use of the Cartesian metaphor that Lakoff and Johnson (1997) identify as Self Control is Object Control (p. 270). Dewey also takes it up in his introduction to *The Use of the Self* :

In the present state of the world it is evident that the control we have gained of physical energies, heat, light, electricity, etc., without having first secured control of our use of ourselves is a perilous affair. Without control of our use of ourselves, our use of other things is blind; it may lead to anything. (Dewey in Alexander 1932, p. xx)

Dewey was a clearer writer than Alexander, however, and I suggest he used explicit, surface, metaphors more self-consciously than Alexander[10]. For example, in *How We Think* (1933), Dewey writes:

While the power of thought, then, frees us from servile subjection to instinct, appetite, and routine, it also brings with it the occasion and possibility of error and mistake. In elevating us above the brute, it opens the possibility of failures to which the animal, limited to instinct, cannot sink. (p. 23)

Frank Pierce Jones explains the seemingly contradictory dualisms in 'The Evolution of a Technique' by referring to Dewey's (1930) *Human Nature and Conduct*, in which Dewey acknowledged Alexander. Jones quotes Dewey: "The real opposition is not between reason and habit, but between routine, unintelligent habit and intelligent habit or art" (quoted in Jones 1976, p. 100). While the word 'opposition' might still imply a Cartesian contradiction needing to be resolved, the distinction between 'unintelligent' and 'intelligent' habits is crucial here. As mentioned in Chapter 3, 'intelligence' is Dewey's synonym for *phronesis,* or practical reasoning.

Garrison (1997) draws on Dewey to remind us that "all reasoning is practical [means-ends] reasoning" (p. xix) and that "conscious thought and inquiry only occur when established habits fail us. At such times the disruption of habitual

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[10] An oblique compliment to Alexander may be read into Lakoff and Johnson's (1997) acknowledgement of Dewey, who "… saw that our bodily experience is the primal basis for everything we can mean, think, know, and communicate. He understood the full richness, complexity, and philosophical importance of bodily experience. [He] drew upon the best available empirical psychology, physiology, and neuroscience to shape [his] philosophical thinking" (p. xii).

action is experienced physically as feeling" (pp. 91-92). In this Deweyan, phronetic view, Alexander's 'reasoning direction' need not be seen as an external, controlling intellect in the Cartesian sense, but rather as *praxis*, the application of intelligent, practical, common sense. I prefer to think Alexander would have agreed with this comment from Dewey:

> Rationality … is not a force to evoke against impulse and habit. It is the attainment of a working harmony among diverse desires. … Reason, the rational attitude, is the resulting disposition, not a ready-made antecedent which can be invoked at will and set into movement. The man [sic] who would intelligently cultivate intelligence will widen, not narrow, his life of strong impulses while aiming at their happy coincidence in operation. (Dewey 1922, quoted in Ratner 1939, pp. 759 -760)

By looking at Alexander's 'reasoning direction' through a phronetic lens, it now becomes possible to assert that he meant to use the expression in the same sense as Dewey's 'practical reasoning' and 'intelligence'. In other words, 'reason' was not setting out to subjugate 'feeling', be it kinesthetic or emotional. Rather, Alexander was trying to distinguish between his habitual, less intelligent thinking, which was inept for the specific solution of his vocal problems, and an intelligent and practical approach to solving it through holistic means. This allows a reading which need not distract us from his post-Cartesian principle of Psycho-physical Re-education but instead resonates with the emerging paradigm of learning. AT teacher Joyce Bird saw it similarly. In her *Alexander Memorial Lecture* given to STAT in 1973, she tells us how she resolved the problem of 'reason' for herself:

> To Alexander, reason was, I think, always God-like. He uses it in his books so often. For a long time, I dodged the word when reading him, because for me it had entirely different connotations. Mine was Blake's Urizen, the Ratio or Bound, a limitation. But this comes from seeing words in the lurid light of abstraction. For I am sure that Alexander meant simply the process of reckoning that every practical man [sic] uses it, in fact — working it out. (Bird 1973/2006, pp. 11-12)

Historic or heuristic? The symbolism of Alexander's story

Alexander's story, 'The Evolution of a Technique', may be read in a variety of ways. Metaphors notwithstanding, the most obvious way is as an objective and accurate account of how he developed his technique during an important period in his life. However, by approaching Alexander's narrative from a postmodern perspective, with "strategic uncertainty … [in order] to mobilize meaning rather than to fix it" (Stronach & MacLure 1997, p. 5), one may challenge the tradition that this text is an unproblematic autobiography and develop alternative interpretations that are more useful educationally (Vollmer 2005). Such an approach is consistent with the critically pragmatic stand I take in this study.

There is reason to be uncertain about the veracity of what may be called Alexander's 'grand narrative'. He wrote it some thirty to forty years after the events he supposedly records, yet he gives no dates or diary notes to support his account. Historiographer Staring (2005) and biographer Bloch (2004) attest that Alexander's version of events is based on fact, but 'the early 1890s' is the closest estimate available of its occurrence, dates being too vague for more precise estimates (Maisel 1974, p. xiii; Staring 2005, p.175).

While Staring (2005) seems not to question the literal truth of Alexander's narrative, Bloch (2004) suggests this chapter may be read in a more sophisticated, heuristic way. He writes, "Possibly [Alexander's] account should be taken symbolically, rather than literally, like the story of the Creation in the Bible. … and it probably represents the best he could do in putting into words a protracted process which he originally grasped in practical rather that intellectual terms…" (pp. 145-146). This allusion to biblical myth is apt in terms

of how Alexander's texts can easily become fundamentalised by practitioners keen to preach, but not critique, the discourses of the AT.

The heuristic and symbolic value of 'The Evolution of a Technique' may be seen in Alexander's research methodology, with Bloch (2004) pointing to the influence of Dewey, who, as already mentioned, had known Alexander since 1916. He had also helped check Alexander's earlier book and written two previous introductions. By the early 1930s Alexander would presumably have become familiar with the principles of scientific method given in Dewey's *How We Think* (first ed. 1910, second ed. 1933). Tremmel (1993) draws attention to how Dewey's "five distinct steps in reflection," as articulated in the first edition (1910) of How We Think, are restated in the 1933 edition. In 1910, the "steps" were:

1. a felt difficulty;
2. its location and definition;
3. suggestion of possible solutions;
4. development by reasoning of the bearings of the suggestion;
5. further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection (Tremmel 1993, p. 439).

By 1933, these five steps had changed and become "five phases, or aspects, of reflective thought" which take a "perplexed, troubled , or confused situation at the beginning to a cleared-up, unified, resolved situation at the close". These five phases are[11]:

> 1. suggestions, in which the mind leaps forward to a possible solution;
> 2. an intellectualization of the difficulty or perplexity that has been felt (directly experienced) into a problem to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought;

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[11] I alluded in Chapter 3 to the correspondence between these five phases of inquiry and phronetic research questions used in this study.

3. the use of one suggestion after another as a leading idea, or hypothesis, to initiate and guide observation and other operations in collection of factual material;

4. the mental elaboration of the idea of supposition as an idea or supposition (reasoning, in the sense in which reasoning is a part, not the whole, of inference);

5. testing the hypothesis by overt or imaginary action. (Dewey 1933. pp.106-107, italics in original)

Alexander's narrative in the 'Evolution of a Technique' neatly parallels Dewey's method, and may be read as a methodological template for research on one's self. McCormack (1958, pp. 146-147) tells us that Dewey endorsed this chapter because it met his five-step scientific method, and Bloch (2004) comments on the possibility of Alexander writing it in a 'scientific' way in order to attract Dewey's endorsement. In any event, Dewey wrote the following in his introduction to *The Use of the Self* (1932):

> I appeal to the account which Mr. Alexander has given of the origin of his discovery of the principle of central and conscious control. Those who do not identify science with a parade of technical vocabulary will find in this account the essentials of scientific method in any field of inquiry. They will find a record of long continued, patient, unwearied experimentation and observation in which every inference is extended, tested, corrected by further more searching experiments; they will find a series of such observations in which the mind is carried from observation of comparatively coarse, gross, superficial connections of causes and effect to those causal conditions which are fundamental and central in the use which we make of ourselves.
>
> Personally, I cannot speak with too much admiration — in the original sense of wonder as well as the sense of respect — of the persistence and thoroughness with which these extremely difficult observations and experiments were carried out. (Dewey in Alexander 1932 p. xiv)

Another way of reading Alexander's autobiographical chapter heuristically is as a teaching allegory, or *bildungsroman*. A *bildungsroman* is an educational parable of a young person, usually a man, who sets off alone from home, often

travelling to London, to engage in self-discovery by challenging and overcoming the circumstances that confront him and then returns home transformed in some way (Usher & Edwards 1994). A well-known example is the story of David Copperfield in Charles Dickens's novel of the same name.

For Alexander, a more contemporaneous example of a such a transformation would have been in the popular imperialist novel *Prester John* by Scottish novelist John Buchan (1910). Buchan's hero, the fatherless, young, white, David Crawfurd, travels from Britain and quells a rebellion by the irrational, restless, 'lesser races' of the Transvaal. Crawfurd then provides them with training in technologies to use for rural work under their colonialist controllers. This *bildungsroman* reading fits with Staring's (2005, p. 5) idea that Alexander's earliest writings have undertones of the 19th and early 20th Centuries' typically British *zeitgeist* of 'Muscular Christianity' and the 'Empire'. Kipling described it as the "White Man's Burden" (quoted in Ferguson 2004, p. 380).

As the hero of his own adventure story, Alexander may be seen as the quintessentially British man of reason who struggled with and eventually mastered irrational feeling, just as powerful agents colonised the supposedly less sophisticated populations in the cause of a "Greater Britain" (Ferguson 2004, p.252). To borrow a word then used within the British Empire, his reasoning mind struggled to gain *dominion* over his reactive body. If Alexander was unaware of this symbolism when he wrote his autobiographical chapter, he acknowledged it fleetingly a decade later with a footnote in his subsequent book, *The Universal Constant in Living* (1942):

> As a medical friend wrote to me after reading *The Use of the Self*: "The only criticism that I can offer of your new book is that is just about the most interesting that I have ever read. It beats the usual explorer's yarn into a cocked hat, because you wandered through a much darker country than any of them did. (p. 210)

Taken together, these phronetic and heuristic interpretations of 'The Evolution of a Technique' suggest, as do all good stories, that Alexander's chapter has teaching value well beyond that of a simple, linear narrative. Alexander was using the story-telling conventions of his time, including seemingly antithetical Cartesian metaphors, to spin a compelling educational yarn about the value of practical reasoning. As well, he was giving an example to his readers and pupils of how they could work on themselves in the same way.

Despite Alexander's obvious passion for writing about his discoveries, I contend that he was not fully aware of his readers' inabilities to interpret him from a post-Cartesian perspective. Nor did he appreciate how his awkward writing style would impact on them (J. Nicholls 2005). Had he developed more reflective insight into the craft of writing and engaged more figuratively with his own texts, he may have been able to diffuse the dualism of his metaphors and add rhetorical clarity to his tale (Richardson 1997). As MacLure (2003 p. 118) points out, "since power and politics are implicated both in clarity and complexity, there is a need for continuous reflection on the possible effects of one's writing, even if one can never predict absolutely what those effects will be".

Readers too need a certain level of literary sophistication if they are to locate more accurately Alexander's story within the emerging paradigm of learning. The problem is that many AT teachers and teacher educators have not learnt to appreciate his literary devices and, instead, are easily confused by his syntactical complexity and Cartesian metaphors. It is important, therefore, that beginning teachers should develop the skill of critiquing the Alexandrian literature in a nuanced way so that AT teachers of the future may appreciate more fully what Alexander was attempting to say. In Chapter 6, I include this

skill among the standards I propose as part of a provisional framework for AT teaching.

In Chapter 5, meanwhile, I shall move to the empirical part of the study that I call phronetic research. Here I will interpret the research participants' email interviews and the published interviews with senior AT teachers to arrive at a range of interim recommendations for the future of AT teacher education. These will feed into a set of provisional protocols that I will put forward in Chapter 6 as an alternative to the numerical protocols.

Chapter 5

Interpreting the participant data

5.1 Introduction to the chapter

In Chapter 3, I explained that phronetic research is one of the subsidiary methodologies I adopt within an overarching research methodology I call, following Biesta and Burbules (2003), pragmatism. Like the AT itself, phronetic research problematises existing patterns of behaviour and suggests desirable changes by asking such practical questions as:

- What are we doing? Where are we going?
- Why are we doing it? Who gains and loses, by which mechanisms of power?
- What comes next? Is it desirable?
- What should be done? How can we do it better?

I will now use a phronetic lens to examine the data sources to arrive at a sense of how the research participants desire AT teacher education to proceed in the future. The main data source is the email interviews, which are interpreted against a background of the published interviews with senior teachers, the peripheral AT literature and my own experience of the profession.

Towards the end of the Chapter, I build on these findings and propose a hybrid attendance model of AT teacher education. In Chapter 6, I incorporate this hybrid model into a framework of standards for beginning AT teachers which I propose as a provisional alternative to the numerical protocols.

5.2 Themes from interviews and other data

As explained in Chapter 3, twenty participants from seven nations volunteered to be interviewed by email. Interviewing was conducted over two rounds, each round having a set of questions that all participants received. These two rounds of e-questions are given in Appendix A. The first round of questions drew on the phronetic template give above and was designed to open up the conversation with participants about the future of AT teacher education (Kvale 1996).

In order to analyse the data, I developed a variation of a hand-coding system suggested by Wolcott (2001). As each reply arrived by email, I printed it in a font which was individualised for each participant and taped the print-out to a large wall. Using a differently coloured pencil for each theme as it emerged, I marked the margins of all the pages, and the colours that predominated then became indicators of the primary themes. Using this process I sorted the first set of replies into the following seven preliminary themes: (1) flexibility of teacher education, (2) competencies of beginning teachers, (3) the influence of gender on competence, (4) the prior experience and motivation of students, (5) competencies of teacher educators and Heads of Training, (6) continuing professional education, and (7) the problem of insufficient teaching work for beginning teachers.

These preliminary themes became the foundation for a second set of e-questions that were more specific, the intention being to focus on a narrower range of collective concerns the participants would have about the future of AT teacher education. When the second round of e-replies was received, there was enough material generated from both sets of e-interviews to identify three primary

themes that capture the participants' desires regarding the future of AT teacher education. These three themes are:

- Flexibility of AT teacher education
- Competencies for beginning AT teachers
- Competencies for AT teacher educators, especially Heads of Training.

In the next sections of the thesis I conduct a two-stage interpretation of these three primary themes. First, after extracting the e-interview excerpts that are relevant to each theme, I analyse how they support or discourage change in that domain of AT teacher education. I then draw on the published material to see how the senior members of the profession might view these themes. The main sources of the senior teachers' opinions are their interviews in Gounaris et al. (2000); Kettrick (2002); and Barlow and Allan Davies (2002).

It is important to make two methodological points about this approach to interpreting the interview data. First, as was mentioned in Chapter 3, the e-interviewees were a self-nominating group who responded to my advertisements to participate. Collectively, they may therefore be called a 'convenience sample' rather than a 'probability sample', which means their opinions cannot be reliably extrapolated to the AT community as a whole (Schonlau et al. 2002). While I may infer from the data that the wider community has desires similar to the e-interviewees, future research will be needed to substantiate this.

The second point is that the interviews with the senior teachers were conducted by interviewers whose agenda would most likely have been different from mine. In other words, I cannot tell if there was a phronetic context to the questions the senior teachers were asked. I can say, however, that I use a

phronetic lens in my interpretation of their replies.

The reader should also note two compositional aspects to the way the data is presented here. The first relates to the fonts I have used. As mentioned in Chapter 3, I initially gave each participant an individual font so that I could locate and identify each participant's replies among the many emails. For example, participant Karen's responses were reproduced in Lucida Grande font, and Lara's in Arial. I have continued this pattern in the thesis by using individualised fonts to distinguish participants' email responses from each other's and from the main text. I trust this system also helps to recreate participants' individual voices and therefore their identities. The senior teachers' opinions are excerpted from the peripheral literature and presented in a common font, News Gothic MT. This is to suggest the excerpt is being used as data rather than simply a quotation.

