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About the authors

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Introduction

This text is designed to provide teachers with a critique of teacher professionalism. It deals with key issues associated with the current debate on professionalism in teaching and what constitutes teacher professional identity. In doing this it recognizes a number of different perspectives: teacher professional formation, research, organizational contexts, learning, continuing professional development and teacher identity. It is important that these perspectives are considered, in a world where 'official' and governmental pronouncements are often more strident than the voices of teachers themselves.

There is another dimension to this book, in that it looks at the English and Scottish education systems and tries to recognize that, in post-devolution contexts, the systemic needs and sociocultural considerations of the educational structures of these systems are different. We also draw upon sources located in Wales and Northern Ireland in our attempt to obtain a more rounded view of what is happening in sometimes very different contexts.

The position from which we start is this: a process of de-professionalization has occurred within the UK education systems over the recent past. Teachers have lost much of their autonomy and agency. This process, we argue, has been introduced with the intention of achieving standardization, benchmarking and performance management. These may have some credibility from the perspectives of systems operation, political imperative and the demands of the standards agenda. But the results have been, in our view, a lessening of the abilities of teachers to control their own destinies and to retain ownership of their own profession. While the rhetoric has been of enhancement of the profession and its image, the effects have been somewhat different.

■ Overview of the Book

Chapter 1 examines the key questions of professionalism and identity, which shape the whole book. It then considers why teachers need to forge new identities in the current climate, examining ways in which teachers shape their

identities in different contexts. The concept of teacher professionalism itself and the problems associated with it are then examined in terms of the impact the problems may have on professional identity. Chapter 1 also makes comparisons with other countries outside the UK and with other professions, especially nursing.

Chapter 2 continues the exploration of teacher professionalism, and the way in which the concept is interpreted by different agencies and communities, including that of government. In a world of ever-increasing complexity, the extent to which teachers can be in control of their own profession has altered, and the chapter looks at the nature of this challenge. It considers whether teaching is unique in this respect, or whether a similar situation can be observed in other countries and professions.

Chapter 3 is research based and investigates teachers' views concerning their professional identity. It relates this to aspects such as professional community, self-image and emotion. These are developed and in turn related to confidence levels, well-being and a commitment to professional practice. The chapter concludes that strong senses of self-efficacy and professional identity are vital in meeting the challenges of the changing nature of the profession.

Chapter 4 discusses the concept of the 'discourse of derision' (Ball, 1990) and how this discourse has affected teachers who have to work within the constraints it imposes. The notion of 'crisis' in education in the UK is explored within the argument that the crisis is neither new nor unique to the systems of the UK, but that it has had an effect on how education and teachers are represented to the public.

Chapter 5 examines a concept which has become embedded in the discourse concerning teacher formation and development: that of 'reflection'. The chapter argues that while personal reflection is a very useful tool for personal learning, the impact it actually has on change is limited, and much more sophisticated models of reflection are required if change is to be effective. The Scottish Qualification for Headship is used as an exemplar for this. The chapter looks at the idea that a culture of reflective practice places responsibility for change on the individual teacher, rather than examining the teacher within the context of the policy and institutional environments within which she has to work.

Chapter 6 focuses on organizational contexts within which professionalism and identity are developed. The environments which impinge on the teacher's work are examined, and the tensions which exist between the right of teachers to exercise their professional learning and judgements and the

demands of the policies and structures of the organizations within which they operate are discussed.

Chapter 7 deals with the changing role of the teacher within the developing context of the school. This context is defined, in turn, within a range of policy contexts in the UK. The impact of inclusive education and diversity, the development of citizenship, the potential of e-learning and the nature of the learning process are discussed. The chapter ends with a review of the concept of leadership and the location of classroom assistants and para-professionals within the school context, and what these mean for teacher professionalism.

Chapter 8 deals with the changes which have recently evolved in terms of the career pathways available for teachers, especially those who are experienced professionals. The development of the 'expert teacher' concept is of particular relevance in this context. The different ways in which this concept has evolved in the varying educational systems of the UK may shed light upon differing models, and the pathways which have been developed have differing purposes and policies underpinning them. The chapter offers a critique of how these pathways are having an impact as they pass through the initial phase of their development.

