Framing the transition from Teacher to Teacher-Educator: developing a taxonomy of career identity

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Introduction

* EdD/PhD study
* This research is underpinned by a belief that teaching and life-long learning are inextricably linked, but that non-chronological issues of identity in the complex role of teacher-educator are often over-looked.

Critical Incidents

* Seen differently by other colleagues in school and HE as our roles changed
* We were viewed differently- when starting research, carrying out further study
* New members joining team
* Realisation that there were models of identity construction that were in play…

Contemporary/Current Research into TE career Phases

Research Aims

* Much current research identifies chronological phases of transition. This, we believe, is misleading: traditional models used to explain career development in both teaching and higher education do not apply to the identity of the HE based teacher educator due to the uniqueness of their role.

* We hope, that our current research in an HE setting, will produce a framework that can be used to form a more contemporary taxonomy of career identity.

* It is envisaged that in turn this will help identify, explore and guide career development within similar settings, providing a model for effective appraisal and career guidance in a teacher-education setting.

Professional identity

* There is a growing body of research around issues of professional identity in both teaching and teacher-education.

* Lack of consensus surrounding TE identity.

* In trying to define what makes a TE 'Being and Doing' aspects are heavily focused on:

"enacting pedagogy, serving as mentors, negotiating contexts, challenging norms and engaging in enquiry"

(Erickson et al. 2011:106)

Professional identity

* Identity is crucial in identifying the psychosocial (Mezirow, 2000) aspects of TE work.

* This is highly dependent on recognition of the intrapersonal values and their alignment with the social community in which they work.

* However, for teacher educators, the role can involve working in multiple communities and drawing upon different aspects of their identity in a way that is not linked to the length of time in post, and this can make transition between career phases problematic.

Previous research in narrative TE

* No specific theory in TE
* Role theory is useful in looking at the roles that we enact (Murphy and Pinnegar, 2011) but that forces a **given** identity, not an assumed identity. It is the participants' perceptions of their identity, not the onlooker that we are interested in.
* Initially this was based on previous narrative work carried out by one of the authors using visual methods and producing a composite voice.
* What emerged from that research was that the process of the telling enabled group reflection, followed by recognition of the self in the composite teacher educator.

Tensions and awareness

The culture of the setting

* Post 92 universities; Russell Group Universities, SCITTs, SD, Training schools, Teaching Alliances, Teach First, EYTT…

The teacher educator's professional identity

* the impact this can have on their professional development

Project methodology

* Carried out pilot to establish methodology
* Online questionnaire to enable self selection into further participation
* Started with a BNIM approach of uninterrupted narrative invited by a single question (Wengraf)
* Use of others and self study
* Intended to establish rep grids (Kelly)
* Storycrafting (Karlsson)

Project Methodology

* Storying the events – the story is the verb.
* The process of telling the story is important. The act of storying the events allows time to reflect.
* The narrative is the outcome, but In the same way that other narrative methodologies recognise the "voice" of the participant, storying your career path enables you to hear (and see) your own voice in a way that encourages active self-reflection.

Where are we going?

* Now happy with methodology we will expand project with greater range of colleagues.
* Interested to hear from colleagues today…tell each other your story…
* This research will have significance to teacher educators within an HE context within the UK, although it may be of interest to international teacher-educators for their own careers. Non-HE teacher educators may recognise similar identity changes, and the intention is the research will be widened to include school-based professionals in later phases.

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Thank you for listening…

Any questions?