The second compositional aspect to note is that, except for corrected spelling and minor editing for clarification purposes, all participants' responses are reproduced exactly as they appeared in their emails. As explained in Chapter 3, not all participants are anglophones, and so by including their grammatical traits I try to provide a truer sense of how each participant responded. Additionally, for confidentiality purposes, I have given them all anglophone, gender-specific, first-name pseudonyms, regardless of their national backgrounds.

Flexibility of AT teacher education programs

The participants' interviews

In Chapter 2, I described the two main styles of AT teacher education as the 'time-specific' model and the apprenticeship model. Time-specific teacher education is mandated by the world-wide group of Affiliated Societies of the AT, which relies on quantitative rules of attendance but prescribes neither competency standards nor any set curricula. By contrast, in the apprenticeship model, the competence of beginning AT teachers is assessed according to an agreed set of qualitative standards, regardless of the attendance patterns they employed during their apprenticeships. The best known professional society of AT teachers which works in this apprenticeship way is Alexander Technique International (ATI).

The first round of e-interview questions put to the participants (see Appendix A) revealed a range of opinions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of these attendance models. I teased out this theme further in the second round of questions and included a question on the possible value of combining the models. The resulting data indicates two interconnected concerns for participants in the matter of flexibility of attendance at AT teacher education programs. These are:

(1)   that the flexibility of the apprenticeship model might jeopardise beginning teachers' standards in ways that the time-specific model would not, and

(2)   that the inflexibility of the time-specific model makes teacher education less convenient for trainees and less accessible to trainee-candidates who have other careers.

These concerns reveal a tension between the desire for the convenience of the apprenticeship system and the need to maintain the safeguards of teacher competence perceived to be embedded in the time-specific system. Participant Karen appreciates the current time-specific standards of AT teacher education:

> I think it a wonderful position to be in: to have an internationally recognized training standard. This is very unusual amongst professions and I therefore feel very strongly that this needs to be preserved and quality assured. We need to work out how to do this.

Some of the participants predicted flexible attendance would be a problem if it were to result in a reduction in the existential, Use-related, aspects of AT teacher training. For example, Lara, who has had extensive experience in AT teacher education, wrote that she disagreed with combining the time-specific and apprenticeship models of training:

> I think the HoT [Head of Training] should state at the outset what is expected of his students concerning attendance, and make sure that a record of the hours of attendance are scrupulously kept.
>
> My reasoning behind this is that it takes a long time for the body to stabilise into the new pattern of use. Students who miss out on hours at the elementary stage of their training never really seem to catch up - and they are usually the disgruntled ones who are dissatisfied with their training!

In this connection, Michael wonders whether the purpose of AT training programs is to educate students to teach the AT, or simply to teach them the AT in the way that pupils/clients are instructed:

> The apprenticeship system might give a more realistic idea of what it means to teach the Technique, as opposed to being taught it. My impression is that they are two very different things, but they were not always presented as clearly distinct in the ... teaching I experienced.

This tension reflects what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) call the knowledge-*for*-practice and knowledge-*in*-practice conceptions of teacher learning. From

my experience of the time-specific system, much of a student's attendance time is, in fact, spent gaining familiarity with the elements of the AT in order to teach it effectively, however that effectiveness may be gauged. Usually, students will have to show they embody the principles of the AT before being certified. Implicit in this system is the idea that the commitment to three years attendance, almost full-time, will allow sufficient time for this embodiment to occur and that good teaching will be an attribute that should occur naturally as a result.

For the most part, participants who identified themselves as apprenticeship-trained did not volunteer that such a tension exists for them, although they could appreciate it as a possibility with time-specific training. For example, Amanda, an apprenticeship-trained participant, can see the advantages to both the time-specific and apprenticeship models. Amanda suggests:

> The advantage to a student in a [structured] training program that requires everyday attendance is the opportunity to be wholly engaged with the exploration of the technique on an intense routine, to become totally immersed.…
> The advantage to training in an apprenticeship system is that it encourages the trainee to <u>reaffirm</u> his/her desire to continue. It takes a different style of discipline to more-or-less be responsible for your own progress. I believe this allows students room to learn at their own pace.…
> So open ended training is an advantage. Time is a helpful tool of teaching. Then of course it gives the chance for students to finance their study as they go along if it is not possible to for them to commit to a full time situation.

Several of the Affiliated Societies-educated participants believe that time-specific programs, with their predictable durations, regular daily attendance patterns and familiar cohort of fellow trainees, are opportunities for trainees to learn to deal with group dynamics and, in the process, become more responsible and collegial. In contrast, others believe daily attendance brings about an inappropriate dependence on the teacher educators and, therefore, less

self-responsibility.

This second view is supported by participants familiar with the apprenticeship system, with its irregular attendance during an open-ended training period. They tend to say they learnt self-responsibility through not being able to rely on constant interaction with their teacher educators. For example, Grace, a teacher educator who uses the apprenticeship model in her teacher education program, wrote

> For me actually learning the Alexander Technique requires a person to learn independently. Although you may start with a teacher, eventually you have to take what you are learning apply it consistently in your daily life without a teacher at hand. One of the biggest advantages of an apprenticeship model is that is "forces" the pupil to become a competent independent learner much sooner. In other words, if one is attending a residential program, meeting daily for 3 hours over three years, it is easier to depend more on the teacher for learning, because the teacher is always there. With an apprenticeship model, or a model of, for example, weekend training, the pupil must depend on themselves. I have also observed that people who attend apprenticeship programs, or any program which has longer spans of time between regular in person training, seem to have more confidence about their ability to apply the principles of the Technique both in their daily life and in teaching. It requires, of course, a trainer who can teach in a way that supports independent learning.

A small group of participants were concerned that an open-ended, one-to-one, apprenticeship system might lead to power-related issues and a guru-like dependency develop between students and their teacher. It is worth noting that these fears were expressed only by Affiliated Societies-trained participants who, presumably, had not experienced apprenticeship. For example, Lara wrote:

> I do NOT think one-to-one teaching is helpful as a main part of the training - there are too many opportunities for the Head of Training to become a "guru" or to give simply a too one-sided approach to training.

Andrea suggested a solution whereby students could have access to a variety of teacher educators with whom they could study on an individual basis. In Andrea's opinion,

> The advantages of the apprenticeship system given that
> its one to one, would of course be the intensive work
> that could be achieved.
> However, the disadvantages far outway the advantages.
> The student would be isolated, there would an
> imbalance in power and the space for wide discussion
> limited.
> If the one-one was allowed between a variety of
> teachers (that is separate from the training school
> teachers) then this would be beneficial to more
> people, widening the student's experience of other
> teaching methods and thoughts.

A fair proportion of participants, for some of whom it had been a struggle to keep turning up at school day after day, would have preferred a more flexible structure that accommodated their home, work and financial commitments. Most would agree that the apprenticeship model is more convenient because it allows trainee teachers to continue working in their primary profession or other work without taking time off and to remain living in locations inaccessible to daily classes. Maria gives an example:

> A medical doctor (with his emphasis in complementary and
> alternative medicine)has been learning the Technique with me for
> 5 years. He has a family, a practice and lives hundreds of
> kilometers away from the next official class.
> He´d love to train and he´d be a great addition to our profession -
> but -how to do it?!
> The class system has the continuity advantage but also students
> sometimes get saturated and are still having to come to class. This
> is exhausting and a waste of time!

Brian, an AT teacher educator within the time-specific system, also made the point that by restricting the training of such people to regular daily attendance, usually during daytime working hours, primary careers need to be put on hold for a minimum of three years. Brian warns:

> Potential trainees of good calibre are deterred from training by the
> need to jettison an existing career. This creates a bias in the
> trainee group [towards non-professionals] which is not necessarily
> to the advantage of the [AT] profession as a whole.

These comments on the lack of flexibility point to dissatisfaction with the way the numerical protocols of AT teacher education do not allow the possibility of part-time and distance learning. Deborah recommends a balance in AT teacher education:

> In general, I think the more flexibility there is in a training structure, the more the student will experience the training as a process that reflects the Alexander Technique itself. The more structure a program provides, the greater the clarity and security for the student regarding expectations. I believe both of these elements need to be balanced within a training program.

The senior teachers' interviews

The six interviews with the senior teachers conducted by Gounaris et al. (2000) can be divided into two groups of three. I put Peggy Williams, Anthony Spawforth and Erika Whittaker in one group because, while they might have taught on AT teacher education programs, they have never managed programs in their own names. The remaining three interviewees, namely, Walter Carrington (co-interviewed with his wife Dilys), Marjory Barlow and Elisabeth Walker, are or have been Heads of Training at their own teacher education programs in England.[12] Their schools operated within the STAT guidelines, which include the numerical protocols. In fact, these Heads of Training would have been experienced stakeholders in STAT when the numerical protocols were introduced in the 1960s.

In response to questions from Gounaris et al. (2000) about recommended attendance patterns at teacher training programs Williams and Spawforth both agree on the need for regular attendance and student interaction. For Williams, it is

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[12] In the time taken to complete this thesis, all but two of the senior teachers interviewed by Gounaris et al. (2000) have died. The two remaining are Dilys Carrington and Elisabeth Walker.

because I think you need a day-after-day atmosphere with other people, as a continuous discipline (Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 19),

and Spawforth says:

Well, it's rather like being brought up as an only child. I think it's better to have other people going through the same thing (Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 115).

By contrast, Whittaker is the only senior teacher to advocate an apprenticeship style of teacher education which would allow for irregular attendance patterns and inconsistent student interactions. She acknowledges that quantitative norms like regular and registered attendance times at a teacher education program may be of help to the administrators of such programs but resists the idea that they are of use to the students. She says:

I don't like the idea of 'training'. People like [Alexander's pre-1932 apprentices] didn't do a training course. They simply were taught by F.M.[Alexander], and at a certain stage he gave them pupils. ...I don't see why in the Alexander world you can't work with [a master teacher] for a bit and then go to somebody else and work with them for a bit. But not over any particular time. It's a matter of experience and understanding; that's what this work is all about. (Gounaris et al. 2000, pp.137-138)

Whittaker's recommendation reflects a polychronic view of AT teacher education which is student-centred and organic and would allow trainees to design their own mentoring systems. In this view, which resonates with participant Andrea's given earlier, there would be no mandatory schedules or even allegiances to particular teacher education programs (see also Woodward's 1989 similar suggestion).

This style of AT teacher preparation reflects that of American Marjorie (Marj) Barstow (b. 1899, d. 1995), a co-member with Whittaker of Alexander's first formal training program. For Barstow, teaching the AT is just one of many

activities that one can use the AT to enable; one need not attend a training program, as such, to become a teacher. She famously said "I do not train teachers" (quoted in W. Conable 1989, p. 26), yet students would apprentice themselves to her on a casual basis over many years and effectively certify themselves in the manner of craft journeymen (W. Conable 1989; Weed 1989; Williamson 1989).

Whittaker aside, among the other master teachers interviewed by Gounaris et al. (2000) there is general agreement that professional standards are maintained by quantitative frameworks such as the three-year time-specific attendance rule, or its equivalent expressed as 1600 hours. Barlow, though, is less insistent on maintaining a daily ration of teaching hours just for its own sake. Despite the numerical protocols requiring attendance at training programs for between 12 and 20 hours per week and for at least four days per week, Barlow understands how tiring daily attendance can be when so much psycho-physical change is happening. She recommends:

> … a minimum of two hours a day if the time is *used*, if people are really working. … Every day. *Every day.* (Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 75, italics in original)

When she says "really working," I presume Barlow means giving attention to the AT only, rather than, as happens in some schools, allocating attendance time to studies like yoga and other peripheral disciplines not directly related to the AT. She also says:

> I had far sooner they did less time, less hours, and kept it to Alexander work, because almost everything one does tires one a bit and you need *all* the energy for this work. (Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 76, italics in original)

Among the senior Heads of Training there is a range of opinions on the value of one-to-one apprenticeship models of training, lacking as they do the benefits of

group interaction on a regular basis. The Carringtons, for example, while making no overt objection to apprenticeship, argue that group classes are superior to individualised teacher education because of the social interaction they make available. Walter Carrington says:

> I think [attendance] should be three hours, five days a week, or something like that. (Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 44)

and Dilys Carrington agrees:

> I think that the discussion between the students is a really important part of [training]. (p. 45)

Suggesting slightly differently, Elisabeth Walker says:

> I think the course, the school [and social] aspect of it, is interesting, but I wouldn't put [individualised training] as not being a possible way of learning to teach. (p. 95)

Barlow's opinion on individualised apprenticeships seems to vary according to which of two recent publications one reads. In her own book (Barlow & Allan Davies 2002) she endorses apprenticeship as a possible future direction for AT teacher education to take. She says:

> I do think the apprenticeship method of training has a lot going for it. After all, some of the greatest teachers [of the AT] learned that way (A.R. Alexander for instance). It's good because you see people working in a real situation — a training course is always somehow artificial.... Apprenticeship is, at least, tried and true! I have a preference for apprenticeship, and I would love to see it supported wherever possible. (p. 153)

However, Barlow presents a contrary point of view in her interview with Gounaris et al. (2000). Here she disapproves of one-to-one apprenticeships because

> it would be much more limited [than group work]. (p. 84)

Are Barlow's seemingly different points of view reconcilable? Given that Barlow and Allan Davies (2002) is a more recent publication and that it is written in an autobiographical context, I take Barlow's statements in this publication to better represent her opinion about apprenticeships. In other words, I believe she would entertain the possibility of one-to-one apprenticeships, albeit on the basis of regular and frequent attendance.

A point to remember, though, is that all the senior Heads of Training interviewed by Gounaris et al. (2000), namely, Barlow, Walker and the Carringtons, are unlikely to have actually taught such so-called apprentices. Their UK teacher education programs were accredited by STAT and therefore always firmly grounded in the tradition of time-specific attendance. In fact, given that apprenticeship training has never been approved by STAT, it is unlikely that any of these senior teacher educators would have seen, at least in the UK, any AT teacher being educated formally as an apprentice.

Summary

The data relating to the first principal theme, flexibility of attendance, shows slight tension between the participants' preferences and the senior teacher educators' recommendations. From the phronetic perspective of *What should be done?, How can we do it better?*, most of the Affiliated Societies participants, who are familiar with the time-specific protocols, would like to see a more flexible approach which accommodates part-time and irregular attendance. Even so, it is also worth noting that these participants expressed no comment about the overall requirement of 1600-hours/three-years. It is difficult to know if this means they take this rule for granted or they prefer to keep it in place. From my experience of the profession, I regard the former as most likely. Further research

will be needed to glean a profession-wide opinion about this matter.

The senior teacher educators, with the exception of Erika Whittaker, seem content with the existing approach of maintaining regular, continuous attendance, if not always in groups or for the minimum number of daily hours prescribed by the numerical protocols. In other words, while they approve of keeping Alexander's original model of daily attendance for at least three years, they are more loosely attached to the stricter aspects of the numerical protocols.

Competencies for beginning AT teachers

The participants' interviews

I began this study just as competencies were becoming a policy issue among AT stakeholders, particularly in the UK. In my e-interviews I asked the research participants their opinions on the adoption of competencies and the mutual recognition of teaching standards within the AT teaching profession. The trend of the participants' replies favours working towards agreement on professional standards and the development of competency documents that can be openly discussed and debated. An example is from Jenny, who is aware of the political pressures facing the AT profession in the UK. She wrote

> I think that we have little choice other than to address the issue of competencies: governments are going to insist upon it. We are in a position where we can influence the contents if we act before we are compelled to. This also makes us think about what we do and the results we expect, both from others and ourselves.

Grace agrees that the process of formulating and writing the standards will itself be valuable:

> Only good can come from consciously examining our assumptions and attempting to put in writing what we believe.

And Andrea concurs:

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Everyone will benefit I think.  Particularly the
trainees and the heads of training.  They may begin to
know what they are teaching\learning!
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Lara, who has extensive experience of time-specific teacher education, also endorses the usefulness of competencies but is concerned they may be used to interfere with the practical and creative skills of teacher educators :

> [There is a] need for the [STAT] 'Competencies Document' - but even that will need constant review. My take on this whole question is that we should have a strong set of fully understood principles that set out the basic tenets of the Alexander Technique, but we should leave to the individual [educator] the means whereby these principles are embodied and taught. More principle, less prescription. …
>
> It has been a useful exercise in defining our own competencies. It also shows how much easier it is to become prescriptive (do it this way) rather than to be able to think things through in an inhibitory and directed way.