Chapter 9 extends the critique offered in the previous chapter by interrogating ways in which continuing professional development (CPD) can help to enhance professionalism and redefine identity. Policy initiatives relating to new CPD pathways in the varying UK systems are examined and the relationships between these and teacher identity are discussed. The chapter looks specifically at how teacher identity is enhanced by these initiatives or how they represent a barrier to teachers reclaiming ownership of their profession.

Chapter 10 is the conclusion and deals with the key aspects of professional development, reflection and enquiry. We argue that these are essential if teachers are to fulfil their roles in a meaningful manner in educational and societal environments which are constantly changing. We propose a model of the 'engaged teacher-educator' which seeks to challenge and to extend existing models. We argue that through this model of development, reflection and enquiry, teachers will be able to prepare young people to be learners in an increasingly complex world, and to lead schools and learning in more effective ways.

This text is intended to be of use to several communities of readership. Firstly, it will be valuable to teachers engaging in various levels of continuing professional development, but particularly to those involved in courses or programmes leading to the status of Advanced Skills Teacher (AST),

Excellent Teacher (ET) or Chartered Teacher (CT) where it engages with core concepts. Secondly, the text may be of use to teachers taking professional doctorates, where it will complement other reading which encourages professional learning and development of professional practice. Thirdly, the book may be used by those returning to teaching after a career break and who wish to understand and interpret vital changes within the teaching profession in recent years. Fourthly, the text offers material of use to students in the final year of their undergraduate studies in education, where they will wish to consider the implications of professional formation and entry into the profession itself. It will also offer an opportunity for students taking courses in complementary disciplines such as sociology to consider the relationships between that discipline and education. Fifthly, education managers may find the text useful in providing an analysis of professionalism where the management of teachers and schools is concerned. Those with aspirations for Head Teacher status and who are undertaking courses for that purpose will find it useful in this context. Finally, there are opportunities for work in comparative professionalism.

List of abbreviations

AST	Advanced Skills Teacher
BEd	Bachelor of Education
CLT	Chartered London Teacher
CPD	continuing professional development
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CT	Chartered Teacher
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ET	Excellent Teacher
ETS	Excellent Teacher Scheme
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GTCE	General Teaching Council for England
GTCNI	General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland
GTCS	General Teaching Council for Scotland
HEI	higher education institution
ICT	information and communications technology
INSET	in-service training
ITE	initial teacher education
LEA	local education authority
NI	Northern Ireland
NMC	Nursing and Midwifery Council
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
O level	ordinary level
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education (England and Wales)
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PGDE	Professional Graduate Diploma in Education
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPA	planning, preparation and assessment

PRD	personal development review
SCT	Standard for Chartered Teacher
SMT	senior management team
SQH	Scottish Qualification for Headship
TACT	Teachers' Agreement Communications Team
TDA	Training and Development Agency for Schools
TEI	teacher education institution
TES	*Times Educational Supplement*
TIMSS	Trends in Mathematics and Science Study
TSW	Transforming the School Workforce
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
USDofE	United States Department of Education

SECTION A

TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

1 Reclaiming teacher identity

Chapter outline

This chapter considers the key question of professionalism and identity which shapes the book: *can teachers forge new professional identities which will help them to claim or reclaim ownership of their profession?* It looks at what identity means and how teachers realize their identites in different contexts. The chapter moves on to examine the problems of teacher professionalism as a concept and the impact of these problems on professional identity. International comparisons are made and the chapter also looks at other professional models of identity, especially in nursing.

Keywords

- Professional identity
- Professional development
- Agency
- Communities of practice

■ Introduction

In this book we argue that teachers need to forge new professional identities in order to reclaim ownership of their profession. We suggest that the way to achieve this is through professional development, reflection and enquiry. The forging of new identities is a critical process within approaches to professional development where it is important to enable teachers to reflect on, and to create, new practices which best serve the learning needs of the children and young people with whom they work. These new practices should centre on an increased sense of teacher agency and ownership of the profession. Arguably, ownership has become vested in other interests. Government poli-

cies (in both England and Scotland) retain the rhetoric of professionalism, but nevertheless have served to constrain teachers' professional agency.