By 'inhibitory and directed way', Lara means the Alexandrian process of means-ends thinking, of receiving a stimulus, stopping to think, and then responding intelligently, rather than reactively. In other words, using practical reasoning.

Michael, too, echoes a number of participants who are concerned that care should be taken not to impinge upon pedagogical creativity within training programs in the name of competency attainment. He writes:

> [I have] reservations about the way competencies will be used in practice, and how they will themselves begin to define our profession in a way that risks narrowing its range unacceptably.

Similarly, Robert argues that competencies should not become so fixed as to interfere with the further evolution of AT teaching styles. Like many AT teachers, he takes Alexander's texts as the primary guide for teachers, yet he understands the need to expand Alexander's pedagogy further. Robert writes:

> The primary guide we have … are Alexander's books which, in my view define the parameters of the Alexander work very clearly. However it must be acknowledged, as it was by Alexander himself, that the work will evolve, and new teaching methodologies may be developed.
>
> International standards are likely to be much harder to establish. The international affiliation of societies attempts to address this, but in doing so may have the effect of preventing national societies from moving forward on developing their own standards.

Aligned with this concern about the need for competencies is a perceived problem with the common method of competency assessment within the Affiliated Societies, that is, the Heads of Training independently certifying the graduates of their training programs. Under this system, there is no requirement for external validation of the Head of Training's assessment. Gail recognises this problem and recommends:

> I would hope that there would be a certifying board outside the Head of Training in the future. Perhaps by the professional organisation of the country in which the teacher trained. This opens up the option that to join organisations in other countries, one would have to demonstrate teaching competencies.

David is one of the few dissenters in the competency conversation and would prefer competencies be not introduced at all. He writes about the competency debate from the perspective of power differentials and is concerned about possible tension between demands of standardisation and trainees' choices for their own teacher education. He suggests paradoxically that having no profession-wide standards will ensure the maintenance of individual standards because students will cease attending training programs that are inept. As well, David is suspicious that whoever writes the competencies may be misguided. He writes:

> What this standardisation process assumes is that the standards which are chosen will be basically 'right'. It cannot allow for the very real possibility that the standards may be completely wrong, or misguided, or abusive, or influenced by vested interests. No matter – the student is stuck with them because there is now no alternative. A very valuable check on standards (i.e. diversity and student choice) has been lost.…
>
> [The competencies inquiry] will serve the interests of those pupils who are frightened by uncertainty and ambiguity, and so can call a teacher to account according to a group-formulated framework which the teacher may completely disagree with.

The senior teachers' interviews

In Chapter 2, I explained the controversy that has developed in recent years about the possible introduction of qualitative competencies into the UK, in particular how Walter Carrington has opposed the way these competencies have so far been expressed. The interviews with the senior teachers were recorded well before the UK competencies were proposed, and so the controversy will not be mentioned here. I shall save further discussion about it for Chapter 6.

In their interviews with the senior teachers, Gounaris et al. (2000) did not ask specifically about qualitative competencies for AT teaching. However, when these teachers do mention standards at all, it is to agree that a beginning teacher's Use should be the focus of assessment. For the sake of this analysis, Use includes the teacher's own self-functioning in addition to their craft-like, hands-on pedagogic skills. Barlow (in Gounaris et al. 2000) explains how she assesses her trainee teachers based on their Use:

> When you work with people daily in a very intimate way, you don't need an examination at the end of it. One of the ways I used to judge them was to make them work on me. ... So if they work on you, that's one of the best ways of judging, because you can't make a mistake about *that.* You know if they're being heavy-handed, or whatever the criticism is. (p. 81, italics in the original)

Walter Carrington (in Kettrick 2002) indicates his similar preference for assessing his students' practical, 'hands-on' skills rather than just their theoretical understanding. He says:

> Certainly people can get intellectual knowledge of the technique, but they can get intellectual knowledge of anything else. But when it comes to an actual putting it into practice, ... realistically for the majority of people, hands-on experience is indispensable [in teacher education]. (p. 11)

Carrington (in Gounaris et al. 2000) also says that AT teachers

> can't give anything but what they've got in their own body (p. 33).

He assesses the competence of teachers by

> putting hands on them and seeing what they're doing to the person they're teaching (p. 34),

and agrees that one of the skills of a "properly trained" AT teacher is that the teacher can tell if someone is "going up" (p. 33).

> [As an AT teacher] you can only work on [a pupil's] nervous system and on the brain and give the signals through your own release for that person to release. And if you haven't got the signals in yourself, you're not teaching them properly. It really is extremely simple (pp. 33 -34).

Dilys Carrington (in Gounaris et al. 2000) puts it this way:

> To me one of the important things about training, really, is to realize that what we're after when we [teachers] put our hands on a person is making sure that the person tends to 'go up'. You have the impression of the body rising out of your hands, not going downwards. And also you must have the impression that you are releasing tension in the muscles and not getting them to tighten. I think those are the two important ways that you can tell how somebody is going. (p. 33)

According to W. Carrington, Alexander's ultimate decision about the competence of beginning teachers was also based on their Use. Williams also recalls Alexander saying

> When your back's ready, you will be able to teach (quoted in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 17).

Walker agrees with the importance of the beginning teacher's Use, but she is wary of standardising competence:

> Rules can get in the way. Of course, teachers must have a good training and their "use" must be good to convey improvements in their pupils. ... There is something about 'Validation and Accreditation' that savours of "getting it right", "fixing" — no wonder F.M. was wary of starting a [professional] society. (pp. 89-90)

While not referring to competencies as such, Kettrick (2002) sought the British senior teacher's views on ensuring the quality of beginning teachers. None, however, seems particularly enthusiastic about how this may be done. Barlow (in Kettrick 2002) comments:

> "There's no insurance .... We cannot ensure the quality of any graduate unless we return to FM and his books and see the essence of what he was doing then and try those careful experiments ourselves in the first person." (p. 11).

For W. Carrington,

> "Only the individual head of training can ensure the quality of graduates,"

And Walker is even less positive:

> "No guarantee, no guarantee."

The implication of these three replies is that quality in AT teaching cannot be easily described and that it should be determined and assessed by Heads of Training.

The peripheral AT literature contains surprisingly few other comments on

teacher competence. An example is from Patrick Macdonald (1989), who writes:

> [I]t is generally accepted that a teacher [of the AT] must maintain a standard of good use in order to be able to pass it onto a pupil. Good use may be described as maintaining a solid back and a certain upflow of the body; the opposite is a contraction of the body and limbs, and results in a pressing down onto the pupil, and a stiffening of the arms and wrists. (p. 69)

While there appear to be elements of the Cartesian dichotomy in the interviews and extracts so far presented, I do not mean to suggest that these teacher educators, or any others for that matter, determine beginner teachers' competence according to their Use only. From my experience, they would include in their tacit assessments many more skills and attributes than this one quality. Carrington (1994), for example, tells us that

> Teaching is finding out as much as you possibly can about the pupil, and … it is seeing what is required to be taught. The process of teaching … is a process of actual explanation and bringing about understanding. Naturally, it is a sensory experience, and we know the sensory experience is absolutely vital in the pupil. It is the main part of our work. (p. 45)

Carrington's words provide a succinct example of what Shulman (1987, p. 8) calls "pedagogic content knowledge, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding". Even so, rarely does one see in the AT literature explicit references to how beginning teachers might be assessed as competent in the sort of teaching Carrington describes. I shall say more about the possibility of writing such standards in Chapter 6.

Dr Wilfred Barlow, a rheumatologist as well as an AT teacher, who, with his wife Marjory Barlow, was a leading AT teacher educator in London from the early 1950s, illustrates an understanding of pedagogic content knowledge when

he describes the competence he would expect of AT teachers. This he does in a section called 'Training Alexander teachers', which takes up just two pages of his book *More Talk of Alexander* (Barlow 1978, pp. 299-300). It is worth noting that until the early 2000s, when competencies began appearing on the AT political agenda, no other writer that I know of has ever devoted even this much print space to describing specifically what AT teachers should know and be able to do.

In summary, Barlow (1978) sees AT teaching as a process of life-long learning. While it may be satisfactory for beginning teachers with even "crude psychomotor skills" to alter their pupils Manner of Use, he says, "genuine Alexander teaching skill is a sophisticated combination of the psychological with the physical, and this takes a long time to mature" (p. 300). These qualities reflect respectively what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) call the knowledge-*for* and knowledge-*in*-practice conceptions of teacher learning. Barlow (1978) argues that Heads of Training and other teacher educators need certainly to have matured beyond this simple imparting of information through the hands to an ability to continuously reflect on practice and conceptualise values. Such understandings would resonate with the knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning, but Barlow seems to imply that they are primarily the reserve of teacher educators and not necessarily of concern to beginning or even experienced teachers.

Kettrick (2002) includes American senior AT teacher Richard Gummere among her interviewees. Gummere, a keen Deweyan (see Gummere 1988, 1989), supports a future-oriented, developmental approach to AT teaching which resonates with the knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning. This contrasts with front-end, knowledge-*for*-practice training pedagogy embedded

in the Affiliated Societies numerical protocols. If AT teaching is to continue evolving, Gummere suggests, stakeholders must research and possibly change the familiar approaches they bring to teacher education. Gummere (in Kettrick 2002) says:

> I think we need to refine the teaching techniques … they need great change. … [T]he technique is too much like it was back then. I don't see any kind of organic development in it. At some point … I began thinking it ought to develop, that it ought to be better, that the teaching of it should be better. (p. 9)
> So why can't we at least introduce non-manual pedagogy as an important part, to be taken very seriously and studied and scientifically analysed in comparison with the manual teaching and just see what happens? (p. 11)

Summary

The phronetic analysis of this second principal theme suggests general agreement amongst research participants that the introduction of competencies for beginning AT teachers is desirable. While a version of AT teacher competencies has yet to be developed which represents the views of the majority of stakeholders, participants appreciate that appropriately written standards for AT teacher education will be needed in the future.

The interviews with the senior teachers were conducted before competencies arose as a policy issue in the UK, and the interviewers do not mention them. I find it difficult, therefore, to determine from these published interviews whether or not the senior teachers would approve of competency standards as a way of ensuring the future professionalism of AT teaching. An exception is W. Carrington, whose more recent opinion is reported elsewhere in this thesis. There is a sense, though, that most of the senior teachers would think of the standards as an unnecessarily complicated way of describing what AT teachers need to do, which is simply to maintain their own Use and 'take people up'.

Competencies for AT teacher educators and Heads of Training

The participants' interviews

Several of the research participants commented on how being successful as an AT teacher is not necessarily commensurate with success as a Head of Training. Apart from the different pedagogical skills required, these areas demand varying levels of business acumen and fiscal management. Financial incompetence of Heads of Training is seen as a possible source of distress in training schools. An example given is of a Head of Training who, because of cash flow needs, enrols new trainees while missing signs that they may be either unsuitable as AT teachers or disruptive to the training environment when they join it. Some participants expressed concern that such trainees could interfere with the learning process of keener or more able students.

Along with money, the issue of power also arises in regard to the attitude of the Head of Training towards student teachers, just as it does in school teacher education (Boote 2003). A number of participants used the opportunity of writing to me to complain about the autocratic, perhaps abusive, style of some teacher educators they know. The emotionally laden words used to describe them, such as 'guru,' 'little gods,' 'high status' and even 'fascist', were quite surprising. I reproduce here a lengthy excerpt from Philip, who expressed how upset he was about the training program he attended:

> I was not pleased with my training both on a professional and personal level. The course directors knew very little about educational processes and had fascist tendencies in their approach to the Alexander work. The emotional climate in the classroom was one of fear of not being right or good enough. Time and time again we were told that life would be better if only we did not stiffen our necks and pull down!!

> The course was heavily structured and based on copying procedures-to quote [*the Head of Training*] "You are not here to ask questions but to learn my methodology!" It all had a strong army feel to it and the local professors at [*location*] College used to say we were in a sort of Nazi Alexander school.
>
> The directors were clearly unsuitable to run a training course and the student body had to get [*professional society*] board members in to air complaints about the course and the climate of fear. We could only obtain qualifications if the directors thought we were "ready" and this meant being on their good side and not questioning them too much. They were extremely threatened by other teachers and [*Head of Training*]... refused to speak to me for a month after attending a [*Name*] workshop in [*country*].
>
> In short my training was very unprofessional and lacking in all respects – it took me a few years to get over the emotional abuse that was rudely disguised as education.

The foregoing comments point to a style of teacher education which reflects the narrow, knowledge-*for*-practice conception of teacher learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999), in which the focus is on what the student teachers are to be taught, rather than on their knowledge-*in*-practice, which is how and why they learn. Philip's story also points to what Boote (2003 p. 263) calls the "central double-bind of teacher education". This refers to the largely unacknowledged dilemma where the teacher educator is claiming to foster the trainee's professional development but at the same time has the power to fail the trainee for not living up to the educator's standards. To save face, both teacher and trainee may invoke a range of immature yet emotionally protective defences, among them transference and counter-transference. In this regard, Karen wrote:

> A need to be viewed as "the best", or holding "special knowledge" that no one else possesses, belittles students and the technique. This rigidity in a director will also tend to create conflicts with students who want to feel competent and may be viewed by the director as competition, challenging their authority or usurping their power.

Emotional reactivity is a well recognised phenomenon among individuals having regular personal lessons in the AT and can be an important part of their self-discovery process (Mowat 2003). Daily attendance at a training program, with its compounding requirement for personal and professional self-reflection, adds intensity to such reactions and may lead to students experiencing emotional stress as their habits of Use are constantly being challenged by their teacher educators. Combine this with the knowledge that the Head of Training has the authority to determine whether or not a student may be certified to teach and possible financial pressure while not working full-time, and one has a recipe for potential upset. As the party having more power in this situation, the Head of Training needs to have a finely developed emotional intelligence (Zembylas 2003 a,b). Grace expressed this awareness more explicitly when she wrote:

> The Director certainly has more experience than the trainee, but that experience should be there for the trainee to use as best suits their own pace and method of learning. A Director can best support a trainee or student by being there when help or advice is asked for. Anything else is paternalism in my book.

Similarly, David wrote:

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The issue of power in teaching relationships is one
which I think needs to be talked about and discussed
more in the AT world.… Abuse of power is stopped by
when there are such qualities as clarity, self-
understanding, awareness and affection in
relationships, and these cannot be brought about
through procedure or regulation.
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The various professional societies within the Affiliated Societies may have their own sets of standards for accrediting Heads of Training (see, for example NASTAT 1997) but none are recognised universally by all the Affiliated Societies. More to the point, mandating standards for teacher educators is made more difficult by there being no agreed competencies for the teachers they

educate. For Margaret,

> this is a difficult issue, as long as we don't even have standards of Alexander teaching competencies. I think, this has to be done first.

Notwithstanding the lack of standards within the Affiliated Societies for graduate teachers, the participants' replies do suggest Heads of Training should embody certain attributes. Karen, a teacher educator but not a Head of Training, encapsulates these qualities:

> Balance in their life. Capacity to run a successful and thriving private practice. Understanding and proficiency in practice of the Alexander Technique. Administrative and teaching skills. Capacity to foster and create [a] supportive and nurturing teaching environment. Ability to recognize and capacity to delegate/employ where lacking skills. Healthy social relationships and interests outside of the technique. Understanding of psychodynamic processes and understanding of own tendencies to project and introject affects. Awareness that the Head of a Training course often is the recipient of trainee students unconscious projections. Sense of fun. Capacity to balance business needs with quality assurance, rather [than] running a successful business using the AT as the commodity being peddled. … Educated to have knowledge of and capacity to fulfil the 'competencies' of the Alexander Technique associations. Teacher training that included psychodynamic process, different styles of learning and teaching and conflict resolution. Selection could include standing amongst peers and the community.

While Karen's list is idealistic, it is also holistic and useful. What I read into it is her awareness of how seldom Heads of Training actually meet all these standards. As a Head of Training myself, I certainly don't, and I know very few who would. In any case, Karen's writing illustrates how the discernment of rank-and-file teachers such as herself is a resource which future policy makers may call on when formulating competencies for teacher educators. In a similar vein, Lara recommends Heads of Training have:

> Thorough knowledge of the principles of FM's work, his writings and history. The skills to impart the experience linked with his words: powers of observation to detect what is actually happening in his own use and

that of the students. An ability to help students change without bullying or undue coercion. A strong sense of humour and the wisdom to nurture students through their rites of passage. Giving students the space and confidence to be wrong, and through doing so, find out what is happening.

Karen and Lara are not alone among the participants in recommending Heads of Training have a sense of fun or humour and awareness of trainees' emotional reactions as attributes of teacher educators. Several of the senior teachers interviewed in Gounaris et al. (2000) mention it too. I concur, although with Boote's (2003) caution that teacher educators should not mistake irony for humour, lest it be perceived as a form of emotional attack.

These comments from Karen and Lara point to the importance of emotional intelligence and practical wisdom in teacher education (Garrison 1997) and the need for professional boundaries and "therapeutic distance" (Boote 2003, p. 272) between educators and their students. Some participants said they would like to see emotional intelligence taught as an undergraduate competency so that trainees can better understand the needs of their own future pupils. While these participants would presumably understand that teacher educators are not usually qualified as clinical counsellors, they would like to see Heads of Training demonstrate a more competent appreciation of the emotional needs of trainees beyond simply referring them to external advisors or by hoping the trainees will sort out their problems in some other way. Nerida writes:

> Besides his "technical" competencies, a director should have the ability to see and support the process the students go through, without turning into a psychologist, and to integrate the group dynamic as an opportunity to "practice" the technique, to experience it in present life situations. Then Inhibition and directions take their full meaning, the entire person is engaged into the work.

Alisa sees the lack of emotional education as a systemic problem which the

whole AT profession should investigate. She writes:

> Alexander Technique [is] much much more than physical movement, although every reaction involves some form of physical tensing or releasing. Now the work is centrally about changing consciousness. ... Alexander trainees often find that as they get more and more hands on work, they become more emotionally alive and less able to go into a habitual suppression of emotional responses. I would like [a] working party to come up with recommendations as to how we could develop these deeper aspects of the work on our training courses, so our training courses are not governed by habit and unconscious approaches to training.

A counterbalance to the view that Heads of Training should take care of the emotional well-being of their students is presented by Deborah:

> **Students learn by dealing with teachers who push their buttons as well as from teachers who explicitly try not to push their buttons.**

With regard to the formal qualifications needed to be a Head of Training, participants question whether AT qualifications and experience alone are sufficient for conducting a teacher training program. Nerida complains about the Affiliated Societies' protocols for accrediting Heads of Training being quantitative, not qualitative:

> ... a point where my heart is very much set on: not so much the competency-based training courses, but the competencies of training school directors and teachers ! In this case also the opening of a school is not competency-based, a teacher must have 10 years experience, 500 hours spent on teaching on T.C. etc...., all quantitative requirements.

Brian, a Head of Training in the time-specific tradition, refers to the tension between those who say the principles of teacher education are laid out in Alexander's books and those who recommend more contemporary approaches to professional preparation. He writes:

> ...it might be interesting to consider whether the Principles of the Alexander Technique alone and by themselves are sufficient to inform how 'training' can best be delivered. If the answer is 'AT principles alone will do' then we go one way. If we say 'There are valid skills and expertise in delivering AT Training which are to be found outside of the AT canon' then we start looking elsewhere.

Participants David and Gail both seem satisfied with quantitative measures of a Head of Training's competence, but they suggest that a way to enhance competence might be to increase the minimum number of years of AT teaching experience teacher educators should have before being permitted to conduct a training program. David would require up to 15 years, and Gail 20 years.

Andrea is rather more specific in her suggestions for Heads of Training to hold formal qualifications, not only as AT teachers but also as educators in the broader sense. Her list of competencies includes

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Vision and clear aims and objectives.
Business and management skills (both of staff and
students).
Adult teaching skills  –  all should be trained and
achieve an Adult Training Cert. (Too many think they
know how to teach, when in fact they haven't a clue
and are often just repeating the teaching they
received which is often outdated in terms of handling
adults.)
Analytical and problem solving (not reacting to
situations).
Openness and good communication skills (which means
listening)
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As mentioned previously, ATI, with its apprenticeship system, does not need to accredit Heads of Training. Rather, three of ATI's external assessors examine the beginning teacher, and it is irrelevant who their teacher educator may be; it is the accreditation of the assessors that matters. Grace, a Head of Training familiar with ATI, says that were the Affiliated Societies' quantitative protocols ever to change,

> I would recommend following the same procedure that I think we should be following in evaluating teachers, i.e. developing qualitative, standardized criteria and training evaluators to evaluate using them. I think it is much simpler for the society to certify the teacher directly. Of course it takes away the power from the heads of trainers and I doubt they will like that.

The senior teachers' interviews

Most of the senior teachers interviewed had been involved in AT teacher education for many years, if not actually Heads of Training. They are uniquely qualified to comment on what other teacher educators should know and be able to do, and to recommend the sorts of personal attributes a Head of Training should have. They agree that a minimum amount of experience as both a teacher and a teacher educator are vital qualities for a Head of Training. In addition, personal character traits should be taken into account. For Walter and Dilys Carrington (in Gounaris et al. 2000), character does have an influence on person's ability to be a teacher educator

> because it really comes back to the question of why an individual would decide that they were going to train teachers. If they just see it as a good money·spinner or something like that, that's obviously no good. ... I should try to, on the one hand, find out what their reasons were, what their thinking was, what their idea was about training. I'd assess that. And at the same time, of course, I'd be watching them and assessing what I concluded about their general use of themselves. (pp. 53-54)

Peggy Williams expands on the question of motivation:

> I would decide by what a person's motivation is. Why they wanted to run the training course: their motives, for one thing. And also their own use, and their own way of living, and their own behaviour in every way (p. 21)

Marjory Barlow (in Barlow & Allan Davies 2002) recommends teacher educators humbly remember their own path in the AT lest they get into a "power game … a 'God' complex" (p. 14). She believes that being a teacher educator is a vocation, a true calling.

> If that's what you're destined to do, you'll do it. ... It's got to be that you can't do anything else, that you've simply got to, that Life makes you. Like it did me. ... It's all to do with motivation, isn't it? Why you're doing it. The danger is to think that one's got the secret

of the universe, the Grail. ... But the miraculous thing about this work is that if you really work on yourself as F.M.[Alexander] taught, things are revealed to you. (pp. 167-168)

Even if Heads of Training are 'destined' for teacher education, Barlow worries about how to assess their readiness to conduct their schools within the STAT system. In Gounaris et al. (2000), she offers both qualitative and quantitative solutions:

> I don't think the procedures for assessment [of Heads of Training] we've got at the moment are satisfactory. How are you going to have a satisfactory way of telling the sheep from the goats over this business of training? You can do it, I think, if you work with people a bit. ... You can tell a lot by giving a lesson and talking to them frankly. ... It is dead honest, this work. You can't fudge it. (pp. 76-77)

> You have to allow people freedom up to a point, but, if they are ever going to learn to be teachers, you've got to have the discipline. When it comes to training teachers, I don't know what the answer is there. Maybe ten years of teaching experience, before starting to train others, not seven as has been the rule in STAT. (p. 79)

The Carringtons (in Gounaris et al. 2000, p. 50) both agree that Heads of Training should have had at least seven years teaching experience. However, they are not so adamant that candidates should have had this experience at teacher training programs, the practicability of which would depend on whether or not they must travel to another country to do it. By contrast, Walker recommends potential Heads of Training gain both theoretical and practical knowledge through extended experience on training courses. Teacher educators should not only be personable, she recommends, they must also have the practical wisdom to deal with the emotional contingencies that can arise during such intimate work with trainees. Walker (in Gounaris et al. 2000) says:

> One of the main differences [between teaching a private pupil and teaching students to become AT teachers] is that in teaching students you definitely need to study F.M.'s books and see what he required all the way through the training.

> ... But I think you need quite a lot of experience to take on a training course. And I think you need quite a lot of experience of teaching on a training course, to see the ups and downs of pupils. ... [T]hey get psycho-physical traumas of different sorts — so you've got to go along with that and handle that, and be 'with it', so to speak! ...[T]his day-after-day work makes quite a profound change and difference in people, and you have to be ready for that. ... [T]he head of training should enjoy teaching and enjoy and respect the students and other teachers ... and within this sense of fun it is safe for the students to allow themselves to change. (pp. 98 -99)

For Heads of Training to have the qualities that Walker recommends, Spawforth (in Gounaris et al. 2000) suggests:

> The teacher trainer has got to be reasonably fit ... [and] they've got to reach the plain of conscious control ... [which] means that you are aware of the process and the Technique pretty well all the time. (p. 120), and
> [I]t's an absolute necessity that the director of training has a sense of humour. (p. 124)

Whittaker is the only senior teacher to see teacher education from a perspective that does not put the Head of Training centre stage as the one accountable for nurturing the trainees from the beginning of their studies through to their graduation as AT teachers. As already mentioned, for Whittaker it is the trainees who can choose best how to construct their own teacher education. Such a model of teacher education, however, would be at variance with the Affiliated Societies' protocols, which are predicated on trainees usually staying with one Head of Training for 1600 hours/three years. It also assumes a level of trainee self-sufficiency and maturity, to the extent at least that they would not need the ongoing emotional support provided by 'belonging' to established schools with their familiar cohorts of fellow students and teacher educators.

Summary

The introduction of competencies for AT teacher educators is the third principal theme of the phronetic analysis of the interview data. This analysis shows there is considerable support from research participants for this idea, with general agreement that it is desirable for teacher educators and Heads of Training to have both the Alexandrian understandings for effective AT teaching and the management credentials to run their schools efficiently. The issue of AT teacher educators' power also arises, with interview participants keen that professional boundaries be prescribed and maintained and students be cared for emotionally as well as pedagogically.

While only a couple of participants want the existing time-specific requirements for teaching experience to be extended, most of the senior teacher educators see experience as a measure of readiness to become a Head of Training, although personal character traits should be considered as well. 'Experience' may be their more tacit way of expressing what the current generation of teachers is calling 'competence', but, because they were not specifically asked in the published interviews about competencies, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not they would agree with the mandating of explicitly qualitative professional standards for teacher educators.

In the next section I shall bring the three themes together to present some interim conclusions from the data. I shall engage further with these conclusions in Chapter 6 when I propose a provisional alternative to the Affiliated Societies' current model of AT teacher education.

5.3 Interim conclusions from the data

So far in this Chapter, I have examined the three principal themes that have emerged through the prism of the phronetic research methodology introduced in Chapter 3. These themes are (1) flexibility of AT teacher education programs, (2) competencies for beginning AT teachers, and (3) competencies for AT teacher educators, especially Heads of Training. While the purpose of my qualitative study has been to discern the issues facing AT teacher education in the future, rather than to arrive at a consensual agreement on strategies, I will propose a range of interim conclusions that would be supported by the majority of interview participants. Further research will be needed to determine whether these conclusions will be agreeable to AT stakeholders world-wide.

The e-interviewees generally support a more flexible approach to AT teacher education than is mandated by the Affiliated Societies. Even so, few of those educated under the time-specific system offer clear alternatives to it. There seems to be a presumption that the 1600 quantum of hours to be spent learning to teach is non-negotiable. From the interview data, my reading of the peripheral literature, and my experience of the profession, I interpret this to be a function of how strongly the idea of the numerical protocols is embedded in the culture of the Affiliated Societies. My critique of the time-specific nature of the numerical protocols given earlier in this thesis may go some way to moderating this attitude, but at this point in the history of the AT, it seems that a completely open-ended, untimed, apprenticeship system of teacher education is not yet acceptable to the Affiliated Societies participants interviewed for this study or to the senior teachers whose published interviews I have drawn on.

Among the participants associated with the Affiliated Societies, there is agreement that well-written competencies should be introduced for beginning AT teachers. As reported in Chapter 2, a survey undertaken by STAT subsequent to my interviews of 2003 supports this finding. The poll, conducted in 2005 among STAT members in the UK, showed that two-thirds of respondents also appreciate the value of such standards, even though the proposed form of the competency descriptions is still contentious.

Taken together, these data sources suggest that the Affiliated Societies interviewees are aware of the need for qualitative standards but are not ready to fully give up their attachment to the quantitative standards. However, what these participants may accept, particularly now that the conservative influence of the senior teacher educators is waning, is a hybrid form of attendance pattern which combines both flexible and regulated attendance, along with qualitative competency standards. This hybrid model would combine elements of both the time-specific and apprenticeship forms of AT teacher education and therefore accommodate those who believe consistent daily attendance in the early part of training is important for the development of group participation and for the structured existential development of each student.

The hybrid attendance model should also satisfy those who believe that flexibility of attendance will permit students to not only meet their extra-curricular responsibilities, but also to enhance their skills by experiencing a progressively wider range of practical hands-on teaching and learning than would be available in any one school. In any event, I see this model as provisional, a necessary stepping-stone to other forms of professional education which, upon further research and experience, will progressively embody more of the principles of the emerging paradigm of learning and of the AT itself.

An example of a hybrid system which might be acceptable is one that mandated, say, two years of the familiar Affiliated Societies attendance pattern (at least four days per week, 12 to 20 hours per week) and then allowed this to be followed by a less regimented apprenticeship leading to certification. Beyond the second year, there would be no need to measure the time spent in training. Rather than it being a third year of fixed attendance, this last part of the training program would be unstructured and be of whatever duration is needed for each student to meet the assessment criteria. During this last phase, students could elect to continue attending a school or become apprenticed to individual AT teachers who may or may not have any connection to the school. This system would require that beginning teachers be assessed by accredited assessors independently of their teacher educators in accordance with an agreed set of competency standards, as is currently the policy within ATI.

From an administrative and organisational perspective, the suggested hybrid system will require a shift in thinking about the roles of AT teacher educators. Heads of Training will still be responsible for maintaining quantitative standards during the first, time-specific, part of training, but the remaining part may be taken on by any AT teacher. A range of management scenarios then becomes possible.

Some Heads of Training may stipulate that students must not join their school at all unless they also agree to finish there. Others may be less demanding and be available for consultations as needed during the last phase. As well, because Heads of Training are among the most experienced of teacher educators, they may be called on to assess candidates who are unknown to them, thus making it important that they are well versed in the agreed competencies. Were ATI's

familiarity with competency-based education and assessment ever to be comphensively researched and theorised, it would be of considerable value to Affiliated Societies stakeholders as they negotiate the complex issues likely to arise in such a transition to flexible, standards-based teacher education (Mills 2007).

The data suggests that AT teachers educated within the Affiliated Societies system are becoming increasingly savvy in their expectations of the service they should receive in return for their investments of time, money and effort. This shows in the levels of competence participants would prefer Heads of Training and other teacher educators to have. With competency standards publicly available, as they are today within the ATI system, teacher educators will themselves need to be able enough to meet the enhanced expectations of their students. Simply having a minimum number of years experience as teacher educators will be insufficient.

The minimum expected of AT teacher educators would be the ability to teach the craft-like, hands-on skills of the AT pedagogy (Nicholls 2003) and the emotional intelligence sufficient to sustain AT teacher trainees through challenging aspects of the Alexandrian work (Mowat 2003). This requires considerable skill, but additionally, as program directors they would need to demonstrate levels of pedagogical and political sophistication commensurate with Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning. In other words, teacher educators of the future should be able to maintain a critical stance towards the discourses and practices of AT teacher education and engage in collaborative research while still upholding the ethos of the AT.

A difficulty with demanding such competencies of AT teacher educators at the moment is the lack of competency standards for beginning AT teachers. Without any explicit guidance about the standards their beginning teachers should meet, it would be inequitable to require teacher educators to meet an even more rigorous set of qualitative professional standards. In any case, the need for such competence to be assessed would only apply to teacher preparation programs that require time-specific attendance, such as the Affiliated Societies current model and, to some extent, my suggested hybrid.

I have argued in this thesis that numerical protocols of AT teacher education are outdated and contrary to the ethos of the AT and the emerging paradigm of learning. From this perspective, I recommend stakeholders consider phasing out time-specific attendance practices and replacing them with protocols which contain appropriately written qualitative standards. My provisional hybrid model is a step in this direction. As this happens, the importance of the Head of Training as sole adjudicator of competence would diminish and, instead, the assessor's reliability and skill would be more valued.