Our use of the term 'professional identity' begs the question of what we actually mean by it. We discuss professional identity in this chapter, and will return to this important concept throughout the book to explore it fully and to link it to the issue of practice. For the moment, we want to argue that the complex world of learning and teaching in the twenty-first century requires a professional identity based upon new understandings of what it is to be a teacher.

Classroom teaching now places very different demands upon individuals than it did 20 years ago: these include collegiate working, liaison with outside agencies, new structures and increasing use of new technologies. What is needed is a professional who can respond to rapid change and, when necessary, drive that change. To accomplish this, teachers need to be secure in their understanding of their place within the profession and their teaching identity, and the place of the profession in policy-making. But more than this, teachers are important people. The job they do is central to the lives of children and adults, and in order to regain a full sense of this importance they need to feel that they have ownership of the work they do. This book, in examining the process of professional development, centres around one crucial question, and some of the issues which arise from consideration of it: *can teachers forge new professional identities which will help them to claim or to reclaim ownership of their profession?*

This question is relevant partly because teachers are currently required to comply with an ever more intrusive set of controls: over the curriculum, teaching methods, management, requirements for standards to be met in terms of professional behaviour, performativity measures, predetermined outcomes and targets. Teachers need to contribute to, as well as take forward, policy into practice if they are to enhance achievement. In our opinion, teachers need to reclaim their professionalism, otherwise their professional identities may be established and determined by forces other than themselves. This dislocation of identity can result in a distancing between those who generate policy and those who implement it.

Education policy is currently based upon concepts of productivity and performance, and this is eroding the position and capabilities of teachers to make judgements about pupil learning. As a result:

1 Many aspects of decision-making have been removed from classroom teachers. Decision-making is vital to a sense of professional autonomy. To remove it is to risk leaving teachers with a decreased sense of their own professionalism.
2 Those who feel their professional expertise is under attack may become disengaged with the work they do. Disengagement creates malaise within the profession and therefore within the classroom.
3 Policy specifies an ideal of practice which is too narrow, and which tends to inhibit collegiate working, and which may leave classroom teachers feeling isolated in the work they do.

Underlying managerialist policies lies a construction of teacher identity and practice based upon compliance and conformity that tends to constrain teachers in the formation of their professional identity and in their role as educators. Ultimately managerialism tends to deny individual professional autonomy and agency.

The concepts of autonomy and agency are crucial if we are to consider a process of continuing professional development that genuinely engages teachers in reflecting meaningfully on their practice. It is our intention to return to these concepts at various points in the book to investigate them in detail. We put forward a rounded construction of professionalism which recognizes the importance of individual agency with responsibility to the various groups with whom teachers work, and with respect to policy which teachers are expected to implement. It is for this reason that we prefer to talk about agency as well as autonomy.

We now examine the concept of professional identity to form the basis of our later discussions in which we look at how reflection and enquiry might be used to develop professional identity, particularly in respect of balancing autonomous practice with policy implementation. This is an important issue for this book. Education in the UK in the twenty-first century is largely policy driven: school improvement and pupil attainment are regarded politically as being effected by policy directives. We will argue that improving the quality of the education offered to children depends on more than an outcomes-focused and standards-based agenda. It depends on teachers and how they develop their roles. It is important to spend some time on teacher professional identity at this stage because

> [i]ssues of teacher identity are deep rooted and can be seen to influence the way teachers respond to professional developments, be it with other teachers, the school setting or the pupils themselves. This challenges the process of affecting change through policy development and suggests the need for in-depth professional development that acknowledges the role and impact of teacher identity. (Jones, 2004: 167)

Policy can only go so far in improving educational provision, especially if it ignores questions of how we encourage teachers to develop fully their own roles both at the stage of initial training and during continuing professional development.

■ What do we mean by professional identity?