In the next Chapter I shall bring these ideas together and propose a framework of AT professional teaching standards and a set of alternative protocols that stakeholders may agree on, at least provisionally.

Chapter 6

A proposal for the future of AT teacher education

6.1 Introduction to the Chapter

The purpose of this Chapter is to propose an alternative to the Affiliated Societies' numerical protocols of AT teacher education. This builds on the work of Chapter 5, where I identified three themes that participants in my study generally agreed would be strategically desirable for the future of AT teacher education. Of these, the two themes that are most important for the ensuing discussion are the introduction of flexibility of attendance at teacher preparation programs, and qualitative standards for beginning teachers.

I first give a brief explanation for using the word 'standards' rather than the more usual 'competencies'. I then discuss in some detail the relationship of teacher professionalism and teacher education that is supported by scholars of the Carnegie tradition. This leads to a description of the California Standards for the teaching profession, which I use as a template for a proposed framework of standards I call the Alexander Professional Teaching (APT) Standards. I then give an example of how the APT Standards might be written. This is followed by a broad-brush introduction to the provisional protocols.

6.2 'Competencies' and 'standards'

An important distinction to make at this point is between the use of the words

'standards' and 'competencies'. In previous chapters I have used 'competencies' because it is is now used extensively in the contemporary AT literature, albeit in ways that are inconsistent and confusing. In the framework I am proposing in this chapter, I deliberately use the word 'standards' rather than 'competencies'.

This follows a trend which can be seen in the Australian, UK and US literature on the development of professional teaching standards (CCTC 1997; Reynolds 1999; Louden 2000; Ingvarson 2002b; Ingvarson & Kleinhenz 2003; NSWIT 2006; NBPTS 2006a, 2006b). An example in Australia is the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT 2006) Framework of Professional Teaching Standards, which "describe, celebrate and support … what [school] teachers need to know, understand and be able to do" (para. 1), relegates 'competence' to the second of the following four 'key stages' in the accreditation of school teachers: graduate teacher, professional competence, professional accomplishment and professional leadership.

A cursory scan of some current school teaching standards in the US (NBPTS 2006b; CCTC 1997) and commentators on them (Whittaker et al. 2001; Pecheone & Chung 2006) reveals that the words 'competence' and 'competencies' seem these days to be assiduously avoided in that country. This might be because in the US these words conjure up the politically divisive history of the atomistic form of competency-based training used during the 1970s and 1980s (Chappell et al. 1995; Louden 2000).

In contrast with the atomistic view of competence, current educational scholars in the field of adult and vocational education (e.g. Gonczi 2004; Hager 2003; Beckett & Hager 2002), whose work manifests the emerging paradigm of learning, encourage holistic competency formulations. Indicators of this view of

holism are standards which are inferential rather than prescriptive and descriptive rather than regulative, and which allow for practical judgement applied to simultaneous activities. Standards of this sort describe learning as an ongoing, organic, educational process, not a 'front-end' product which is expected to be delivered by the end of a training program. Shulman's (1987, p. 20) advice is worth remembering here: "We have an obligation to raise standards [of school teacher education] in the interests of improvement and reform, but we must avoid the creation of rigid orthodoxies. We must achieve standards without standardization."

Similar moves in the UK to change from competencies to standards have not been without their problems (Ingvarson 2002a, 2002b). According to Reynolds (1999), in 1997 the UK Teacher Training Agency shifted from competencies to standards because it "felt that the professional competences were 'more general' … and what was needed was a definitive statement of the outcomes which could be used for assessment of ability in absolute terms" (p. 251). In fact, the standards for UK school teacher educators had become so prescriptive and specific that "rather than providing insight into teaching, [they] can be interpreted as an attempt to formulise classroom practice, or to 'standardise' it, in the narrowest sense" (p. 253). Now called the Training and Development Agency for Schools, its web site (TDA 2007) indicates a softening of this prescriptivity in its standards for teachers.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, I shall adopt the nomenclature used by these school teaching organisations and introduce the word 'standards' into the framework I propose for AT teaching. Even so, the words 'competencies' still has so much currency in the context of the AT that when referring to the existing literature I shall continue to use the words that appear there.

The next section is a brief introduction to how some school teacher and other professional educators are formulating their standards in line with the emerging paradigm of learning. As mentioned previously, I contend that school teaching is an appropriate cognate professional model for AT teaching. The AT profession can therefore benefit from studying how exemplary school teaching standards are derived.

6.3 Exemplary US school teacher standards

The United States National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is an independent body which allows experienced school teachers who already have local and state qualifications to upgrade their certification in line with the organisation's mission of maintaining high, rigorous, professional teaching standards. Stemming from the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, the NBPTS (2006 a,b) has developed a comprehensive set of teaching standards and authentic assessment procedures for the certification of experienced school teachers who want to be nationally recognised as being highly competent (see also Darling-Hammond & Bransford 2005). The Board, which is made up of school teachers, challenges practitioner candidates to meet its professional teaching standards while reminding them of the genesis of these standards in the emerging view of professional education (Haertel 1991).

In its report first issued in 1989, *What teachers should know and be able to do*, the NBPTS (2006a) summarises teacher expertise as: "teaching ultimately requires judgement, improvisation, and conversation about means and ends. Human qualities, expert knowledge and skill, and professional commitment together compose excellence in this craft" (p. 2). Though nearly two decades old, this

report remains the "cornerstone" (p. 1) of the system of National Board Certification and "holds the promise of being … a catalyst for healthy debate and the forging of a new professional consensus on accomplished practice in each field of teaching" (p. 1).

With these principles as context, the report spells out the Board's policy position by reference to the "five core propositions" that reflect accomplished school teaching (NBPTS 2006a, pp. 3-5). The report further explicates these five propositions in ways that reflect their holistic, organic genesis in the emerging view of professional education. These propositions resonate with the 'new' teacher professionalism outlined by, among others, Goodson and Hargreaves (1996), Handy and Aitken (1986) and Shulman (1998), and with the emerging paradigm of learning described by Beckett and Hager (2002) and the ACDE (2004). The NBPTS (2006a, pp. 3-5) five core propositions are:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

Assessment of candidates for NBPTS certification is performance-based, which means that teachers need to demonstrate not only their subject knowledge but also their classroom teaching skills and be able to reflect on their experience. A candidate's understanding of and compliance with the five core NBPTS standards is first assessed by a board of fellow teachers who examine portfolios containing real-time videos of teaching, reflections and other artifacts submitted for assessment. Portfolios are purposefully complex and time-consuming to prepare, occupying between 200 and 400 hours, and include evidence of contribution to community and professional interests. Subsequent assessment

exercises at a testing site complement the portfolios by examining the candidate's pedagogical and content knowledge, although no particular manner or style of teaching is mandated. The portfolio and assessment exercises taken together are then scored by the assessment board according to how they reflect the NBPTS standards (NBPTS 2006b).

Australian school teacher educator Louden (2000) who has examined a number of current Australian standards for school teachers, calling them the "first wave" (p. 118) of Australian standards. He argues that these standards are often awkwardly written because of the conceptual template prescribed for writing Australian occupational standards during the 1990s. Louden suggests a new, 'second wave' of teacher standards should allow for styles of writing that reflect the approaches now being seen in the United States, such as the NBPTS procedures. Of the examples I have seen of US standards for beginning rather than experienced school teachers, the version I favour is *The California Standards for the Teaching Profession* produced by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialling (CCTC 1997/2006). In the next section, I shall explain why I prefer the California standards as the cognate model for my proposed APTS framework.

The California Standards for the Teaching Profession

The California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CCTC 1997/2006) have a number of features which resonate with the emerging paradigm of learning and the knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning. They are holistic in their recognition that teaching and learning include complex processes that are "interdependent, occur in a variety of contexts, and are affected by many factors that are intrinsic and external to the classroom" (para. 12). They acknowledge

that there is diversity among teachers and that teachers will have their individual ways of fulfilling the standards. The standards also represent a developmental view of teacher professionalism, whereby "teachers are never 'finished' as professional learners, no matter how extensive or excellent their formal education and preparation" (para. 14). They are therefore formative rather than summative (Whittaker et al. 2001).

The California Standards CCTC (1997/2006) are organised around the following six interrelated categories of teaching practice:

- engaging and supporting all students in learning
- creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning
- understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
- planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students
- assessing student learning
- developing as a professional educator (p. 1)

Apart from the last listed, all of these standards are expressed in learner-centred terms. In other words, the California Standards are focussed on how the school students learn, rather than on the beginning teacher's ability to demonstrate her competence according to the familiar professional competencies trinity of professional knowledge, skills and attributes. Instead, these three attributes are merged in descriptions of teaching practices that directly effect school students over the teacher's life-span, rather than as qualities the teacher must acquire, front-end fashion, for the purposes of accreditation. An example from Standard 1, 'Engaging and supporting all students in learning', reads:

> Teachers build on students' prior knowledge, life experience, and interests to achieve learning goals for all students. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and resources that respond to students' diverse needs. Teachers facilitate challenging learning experiences for all students in environments that promote autonomy, interaction and choice. Teachers actively engage all students in problem solving and critical thinking within and across subject matter areas. Concepts and skills are taught in ways that encourage students to apply them in real-

life contexts that make subject matter meaningful. Teachers assist all students to become self-directed learners who are able to demonstrate, articulate, and evaluate what they learn. (p. 5)

The narrative form of each of these sentences is in the indicative mood. Each of the six sentences is then reframed as a key element. For example, the first Key Element of Standard 1 becomes *"Connecting students' prior knowledge, life experience, and interests with learning goals"*. This element is further explicated by "How do I …?" and "Why do I …?" questions, which are designed to encourage continuous reflection and examination on key aspects of teaching. These are written as:

As teachers develop, they may ask, "How do I . . ." or "Why do I . . ."
- help students to seen the connection between what they already know and the new material?
- help students to connect classroom learning to their life experiences and cultural understandings?
- support all students to use first and second language skills to achieve their goals?
- open a lesson or unit to capture student attention or interest?
- build on students' comments and questions during a lesson to extend their understanding?
- make 'on the spot' changes in my teaching based on students' interests and questions? (p. 5)

In regard to the linguistic formulation of competencies and standards generally, Beckett and Hager (2002) point out that their verb structures are an important consideration. They suggest "competence structures should focus on action words such as *undertakes, prepares … demonstrates*" (p. 61). Writing performance criteria in this form is consistent with the 'integrated' approach to competency descriptions because it reflects not only the knowledge and skill that occur in practice but also practical reasoning and judgement. This approach is consonant with the emerging paradigm of learning discussed in Chapter 3 (see also Hager 2003). The Law Society of NSW (2006) has compiled a range of integrated

competency standards for Accredited Specialists which follows this pattern. An example is:

> The specialist criminal solicitor elicits information from the client and witnesses by choosing the most effective communication technique …. The gathering of information is conducted in a way which demonstrates preparation …. If necessary, the solicitor is able to perform in difficult situations such as … (p. 12)

Examples of other Australian work in a similar vein can be seen in the research conducted by Chappell and Melville (1995), and Scheeres, Gonczi, Hager and Morley-Warner (1993) into the professionalism of teachers of adults. With slight variations, these authors also portray the professional competencies in this indicative form. The NSW Institute of Teachers (NSWIT 2006) also uses the indicative *teachers demonstrate, evaluate, initiate* etc. A counter example is Australian Council of Deans of Education's collection of 'Graduate Standards and Guidelines' (ACDE 1998) in which the prescriptive modal *graduates should* is used in parallel with *need to*. It is worth noting that in these ACDE standards the word *should* appears 97 times in six pages.

My concern with even the best of these linguistic formulations, however, is that they do not convey adequately the developmental nature of professional expertise over the occupational lifespan of the teacher. By contrast, California's narrative style of expressing the key elements of the teaching standards acknowledges this aspect of professional formation. The writers of the California Standards extend this to the *how* and *why* questioning format because "questions [open] practice up to inquiry and supported growth, while statements cut off conversation and [tend] to transform teaching into behavioristic type checklists that are quite useful for low inference judgments but much less so for understanding or supporting quality teaching" (Whittaker et al. 2001, pp. 92-93).

The California Standards are worth studying by stakeholders in AT teacher education. The use of 'why' and 'how' questions cuts across complaints that competency descriptions are actually curriculum prescriptions of the non-Alexandrian, 'end-gaining' sort that define too narrowly the way individual teachers should teach the AT (e.g. Carrington 2004 a,b; Sly 2003). Nor should the creativity of teacher educators be circumscribed by this format. Rather, as Hager (2003, p. 13) puts it, performance descriptors of this sort are "abstractions" which are necessarily incomplete because they describe "*aspects* of [a] performance … that is a richer whole than what the rules specify*".

In the next sections of this chapter I explore how stakeholders within the AT profession already conceptualise the competence of AT teachers. I critique three examples of AT competency descriptions currently in the spotlight, namely, (1) the draft competences of the UK Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique (STAT), (2) the competency 'criteria' of the professional society Alexander Technique International (ATI), and (3) the published competencies of the Advanced Diploma of the School for F.M. Alexander Studies in Australia. I am a teaching member of both STAT and ATI and have the Advanced Diploma.

I critique these AT competency descriptions for two reasons. First, I want to show their limitations in the light of the aforementioned US practices in the presentation of standards for the school teaching profession. Second, I use many of their themes as templates for my proposed AT teaching standards, which I present later in the Chapter. By recasting the descriptions of these themes into the holistic language style of the California Standards, I hope to whet the collective appetite of the AT profession to possible ways of composing AT teaching standards that satisfy both Alexander's philosophy of education and current expectations of teacher professionalism.

6.4 AT competency descriptions: three examples

In Chapter 2, I mentioned that Alexander (1932) wrote in his 'open letter' to prospective trainees of his first organised teacher education program: "would-be teachers of my work must be trained to put the principles and procedures of its technique into practice in the *use of themselves* in their daily activities, before they attempt to teach others to do likewise" (p. 132, emphasis added). Then in Chapter 5, I reported how Alexander equated a teacher's adequacy of personal Use with their ability to teach, as do still many of his followers. Because this concept of Use appears in the competency descriptions I propose to critique, I shall now extend the work done on metaphors in Chapter 4 and explain a little more about the meaning of the metaphor Use in the discourse of the AT.

The meaning of Use

As a noun, Use may be understood as two distinct yet overlapping ideas which Alexander (1932) called Manner of Use and Conditions of Use. Manner of Use refers to the more overtly observable patterns of everyday movements that may be amenable to change through reeducation of habits, elementary examples being sitting, standing, walking and squatting. Manner of Use also applies to the organisation of movement patterns for dealing with various environmental, ergonomic or vocational conditions and for injury prevention — the 'how' of an activity (Armstrong 2003). It may also include elements of breathing and voice production. AT teachers would be expected to teach the Manner of Use appropriate to their pupils' needs and to exemplify such Use in their own personal activities. In an expression such as 'she uses herself well', for example, the verb Use means to coordinate intelligently one's Manner of Use.

The expression Conditions of Use relates more to the internal muscular and neurological coordination of a person, especially as it concerns the optimal relationship between the head, neck and torso that Alexander called the Primary Control of the human organism (Alexander 1932; Macdonald 1989; Fischer 1995; Armstrong 2003). As mentioned in Chapter 1, AT teachers traditionally employ a specialised pedagogy of touching and talking to teach pupils how to prevent, or Inhibit, interference with this coordination. By learning how to discern and disrupt inappropriate Manner of Use and to Inhibit those inefficient postural habits, pupils are better prepared to attend to improving their Conditions of Use.

AT teacher Joe Armstrong (2003) argues that teaching Manner of Use requires less sophistication and skill than teaching Conditions of Use, and he makes a case for recognising stages of teaching proficiency that move between them. As the senior teachers whose opinions are analysed in Chapter 5 agree, educators and assessors should be able to assess the overall Use of beginning AT teachers in ordinary activities and in teaching practicums by critically observing a candidate's head-neck-torso relationship and by experiencing the candidate's hands-on guidance in simulated teaching situations.

Writers of qualitative standards for teaching the AT will find Manner of Use easier to describe than Conditions of Use. As a teacher of ballroom dancing in addition to the AT, I liken Manner of Use to the technical requirements of dance teaching. To become a qualified dance teacher, a candidate first needs to demonstrate pedagogic competence by explaining and demonstrating the technical elements of the written syllabus. These have to be understood cognitively before they can be imparted, and an experienced assessor can discern how much of the syllabus the candidate has learnt.

Conditions of Use, on the other hand, relate more to the disposition of the dance teacher, her aesthetic sensitivity and musicality, the poise and muscle tonus she embodies in her dancing as well as in her teaching, and her ability to communicate to pupils through touch as well as speech. These qualities are assessed qualitatively within the norms of the dance profession and require the assessor to appreciate tacit understandings that are difficult to describe in writing (Polanyi 1958/1973). For these same reasons, competency descriptions of AT teachers' Conditions of Use will require more sophisticated construction and interpretation than their Manner of Use (Barlow 1978).

I shall now analyse briefly examples from three different AT teaching competency descriptions now being discussed within the AT profession. These are (1) the STAT draft 'competences' that have recently been debated in the UK, (2) the 'criteria' of the professional society Alexander Technique International (ATI), and (3) the competency standards developed for the Advanced Diploma of Alexander Technique Teaching in Australia. In the first and last, the idea of professional competence includes the teacher's Use, but without clear explanations of its meaning.

The STAT draft competencies (UK)

As discussed in Chapter 2, the British government's moves towards regulation of complementary health professions has motivated the AT community in the UK to consider voluntary self-regulation, which will necessarily require the adoption of nationally agreed competencies (STAT 2005a, 2005b). The STAT draft competency statements (18 September 2004, draft B) were formulated over a number of years as part of a drive by STAT to encourage debate about this

aspect of professionalisation of AT teaching. Interested teachers contributed to the document, which was then composed by a designated committee. The proposed competencies do not include assessment methods.

The full list of the draft STAT (2004) draft competencies is too large to include in this thesis. Even so, some examples from the list will suffice to show the style in which they are written. While my analysis will point to some flaws in the writing of these standards, I also commend the teachers who composed them for at least attempting to describe "what a newly qualified teacher would be able to do" (p. 3).

The STAT (2004) draft competencies are arranged under three headings, namely, (A) knowledge, (B) skills and (C) practice, all of which have a number of sections and sub-sections. The verb form of each sub-section is: "The teacher *should be able to*". I have selected the following five examples from among the three headings:

A. Knowledge
Section A1: History
A1.1: [*The teacher should be able to*] demonstrate a knowledge of F.M. Alexander's
    writings. (p.4)

B. Skills
Section B4: Explaining concepts
B4.1: [*The teacher should be able to*] articulate the principles and concepts of the
    Alexander Technique in a variety of ways in a teaching context. (p. 7)

C. Practice
Section C2: Lesson plan
C2.2: [*The teacher should be able to*] tailor the focus, manner of delivery and style
    of the lesson to the individual pupil's capacity (physical, mental, emotional
    etc).

Section C4: Using procedures to demonstrate principles
C4.2: [*The teacher should be able to*] guide a pupil through general activities while

enabling the pupil to inhibit misdirected activity and manually and/or verbally guiding the pupil towards improved use.

C4.3: [*The teacher should be able to*] teach pupils how to employ these procedures and the principles behind them in the activities of the lesson in order to gain more control over their own use, to improve their use in everyday life. (p. 9)

This last mentioned competence, C4.3, is in fact the ultimate in the STAT list. I have included it here because, while it contextualises the whole work of AT teaching, it paradoxically appears at the end of the document rather than at the beginning. Curiously, it is also the only competence listed whose operative verb is *teach*, as distinct from, for example, *demonstrate, articulate, tailor,* and *guide*. At the time of writing this thesis, the STAT competences (draft B) have been debated but not approved by the STAT's Council or membership.

Alexander Technique International's 'criteria'

ATI is the only international collective of AT teachers to insist on qualitative professional standards that are independent of training programs and of the time trainees might spend attending them. This contrasts with STAT and the Affiliated Societies, which insist on quantitative standards in form of the numerical protocols. The ATI (2006) web site states explicitly:

> ATI has not attempted to set a quantitative standard of Alexander teacher training courses such as a certain number of hours, weeks and years of training or a specific ratio for students to teachers. Some Alexander Technique training courses run by ATI Teaching Members have a more flexible, extended schedule for those who work full-time or in apprenticeship-like structure. Some training programs are run on the standard three-year training schedule.

> Rather than regulating training courses ATI has set up a standard that relies on the qualitative recognition of a teacher's competence to teach. After all, no amount of time in training, by itself, is sufficient to become a

teacher. A trainee applying to become a certified teacher must prove that he/she has reached a level of understanding and ability to adequately and safely teach the public as recognized by a head of training or another person with skill and experience. … They simply need to work with any three ATI Sponsoring Members and from this work gain their Sponsor's [sic] written support.

ATI's (2006) document on teacher standards is titled 'Criteria for Certification as a Teacher Member'. There are three of these criteria: (1) conduct, (2) knowledge and (3) teaching skills. The verb form of the criteria is *"Candidates must fulfill the following criteria"* followed by *"demonstrate"*. These descriptions are designed for assessment examinations, albeit by three independent 'sponsors'. I shall give an example from each criterion:

I. Conduct:
A. *Demonstrate* qualities of patience, compassion, honesty, and respect in interactions with peers and students.

II. Knowledge:
B. *Demonstrate* intellectual comprehension of the ability to communicate effectively Alexander's ideas and the principles of the Technique. These principles include (but are not limited to) the importance of the relationship of the head to the spine in coordination ('Primary Control'); the ability to suspend acting on a habitual impulse to allow a new response to a demand for action ('Inhibition'); and the ability to direct energy to support natural coordination while carrying out an activity in accord with natural coordination rather than with habitual discoordination ('Direction').

III. Teaching Skills:
A. *Demonstrate* an ability to clearly and simply communicate and demonstrate the concepts and principles of the Alexander Technique by giving clear demonstrations and verbal explanations that are appropriate to the pupil's learning in the moment; when using hands, to use their hands sensitively and appropriately. Both verbal explanations and any use of hands will allow pupils to effect a positive change in their psycho-physical coordination. (Italics added)

Advanced Diploma competency standards (Australia)

David Moore (2002) has created the first AT teacher education program to be recognised by the Australian government through the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). This program, the School for F.M. Alexander Studies in Melbourne, is an Affiliated Societies-recognised program which adheres to the numerical protocols by offering a traditional three-year AT teacher education course. In addition, the School awards an *Advanced Diploma of Alexander Technique Teaching* on the basis of students' completing the equivalent of a fourth year of extra study, during which students complete government-mandated subjects dealing with generic teaching practices that are not specific to the AT. An Advanced Diploma is just below a Bachelor's degree in the AQF.

Moore's Advanced Diploma accreditation is written according to a template prescribed by the Australian government for competency-based programs and uses a heirarchy of modules and learning outcomes. Louden's (2000) critique of this formulation was mentioned earlier. Among a total of 30 modules, there are 16 Alexander-related core modules, each having a number of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Shown here is an example of an AT core module, *OUFS01 Use of the Self*, which has a nominal duration of 201 hours. This module has the following purpose:

> The trainee will develop an improved use of him or her self over the course of the training. The aim of this module is to introduce awareness of the habitual use of the self to trainees who will begin to learn the means whereby their use can be changed. Trainees will use voice, movement and option applications in a specialist area as vehicles for this process. (p. 18)

This module has three learning outcomes (LO), each with a number of assessment criteria (AC). The verb form for the learning outcomes is: *On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to…* It should be noted

that in these outcomes, the 'learner' is the trainee teacher. The three LOs are:

LO1: *On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to* identify key aspects of own habitual pattern of use.
AC1.1: Articulate and demonstrate key aspects of own habitual pattern of use.
AC1.2: Recognise and demonstrate aspects of own faulty sensory awareness.

LO2: *On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to* apply inhibition and direction as a means of indirectly improving the use of the self.
AC2.1: Demonstrate inhibition in different movements, under guidance.
AC2.2: Apply directions for a number of different movements, under guidance

LO3: *On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to* apply inhibition and direction in a range of different activities.
AC3.1: Apply inhibition and direction in the use of the voice.
AC3.2: Apply inhibition and direction to movement.
AC3.3: Apply inhibition and direction to a range of activities.

Brief discussion of the three sets of competency descriptions

The three examples reproduced here from the sets of AT competency descriptions currently in the public eye are designed to show how different they are from each other in style and content. The Advanced Diploma competencies are replete with Alexandrian terminology that would make sense only to an experienced practitioner. The words Use, Self, Inhibition and Direction are context-specific and, as mentioned earlier in this Chapter with reference to the description of Use, difficult to explain, let alone assess. Moore (personal communication 2006) was not required by the Australian accrediting authority to define these terms .

The STAT (2004) draft B competencies similarly incorporate occupational

jargon, adding terms like 'procedures', which are also context-specific. While they make no formal attempt to define the terms, the authors of this draft provide separate explanatory forewords to each of the competencies and refer to other documents which outline the specialist vocabulary of AT teaching. In any case, it is likely that these competency descriptions would need to be redrafted for the purposes of UK government accreditation within that country's Skills for Health system (St.Clair 2006). The ATI criteria, in contrast to both Moore's and the STAT draft competencies, attempt to define the specialist terms as they are being introduced. This approach is preferable, although a glossary of Alexandrian expressions might have made the text clearer.

The linguistic formulation of the three documents is also worth noting. Both Moore's Advanced Diploma learning outcomes and the ATI criteria are quite prescriptive, emphasising respectively "… *the learner will be able to…"* and *"Candidates must fulfill the following criteria …".* By contrast, The STAT (2004) draft B list of competencies uses the modal form "The teacher *should be able to …".* This use of *should* might seem to imply *ought* or *need to,* but the STAT authors qualify its meaning as "there is a reasonable expectation" (p. 1). This somewhat British usage of *should* was chosen deliberately because "the alternatives — the teacher *will be able to* or the teacher *can* are blunter and more prescriptive" (p. 1, italics added).

Of the three documents, the ATI (2006) criteria are most focussed on the client / pupil's learning, as distinct from the beginning teachers being able to demonstrate competencies in order to be certified — the 'front-end' approach mentioned earlier in this thesis. From this perspective, they resonate with the California Standards. The STAT (2004) draft B has elements of pupil-centredness, while the Advanced Diploma (Moore 2002) competencies reflects a

'front-end' approach to the expression of professional outcomes. It should also be noted that, while time-specific attendance has never been an ATI requirement, neither the STAT nor Advanced Diploma documents mention the numerical protocols mandated by the Affiliated Societies. There seems to be a presumption that these protocols will remain in place even when qualitative standards are adopted.

One of my intentions in this thesis is to argue for the introduction of AT teaching standards which integrate the organic ethos of the AT and the emerging paradigm of learning with contemporary expectations of professionalism (see also Fitzgerald 2002a, 2002b). From my reading of recent international AT policy discussions, and my experience of the positions many AT stakeholders take with respect to the competencies debate, I believe the style of writing exemplified by the California Standards for school teachers shown earlier in this Chapter will be more acceptable to the AT profession as a whole than any of the three already described. In the next section, I outline a framework for AT teaching standards that is based on the California Standards for school teachers. I call this proposed framework the Alexander Professional Teaching Standards (APTS).

6.5 The proposed framework of Alexander Professional Teaching Standards

The proposed framework I am calling the Alexander Professional Teaching Standards (APTS) is necessarily a work in progress. It is an example of how AT teaching standards might be formulated to meet current expectations of professional accountability and yet be consistent with the ethos of the AT and the emerging paradigm of learning. Much more research and persuasion will be

needed before the AT profession at large can agree on the competencies of AT teachers, let alone develop a set of beginning teacher standards which it will find acceptable. On the presumption that such research will be undertaken eventually, the APTS framework is proposed as an early contribution to improving AT teachers' performance, professional standing and continuing development (Sachs 2003).

To draft the APTS framework, I shall borrow ideas from the STAT, ATI and Moore lists of competencies for beginning AT teachers, parts of which were shown earlier. These ideas will then be mapped onto a template based on the California Standards (CCTC 1997) and used as examples, rather than prototypes, of how an organic set of AT teaching standards might look. My own experience as a teacher educator will influence how I compose and frame them. Were the California Standards ever to be used as a template for an extensive set of standards for the AT profession, permission from the California Department of Education would presumably be required.

In the examples I give here, I shall not attempt to cover in detail any teacher assessment procedures. In brief, though, I recommend assessment procedures reflect the work of Shulman (2004), the NBPTS (2006b) and like-minded US scholars and be based on what have been variously called 'authentic', 'emergent' and 'professional' processes (Haertel 1991). Assessment instruments of this sort which could be adapted for AT teaching are portfolio assembly, videotaping of teaching and role-play, as well as cognitive assessment through oral or written examinations.

As mentioned earlier, the six California Standards are:
1   engaging and supporting all students in learning
2   creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning

3   understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
4   planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students
5   assessing student learning
6   developing as a professional educator (CCTC 1997, para. 3)

These California Standards are designed to be used by teachers to:

- prompt reflection about student learning and teaching practice;
- formulate professional goals to improve teaching practice; and
- guide, monitor and assess the progress of a teacher's practice toward professional goals and professionally-accepted benchmarks (CCTC 1997, para. 7)

Not all six California Standards are appropriate for AT teaching. They are written for school teachers who take classes of children and are expected to satisfy mandated syllabus requirements. By contrast, AT teachers mostly work with adults in individual lessons lasting between 30 and 60 minutes, although group workshops and classes are increasingly becoming a recognised form of AT instruction. Pupils come to AT lessons for many reasons, often with no clear idea of the outcome they might expect, other than perhaps to feel better or to understand more about their coordination and posture. Teachers will adjust their AT pedagogy to each pupil's needs at the time of the lesson. In other words, contrary to usual school teacher practice, there are no syllabi for AT teachers to follow or assessment processes for their pupils to submit to. AT teaching standards should reflect these differences from school teaching and therefore not follow the California Standards line for line.

To illustrate my point, I shall construct the proposed APTS framework by combining a number of the elements from California Standards 1, 3, 4 and 6 with the AT standards written for STAT, ATI and the Advanced Diploma. I will also follow the Australian and British convention of calling individual learners 'pupils', rather than 'students', because among AT practitioners in these two

countries the latter term tends to mean teacher trainees.

The proposed APTS framework consists of four standards. The first three are pupil-focussed and the fourth, like the sixth in the California standards, focusses on the teacher's lifelong professional development. The titles of the four APT Standards are:

1. Engaging and supporting all pupils in learning
2. Understanding and applying the principles of the AT to enable pupils' learning
3. Designing learning experiences for pupils
4. Developing as a professional educator

These standards are explained in more detail below. There are a number of general points to note about their formulation that relate to the earlier conceptual work of this thesis. First, I am cautious in my use of Alexandrian terminology such as Inhibition, Use and Direction other than as curriculum headings. For reasons indicated in Chapter 4 regarding the latent Cartesianism of some these metaphorical expressions, I would expect these terms to be included in a glossary which describes them technically for practitioners. It would be insufficient for their meanings to be presumed in the standards themselves simply because they are widely used already within the profession.

The second point also relates to the work of Chapter 4. In Standard 2, I propose that Alexander's books be studied exegetically and in ways that encourage multiple readings. This has important implications for the future of AT teacher education, not only because it will interrupt tendencies to fundamentalise Alexander's texts, but also because it will help future teachers and teacher educators expand their critical appreciation of his work. No less would be expected today of other professions which draw so much inspiration from their founders' discourses.

Third, the APTS focus on the learning of the client/pupil over time, rather than on the 'front-end' skills of the graduating teacher. For example, the Use of the beginning teacher would not be assessed for its own sake, but rather be seen as a resource for helping pupils improve their own Use. Similarly, the demonstration of any amount of 'hands-on' artistry in the environment of a teacher education program should mean little if it cannot assist a pupil to learn and apply the principles of the AT in the real world.

The fourth point concerns Standard 4, the teacher developing as a professional educator. This standard reflects Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning and is intended to stimulate a view of professionalism that is broader than possessing pedagogical skill and compassionate understanding. It is premised on the idea that AT teachers of the future, as both educators and professionals, should be encouraged to nurture not only their own careers, but also the public perception of the AT itself.

I shall now demonstrate how these four proposed APT Standards may be expanded in the style of the California Standards. Following this, I will anticipate some potential difficulties with the proposed framework and then speculate how it may form part of a revised set of protocols of AT teacher education.

The four Alexander Professional Teaching Standards

Standard 1   Engaging and supporting all students in learning

Narrative:
Teachers engage with pupils to discover their individual needs and their reasons for having AT lessons. Teachers describe the nature of AT instruction and receive permission to continue, particularly if using hands-on methods. Teachers explain whether or not the AT will be helpful to individual pupils and

suggest the number and frequency of lessons that may be required. Teachers establish an agreement with pupils about regularity of attendance and cancellation policies. Teachers build on pupils' prior knowledge, life experience and interests to make the lessons relevant.

Key element 1: Engaging with pupils individual needs and their reasons for having AT lessons.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- help pupils to identify their needs and reasons for having AT lessons?
- help pupils to clarify which of these needs and reasons may be responsive to AT lessons?

Key element 2: Describing the hands-on nature of AT and receiving permission to continue.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- ensure that pupils are aware that they will be touched and receive their permission?

Key element 3: Explaining the relevance of the AT to the pupil's needs and the frequency of lessons that may be required.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- help pupils to understand whether or not the AT might be of use or interest to them?
- use case studies and previous experience to illustrate how many lessons may be required?

Key element 4: Establishing an agreement with pupils about regularity of attendance and cancellation policies.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- make agreements with pupils about the suggested frequency and regularity of attendance?
- make agreements with pupils about cancellation policies?

Key element 5: Building on pupils' prior knowledge, life experience and interests to make the AT lessons relevant.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- help pupils to make explicit what they already know implicitly of the principles underlying the AT?
- draw on pupils' life experiences to help them understand the principles of the AT?
- help pupils to decide if the principles of the AT are relevant to their interests and needs?

Standard 2   Understanding and applying the principles of the AT to enable pupils' learning

Narrative:
Teachers exhibit strong working knowledge of the AT, including its history and principles. Teachers organise lessons to facilitate pupils' understanding of the central themes, concepts, and practical components of the AT. Teachers use their own practice of the AT, including their theoretical knowledge and embodiment of its principles, as instructional resources and teaching strategies to make the AT accessible to their pupils.

Key element 1: Exhibiting strong working knowledge of the AT, including its history and principles.
As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- assist pupils to appreciate the history and principles of the AT?
- develop a range of concise yet pertinent descriptions to help pupils understand Alexander's central concepts, including[13]:

> Recognition of the force of habit
> Inhibition and non-doing
> Recognition of faulty sensory awareness
> Sending directions
> The primary control
> Use affects function

- help pupils to benefit from the AT by giving explanations, critiques and alternative readings of Alexander's four books and other texts?

Key element 2: Organising lessons to facilitate pupils' understanding of the central themes, concepts and practical components of the AT.
As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- plan or modify lesson plans to help pupils understand how to use the AT in practice?
- monitor pupils' practical application of the AT by observing and commenting on pupils' movement, voice, and other indicators?
- monitor pupils' conceptual understanding of the AT by judicious questioning?

Key element 3: Using personal practice of the AT, including theoretical knowledge and embodiment of its principles, as instructional resources and strategies to make the AT accessible to their pupils.

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[13] From Macdonald (1989) and Barlow (1973)

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- use appropriate hands-on instruction to facilitate pupils' improving their manner and conditions of coordination?
- give practical demonstrations of how pupils may improve their manner and conditions of coordination?
- use stories, case studies, metaphors and other verbal teaching strategies to help pupils conceptualise the AT?
- embody the principles and practices of the AT as much as possible in order to facilitate the pupils' practical application of the AT?

Standard 3   Designing learning experiences for pupils

Narrative:
Teachers design learning activities that enable pupils to experience the benefits of the AT. Teachers use the interests and goals of pupils to stimulate their putting into practice the principles of the AT. Teachers give appropriate feedback to pupils to encourage further learning.

Key element 1: Designing learning activities that enable pupils to experience the benefits of the AT.
As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- use appropriate learning activities that pupils can participate in to develop their learning?
- choose and adapt from the classical repertoire of AT activities, including 'monkey position'; 'hands on back of chair'; 'whispered ah'; 'squatting'; 'lunge' and 'walking', to assist pupils to adapt the AT to their personal activities?

Key element 2: Using the interests and goals of pupils to stimulate their putting into practice the principles of the AT.
As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- explore with pupils ways of using the AT as a means to attaining their goals?
- manage the lessons so that pupils have time to explore the application of the AT to their interests and goals?
- prepare and sequence teaching procedures to include components of pupils' interests and goals?

Standard 4   Developing as a professional educator

Narrative:
Teachers reflect on their teaching practice and actively engage in planning their professional development. Teachers establish professional learning goals,

pursue opportunities to develop professional knowledge and skill, and participate in the extended professional community. Teachers balance professional responsibilities and maintain motivation and commitment to pupils. Teachers recognise and accept the ethical mores of the AT professional community. Teachers work with colleagues to improve professional practice.

Key element 1: Reflecting on teaching practice and planning professional development.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- assess my growth as a teacher over time?
- learn about teaching as I observe and interact with my pupils?
- reflect on my teaching successes and dilemmas to move my practice forward?
- analyse my teaching to understand what contributes to pupil learning?
- formulate professional development plans that are based on my reflection and analysis?

Key element 2: Establishing professional goals and pursuing opportunities to grow professionally.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- maintain an attitude of lifelong learning?
- learn more about my own professional roles and responsibilities?
- use professional literature, workshops, lessons and practice sessions with fellow teachers and other professional development opportunities to increase my understanding of teaching and learning the AT?
- expand my knowledge of new instructional methods and techniques?
- benefit from and contribute to professional organisations to enhance my teaching and learning the AT?

Key element 3: Balancing professional responsibilities and maintaining motivation.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- maintain a positive attitude with students and colleagues?
- challenge myself intellectually and creatively throughout my career?
- deal with the isolation of teaching?
- find support to balance professional responsibilities with my personal needs?

Key element 4: Recognising and accepting the ethical mores of the AT profession.

As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- demonstrate professional conduct and integrity in my teaching environment?
- extend my knowledge about my professional and legal responsibilities for

pupils' learning, behaviour and safety?
- recognise and accept the Code of Ethics of my professional association?

Key element 5: Working with colleagues to improve professional practice.
As teachers develop, they may ask "How do I …" or "Why do I …"
- create opportunities to collaborate with my colleagues?
- engage in thoughtful dialogue and reflection with colleagues to solve teaching and teaching-related problems?
- use observations of colleagues to improve my teaching?
- prevent and resolve personal and professional conflicts with colleagues?
- contribute to the learning of other educators?

Potential difficulties with the framework

The world-wide adoption by the AT community of an integrated framework of teaching standards such as the proposed APTS framework would have its difficulties. For example, national groups of AT teachers might find their attempts to write standards that accord with the preferred framework constrained by local government regulations dealing with professional registration, as is the case in the UK and Australia now. In such cases, were the philosophical underpinnings or technical phrasing of these regulations to conflict with the wording of the framework, the internationally agreed standards would still be useful because stakeholders could refer to them as they make informed choices about whether to subscribe to the regulations or not.

If for administrative or political reasons AT stakeholders then chose to subscribe to the locally regulated standards, they would be able to acknowledge how far these might deviate from the accepted preferred professional versions. Practising AT teachers and trainees in such locations may then be apprised of these difficulties so that they can lobby for political change. In this way, the knowledge-*of*-practice conception of teacher learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle

1999) would be utilised for the organisational development of the AT profession itself.

Experienced Heads of Training Carrington (2004a) and Ackers (2004) have expressed another concern about the adoption of qualitative standards. As I alluded to in Chapter 2, these teachers worry that such standards may interfere with the pedagogical creativity now allowed to AT teacher educators. However, such interference is unlikely to occur under the proposed APTS framework because Heads of Training would retain the prerogative to design their own curricula and syllabi. In fact, as happens already with the professional society ATI, teacher education programs would not necessarily be subject to accreditation as currently understood within the Affiliated Societies. Beginning teachers would be assessed according to the applicable standards, and the pedagogies employed by their teacher educators would be of no regulatory interest to the assessors. In the next section I bring together the APTS framework and the hybrid model developed in Chapter 5 into what I call the provisional protocols.

6.6 The proposed provisional protocols of AT teacher education

I suggested in Chapter 5 that a hybrid model of AT teacher education might satisfy the desire expressed by the majority of research participants for both schedule flexibility and qualitative standards. It would also respect their seeming unreadiness to give up completely the traditional mandatory daily attendance structure. In this section I introduce a set of administrative rules for AT teacher education which will provide a structure for combining the hybrid model of AT teacher education developed in Chapter 5 with the proposed APTS

framework just now formulated. These new rules will more adequately reflect the organic ethos of the AT than the existing numerical protocols.

Throughout this thesis I have argued that the existing numerical protocols identify the Affiliated Societies' system of teacher education with the normal paradigm of learning. From this perspective, my proposed system will need new protocols to ground it in the emerging paradigm of learning. For want of a better term, I call this early version of these rules 'the provisional protocols of AT teacher education'. They are provisional because I anticipate them to be superseded after research and experience by criteria which will reflect more authentically the emerging paradigm of learning and the ethos of the AT.

I will now summarise these provisional protocols in the following two paragraphs. This summary needs to be read alongside the qualitative standards for beginning teachers proposed in the APTS framework. At this stage, I will not attempt to describe the competencies required of AT assessors, or any of the authentic processes they will employ, although such descriptions should find their way into the more advanced versions of the protocols.

Under the proposed provisional protocols, AT teacher education students will complete a mandatory minimum time-specific component of their teacher education in a programmed school environment. For the time being, I suggest a minimum duration of two years of regular daily attendance instead of the three years currently mandated by the Affiliated Societies. Subject to the continuing well-being of the students, the attendance pattern and maximum teacher:pupil ratio may be the same as now prescribed, that is 12 to 20 hours in a teaching week of no less than four days at a 1:5 ratio.

After attending for this minimum time, students will elect either to remain at a school or to apprentice themselves to a mentor or a series of mentors until they feel ready to submit themselves for authentic assessment by an independent panel of assessors. Assessment will be carried out according to published standards for beginning teachers, an example of which is the proposed APTS framework. The assessors themselves will be certified according to higher-level professional standards that have yet to be agreed upon.

Even if these provisional protocols are accepted by stakeholders in AT teacher education, I expect them to change with experience and usage and become more sophisticated. In particular, I believe the mandatory attendance component of the hybrid model will be discarded progressively as the profession understands that it is an anachronistic administrative device which supports neither the organic holism of the AT nor Alexander's person-centred intentions for teacher education. As the protocols evolve in this direction, trainees will negotiate individually with their teacher educators to be assessed progressively throughout their studies, not just at the ending stages.

Were a completely standards-based professional education to be introduced by the Affiliated Societies, there would be two major variations in the ways students experience teacher education. First, from the commencement of their teacher education they would become familiar with the standards and assessment procedures by which they will be certified, and second, the duration of their education would be unspecified. No longer should they be content to say they are qualified to teach the AT 'as outlined in Alexander's four books' simply because they spent 1600 hours at a training course.

These protocols will also present teacher educators with new ways of working.

A standards-based AT teacher education system will be concerned with the capacities of the assessors to determine the competence of the graduands, not with the infrastructures of training environments. With responsibility for accreditation falling on qualified assessors who are independent of the training process, new styles of administration will become possible.

AT teacher education programs could be owned and run by third-party managers who need not necessarily be registered Heads of Training, as is the case under the existing numerical protocols. These managers could then hire the faculty, including the Head of Training, and other ancillary staff in the same way that other professional education institutions do now. This would take pressure off the teaching faculty to have financial and business acumen in addition to their AT skills. If the managers and staff then prefer to organise their curricula around attendance and time-keeping in addition to standards-based assessment, they may do so, but this should be seen as an administrative choice, not an assessment imperative.

I expect my findings in this study to be controversial because they challenge a half-century or more of organisational usage, custom and habit. I therefore encourage additional research to substantiate them and make them more workable. As I wrote in Chapter 3, of Shulman's (1998) six attributes of a contemporary profession, the one that is most notably missing in the AT, as a profession, is a culture of research, which he describes as "learning from experience, [which] requires both the systematic, prototype-centered, theoretical knowledge characteristic of the academy and the more fluid, reactive, prudential reasoning characteristic of practice" (p. 517). In the next and final Chapter, I speculate on a future that includes a culture of critical and creative analysis and scholarly research into AT teacher education.

Chapter 7

Concluding comments

7.1 Introduction to the chapter

I asked at the beginning of this thesis: How can the practices of AT teacher education be reconstituted in ways that meet 21st Century expectations of professional accountability and, at the same time, continue to respect the principles of the AT? This question arose in the context of my claim that the AT profession can no longer can assert, without evidence, that its traditional system of teacher education is appropriate. I make this claim because no academically accountable, policy-informing, research has yet been conducted into AT teacher education. This study is the first of its kind in the field.

After taking into account the conceptual and empirical work so far concluded, I now say it is possible to reconstitute these practices. To do so, however, will require a paradigm shift in thinking about the protocols that currently govern most of the world's AT teacher education. I have argued from historical and philosophical perspectives that these protocols reflect the Cartesian paradigm of learning that Alexander himself rejected. For the AT profession of the future to operate consistently with the emerging paradigm and meet expectations of professional accountability, two interlinked policy decisions need to be made about teacher education. The first is to phase out the time-specific, quantitative protocols, and the second is to introduce appropriately written, qualitative standards and assessment procedures for beginning teachers. These are brought together in the provisional protocols suggested in Chapter 6.

I have also argued throughout this thesis that academically viable research into AT teacher education is needed if AT teaching is to claim its place as a profession on par with school teaching. Just how this research might look is the subject of the remaining sections.

7.2 Building a culture of research

In 2004, I gave a presentation on my thesis topic at the 7th International Congress of the AT in Oxford, UK (Fitzgerald 2004). My talk was premised on the rhetorical question "How do we know, 75 years after Alexander instituted his first formal teacher training school, that AT teacher education cannot be improved?" My point was to engage participants in the idea that until the AT profession commits to a program of authentic scholarly research, AT teacher education will either continue as a set of habits from the past or drift directionless into the future, buffeted by ideology, anecdote and administrative convenience.

At the Congress itself there were about 600 participants, and my presentation attracted twelve of them. I was surprised by the small number until I remembered there was considerable competition from parallel presentations which promised more physical, hands-on participation. As well, AT teacher education is a rather dry subject for rank-and-file AT teachers who have already received their teaching certificates and are unlikely to care any longer about the processes of teacher education. They will have gained what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) would call knowledge-*for*-teaching as well as some knowledge-*in*-teaching, but unless they are involved in the pedagogy or politics of the AT, many will have little attraction to gaining knowledge-*of*-teaching, which

includes the ramifications of global policy decisions. In any case, the small number of audience members seemed keen enough to be there and we generated a lively discussion.

As part of the presentation I showed a list I had compiled of possible projects for researching the future of AT teacher education and invited the group to contribute their own ideas to it. I reminded them that because of the scarcity of academically viable research into AT teacher education they could be very creative in their suggestions. I also prompted them to suspend for the moment any logistic and financial difficulties they might foresee, such as who would pay for this research, which group would auspice it, where would the researchers come from and how difficult it might be to implement any results. However, I did suggest they take the view that their research ideas should be concrete enough to warrant scholarly review and publication, as though it were being undertaken by educational consultants or by doctoral and masters students at a university. The outcome of that discussion is the following list, which I have thematised under the following five categories:

Marketing
- Is there a crisis in finding potential trainees?
- What attracts trainees to the work?
- What causes teachers to leave the work?
- How can we assure AT teaching will remain marketable?

Professional practice
- What is the usefulness of time-based teacher education?
- What is the usefulness of competency-based education and assessment?
- How relevant are, and what are the potential problems with, alternative models of AT teacher education — flexible, part-time, apprenticeship, distance?
- What is the usefulness of continuing professional education?

Competency standards
- How should we describe AT teaching competencies?

- How should we assess AT teaching competencies?
- What is the usefulness of recognising prior professional learning and other relevant attributes?
- What are the problems with this?
- What would be the benefit of recognising AT experience gained prior to formal training?
- What should be the competencies of Heads of Training and other staff?

Professionalism
- From the perspective of power, what are the relationship issues in AT training environments?
- What is the usefulness of national and international professional societies?
- From the perspective of power, what are the relationship issues in professional societies?
- What is the usefulness of working with further and higher education authorities?
- How do government regulations influence AT teacher education in particular countries?

Scholarship
- How can we theorise our teacher education pedagogy? (See Nicholls 2003)
- How do we conceptualise exemplary teacher education? (See Brennan 2004)
- What is the influence of the gender of teacher trainees, teachers and teacher educators? (See Hartwig Knaub 2000)
- How can we theorise an interdisciplinary crossover between teacher education and counselling/psychotherapy? (See Mowat 2003)
- How can we theorise the personal transformative effects of the AT and of AT teacher education?

These lists indicate the effort that will be needed should the AT profession take seriously the challenge to research AT teacher education. They also give stakeholders a sense of how such work might be prioritised. The first two scholarship questions, for example, suggest that before the profession can generate policies to steer AT teacher education in the future it needs a better understanding of what it means to be a competent AT teacher today. In other words, until the profession has some collegial agreement on what exemplary AT teachers should know and be able to do, the content of qualitative standards

such as those in my proposed framework of Alexander Professional Teaching Standards presented in Chapter 6 will be necessarily speculative and, therefore, controversial.

Since the Oxford Congress, other stakeholders in the profession have responded to the call for research into AT teacher education. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, the Affiliated Societies introduced the matter of research into AT teacher training at its 2006 meeting in Germany. They asked AT teachers and student teachers to consider the following question in advance of their 2007 meeting: "Can Training Courses change without losing the essentials of the training of teachers of the Alexander Technique?" (AmSAT 2006b, p. AR3).

At first glance, this question seems to be a step in the right direction. It represents the first time the largest group of professional stakeholders has issued a public invitation to AT teachers to critique the efficacy of current policies of teacher education. However, the question is inappropriate for at least two reasons. The first reason is that there are no 'essentials' of AT teacher education and there never have been. None were spelt out by Alexander and none have ever been consistently agreed upon by AT teachers since. Rather, what Alexander's followers have done since his death is mix historical tradition and administrative convenience to construct quantitative, time-specific protocols that remain unmediated by qualitative expectations of competency. These protocols are 'essentials' only to the extent that the profession both defines and limits itself by them.

A culture of research would not only influence the future of AT teacher education, it would also open up further debate on other philosophical issues facing the profession at the moment, such as whether the AT is teaching or

therapy, profession or craft, science or art (Nicholls 1998). That these Cartesian dichotomies arise at all for practitioners reflects the need to explore the pervasiveness of the normal paradigm of learning in their everyday understanding of the AT. As I have attempted to show, the artificiality of these dichotomies will be more recognisable when Alexander is read phronetically and heuristically, and when the discourses and practices of the AT are studied through the integrating lens of the emerging paradigm of learning.

For AT practitioners to express concern about possibly losing the 'essentials' inherent to AT teacher education is to miss the point that the field, like school teaching, is "a contingent social construction open to reconstruction … reconsideration and revision" (Garrison 1994, p. 13). For it to be otherwise would be contrary to the holistic principles of the AT itself. My proposed APTS framework and provisional protocols are intended to contribute to such a reconstruction, albeit in a way that reconciles these principles with societal expectations of professional accountability. These proposals, too, should be subjected to continuous critique and reappraisal by practitioners.

The second reason the Affiliated Societies' question is inappropriate concerns the duty of care teachers have for their pupils. Rather than prioritising the maintenance of 'essentials', the Affiliated Societies would do better debating whether or not the phasing out the numerical protocols of teacher education and introducing qualitative standards will enhance the professionalism of AT practitioners and, in parallel with that, the well-being of their clients. While my findings in this study can only be called preliminary, they suggest that these sorts of changes are needed.

Were the Affiliated Societies to initiate a world-wide inquiry into the

acceptability of standards such as the APTS framework proposed in this thesis, feedback from interested individuals and groups about the use and value of these standards would become grist for the mill of further coordinated research. As with other professional educators, such as school teacher educators, research would be ongoing, with journals, web sites and other venues devoted to generating and maintaining it. In a similar vein, AUSTAT Chair Michael Shellshear (2006) has proposed a model for collating and sponsoring scientific research into the AT under the umbrella of a charitable trust which he names the David Garlick Benefit after the renowned Australian AT teacher and medical academic, the late David Garlick. I have recommended Shellshear consider including academically grounded research into AT teacher education within his proposed scheme.

7.3 The future

If there were just one life-encompassing skill which pupils can learn through the AT, it is this ability to consciously adapt their range of reactions and to reclaim their poise in the face of whatever is happening in their lives. During AT instruction, pupils are often amazed at how differently they feel when they Use themselves better, when they release the habitual muscular-mental fixities they once thought were essential to their coordination and learn more intelligent means to control movement and reactivity. These changes are not always comfortable in the short-term, but this form of learning provides them with existential tools for dealing more appropriately with many of the environmental and occupational contingencies they will face outside the teaching room.

Alexander (in Maisel 1974, p. 5) spoke of his pupils' transformation this way: "You can't do something you don't know, if you keep on doing what you do know." Applying this aphorism to the AT profession at large, if stakeholders in teacher education keep on doing what they already know how to do, they cannot learn what there is yet to know about being professional educators in the 21st Century. Were the AT profession to pay collective attention to the lesson Alexander (1932/1946) provides in 'The Evolution of a Technique', it might employ its collective intelligence and practical reasoning to transform the practices and habits of AT teacher education through practice-based, community-wide research. Otherwise, these practices and habits continue as unexamined traditions and remain the organisational equivalent of what Alexander called "instinctive direction and … the familiar use of ourselves that feels right" (p. 21).

Garrison's (1994) alliteration, 'reconstruction, reconsideration and revision', neatly encapsulates this practical wisdom of the AT. One could say the AT teachers' pedagogical craft is first to gently reconstruct their pupils' familiar balance so that they can learn to respond to stimuli with a more naturally occurring poise. In this way, the reconstruction of poise may be seen as a metaphor for the ongoing transformation of personal identity (Hager 2005), with reconsideration and revision being part of this change process. The organisational identity of the AT profession itself, as reflected in many of its teacher education traditions and practices, is in no less need of reconstruction, reconsideration and revision.

Before bringing this thesis to its conclusion, I need to say that the survival of these traditions and practices is largely due to the generosity and commitment of those first generation teacher educators who have persisted for the half-

century since Alexander's death with his aim of creating a viable profession. Borrowing ideas and fashions from school teacher educators and other professional educators along the way, they generated and nurtured a world-wide community which is committed to teaching the AT. This they did with little written guidance from Alexander himself on the matter of teacher education and effectively no published educational research from others in the field.

With these gracious teachers now retiring or dying in quick succession, the AT community of the future will consist of individuals who only know Alexander through his books and the stories told about him by senior teachers and historians. If, as Dewey suggested in the quotation shown at the beginning of this thesis, the AT is to continue as "the promise and potentiality of the new direction that is needed in all education", it is imperative that future generations of AT teachers maintain a critical stance towards teacher education practices. In this way, AT teaching may remain open to continuous transformation as a profession while staying grounded in the principles of the AT itself.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Email interview questions — rounds 1 & 2

Round 1 interview questions

Dear …………

I am interested to learn what Alexander Technique teachers and trainees around the world think about AT teacher education as it is now and how they would like to see it develop in the future.

The first part of my project's title, "Promise and potentiality: Conversations for the future of Alexander Technique teacher education," comes from John Dewey's introduction to Use of the Self (1932 p. xix). Dewey writes:

> I cannot state too strongly the hopes that are aroused in me by the information… that Mr Alexander has, with his coadjutors, opened a training class, nor my sense of the importance that this work secures adequate support. It contains in my judgement the promise and potentiality of the new direction that is needed in all education.

I will start now by asking you some open ended questions, inviting you to answer them in as much detail as you can. As the various participants reply, certain themes will become apparent which will then provide a basis to ask further questions. Eventually, enough data will be available for me to make some assertions as to what the "conversations for the future" might be. The future trends that emerge will shape the focus of the dissertation.

As the project proceeds, I will also ask for information about your experiences as an Alexander teacher and some personal details. As you know, all information will be held in strict confidence. To assist with this, after you have completed your interview I will also ask you to nominate a pseudonym that can be used in the dissertation.

You might have already seen the introductory explanation I sent to several Alexander Technique newsletters and journals about the project. It included the first exploratory questions. I have expanded on these in the set of questions shown below, and you may wish to use this as a template for your writing. Please reply with as much detail as you consider necessary. Please also feel free to tell me anything else you would like to about Alexander teacher education.

These questions are:

• To what extent are you personally and professionally satisfied with Alexander Technique teacher education as you have experienced it?

• How would you describe and assess what is taught and how it is taught?

• How would you describe and assess the influence on Alexander teacher education of the internet and other forms of communication?

• How would you describe and assess the administration and management of training course accreditation and teacher qualifications?

• How would you describe and assess the influence on teacher training of professional societies?

• How would you describe and assess the influence of various individuals associated with Alexander teacher training? (Examples might include the Alexander brothers themselves and the 'first generation' of senior teachers)

• Using your assessment of the present status of Alexander teacher training as a starting point, how would you like to see it develop in the future?

• How might Alexander teacher training systems be designed if we were to start afresh?

I would appreciate receiving your replies by 31 March 2003. If this does not seem achievable, please let me know.

Thank you very much.
Terry

Round 2 interview questions

Dear ……,

Since we last had contact, I have had a gratifying response to the first round of research questions.   Thank you again for your contribution.

It's now time for a second round that takes into account the range of opinions and suggestions of many of the participants.

The questions are shown below. Even if you have already made some comments relating to them, please reply to as many as you can. And please feel free to make any other comments you might have thought of since you last wrote.

I know it's summer holiday time in the northern hemisphere, but I would also appreciate receiving your reply by 15 September if possible.

Thanks again for your assistance.

Regards,
Terry

The following set of questions takes into account themes appearing in the data collected so far. They are in no particular order of priority. Since the intention of the research project is to explore the FUTURE of Alexander Technique teacher education, these questions hope to further this aim. Each is preceded with a short introduction to the theme.

1.   The Affiliated Societies minimum rules for teacher training include 1600 hours attendance over at least three years, attendance time per week of between 12 and 20 hours spread over not less than four days, and a 5 to 1 trainee to teacher ratio.

        Some teacher training schools operating outside the Affiliated Societies are already using the 'apprenticeship system' of teacher education, which I take to mean mostly one-to-one teaching in addition to some class work. Some respondents suggest this method could be advantageous for teacher education in general.

Q1a: Can you summarise the advantages and disadvantages you see in these different systems of teacher education?

Q1b: Can you see value in accommodating a range of attendance methods within a training environment?

2.   Some participants mention 'moderation,' at least as it operates within STAT, as a way of maintaining standards. As you might know, a number of Societies operating even within the Affiliated network do not have a moderation process for training courses, and a trainee's fitness to become a teacher is determined solely by her/his Head of Training without any external referee.

According to the Affiliated Societies agreement, because a teacher might have completed these quantitative requirements at a recognised school somewhere in the world, her/his qualifications (and presumably standards of 'use') are automatically accepted by all Societies. This seems to presume that each teacher has a standard of use and a minimum set of skills the equal of every other teacher in the affiliated network.

Q2a: Do you think it is fair to equate such standards when teaching competence itself is not being assessed uniformly world-wide?

Q2b: More generally, in the future how will it be possible to maintain teaching standards when around the world there is likely to be an increasing number of training schools all claiming to teach the same skills but with no way of defining or assessing what those skills are?

3.   The issue of competencies and their formulation has produced mixed responses from research participants. In many countries government accreditation of professions is now on the agenda, and members of our profession are analysing and classifying teacher competencies with a view to satisfying the accrediting authorities should it become necessary. STAT, for example, is engaged in this process and has recently sent out a draft competency document to its members for comment.

Q3a: From a perspective of identifying future directions for the profession, would you say it useful to continue this inquiry into Alexander teaching competencies?

Q3b: Whose interests will this analysis serve — the public, the government, the clients, the trainees, the heads of training, the professional societies? Anybody else?

4.   The majority of my research participants are female. This is hardly surprising when a quick look at a number of international teachers' lists will show there are many more female teachers of the Alexander Technique than male teachers. Presumably there would a similar proportion of female and male trainees.

Q4a: From your experience, do you think female and male teacher educators, particularly Heads of Training, have different expectations of their female and male trainees' abilities to learn and to acquire the skills of an Alexander teacher?

Q4b: Do you think male and female trainees should or could be assessed differently from each other?

Q4c: If the proportion of female to male teachers remains similar to what it is now, will gender be an issue for the future?

5.   Another consideration to emerge is the experience and motivation of trainees at the beginning of their teacher education. One participant recommends that trainees should required to have had some years of lessons before being permitted to train. Another suggests there should be separate streams for those who know they want to be teachers and those primarily wanting personal development.

Q5a: Do you have any comments about the sorts of qualities and experience that potential trainees should have before commencing their teacher education?

Q5b: Should a full commitment to being a teacher be a prerequisite to entering a teacher training program?

6.   Several participants refer to situations where Heads of Training seem to have overextended their power in the training environment.   Words such as 'guru,' 'little gods,' 'high status' and even 'fascist' have been used in this context. However, not all respondents believe the 'cult of the Director' to be inappropriate, one person suggesting it can be an important support for the trainees' personal development.

Q6a: In your experience, is this issue of power something that the professional societies should take into account when accrediting Heads of Training?

Q6b: Can you describe the knowledge, skills and attributes that an exemplary Head of Training should have?

Q6c: Further to this, do you have any recommendations for how teacher educators of the future, particularly Heads of Training, might themselves be educated and selected?

7.   Many professions, particularly those involving close dealings with clients, require their members to have ongoing supervision or mentoring after graduation, even if only for a limited time. They might also require continuing professional education, for example through private classes or attendance at workshops and conferences. Within the Alexander Technique profession, however, there seems to be no world-wide requirement along these lines. Some of the respondents argue that continuing postgraduate education and/or supervision should be compulsory for Alexander teachers.

Q7a: Do you agree? If so, what would you recommend?

8. A difficulty mentioned by several participants is of having insufficient paid teaching work after graduation.

Q8a: Should this problem be taken into account in future teacher education policy? How might this be done?

Q8b: Should it be addressed by training schools at undergraduate level, or is it a postgraduate issue?

Appendix B

Letter and ethics consent form (email version)

Dear ……,

I appreciate your patience in waiting for correspondence regarding my research project.

Before proceeding further with it, I need to ask you to please read the following form and indicate your consent to participating in the project. Your consent will be indicated by typing your name at both the beginning of the form (after 'I') and at end of the form, and then returning this message to me by email. Please keep a copy of this agreement for your records.

If you have any questions to ask before signing, please contact me.

Kind regards,
Terry Fitzgerald

CONSENT FORM - STUDENT RESEARCH

I … agree to participate in the research project "Promise and Potentiality: Conversations for the future of Alexander Technique teacher education" being conducted by Terry Fitzgerald, Faculty of Education, University of Technology, Sydney (Email: Terrence.F.Fitzgerald@uts.edu.au; Phone +61 2 9514 3826), for the purpose of his Doctor of Education degree.

I understand that the purpose of this study is to research the opinions of Alexander Technique teachers and teacher trainees on how Alexander Technique teacher education may be developed and improved.

I understand that my participation in this research will involve personal interviews or email correspondence. Personal interviewing time might be in the order of one to two hours. Email writing time will be self-determined.

I am aware that I can contact Terry Fitzgerald or his supervisor, Prof. Paul Hager (Email: Paul.Hager@uts.edu.au; Phone +61 2 9514 3826), if I have any concerns about the research. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from this research project at any time I wish and without giving a reason.

I agree that Terry Fitzgerald has answered all my questions fully and clearly.

I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.

………………
Please type your name
and return to Terry Fitzgerald

NOTE:

This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer, Ms Susanna Davis (ph: 02 - 9514 1279, Susanna.Davis@uts.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix C

Copy of 'The Evolution of a Technique', Chapter One in

The Use of the Self by F.M. Alexander (1932/1946, pp. 1-25)