In putting forward the concept of a professional identity based on agency, we recognize that identity, agency and autonomy can be constructed and understood in very different ways in different contexts. How these things are seen often depends upon positions of power and the relationships within them: professional and clients, school managers and teacher trade unions, and employers. There are issues that we need to consider, not merely in terms of individual practitioners, but in terms of the abilities of an institution to act with degrees of self-determination. Teachers have to work within inherent tensions to construct their own identities.

Teacher identity is not necessarily synonymous with the role and function of being a teacher (see Beynon et al., 2001). Roles and functions are assigned as part of the job and may be outside the individual's control. In contrast, professional identity is constructed by the individual who carries out the role and is based on that person's values, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and understandings (see Beynon et al., 2001: 135). It is also based on our own personal history, ethnicity and culture. Professional identity, then, rests on personal identity but these are not simplistic unitary concepts. Identity is partly individualistic: it is what makes us different to others. However, we also note similarities with others in any given group. Kroger (1986: 6) states that the 'means by which we differentiate ourselves from other people in our lives … constitutes the very core of our experiences and personal identity'. Of equal importance are the similarities which allow us to identify ourselves as part of a group, especially a professional group.

So, our identity has social aspects. Reicher (2004: 929) notes that when we 'behave in terms of any given social identity, [we] are guided by the

norms, values, and beliefs that define the relevant identity'. Within a profession we recognize others by their adherence to the norms and values of that profession. Those who do not adhere to these rules risk being termed 'unprofessional', or risk marginalization. Coldron and Smith (1999: 712) state that from 'the beginning of, but also during, their careers, teachers are engaged in creating themselves as teachers … it is a matter of acquiring an identity that is socially legitimated'. During initial teacher education, learning to teach is partly about constructing a professional identity that we are comfortable with, but one which also allows us to feel and be recognized as part of a professional community.

Professional initiation and identity formation

Initiation into the teaching profession occurs first through training/education. Indeed, insisting on a qualified workforce was part of the transformation of teaching into a 'profession'. Philip Gardner undertook a historical study as to how teacher professional identity was formed in early twentieth-century England (Gardner, 1995). This study centred around a time when teacher training was moving from schools to training institutions and where the professional image of the teacher was changing as a result. An interesting aspect of this study is that Gardner uses the voices of the teachers themselves to reflect upon their identities and how these were formed. Many of these teachers undertook the transition from untrained to trained while working in schools.

The retired teachers in Gardner's study indicate that by the middle of the twentieth century to be uncertificated was to 'carry a mask of professional inferiority' (1995: 199). But the interviewees felt that there was a difference in approach to the teaching role: those who were college trained tended to see that as being all the professional education they needed. The uncertificated teacher, on the other hand, tended to see professional learning as something undertaken throughout a career (1995: 199). What college induction did was to consolidate professional identity both at an individual and group level.

The use of examinations and qualifications to 'professionalize' work began on a large scale in the UK in the nineteenth century. Engineers, doctors, accountants, architects, lawyers, all saw their work professionalized by use of formal examinations and curricula to legitimate a certain body of knowledge and skills that their professions deemed necessary for 'expert' practice (see Sutherland, 2001). Partly this was about shaping the values and behaviours that professionals were expected to show: 'formal examinations

were seen as the antithesis of corruption and self-interest … [and] ability was equated with merit, talent and virtue' (Sutherland, 2001: 55). Thus a specific image of the professional was created within these groups: one who is knowledgeable, virtuous and expert. It has therefore long been recognized that professional identity can be shaped in part by the education that is designed to induct people into a profession.

Identity formation and career progression

Professional identity, then, begins to be shaped during training/education, but it is open to development throughout a teacher's career, often in response to workplace changes. Woods and Jeffrey's study (2002) examines the way in which primary teachers have had to reconstruct their identities as the education system itself has altered. They mention the sense of consistency in professional identity that was a feature of the 1960s and 1970s. They look at the effects on teacher identity of the challenges to child-centred education, perceptions of a loss of trust (or a change in the nature of trust – see Avis, 2003) and changes in the role of the teacher. Woods and Jeffrey conclude that teachers have seen their role reduced to a list of competences and performativities. In trying to make sense of their professional role, teachers may be forced to assume multiple identities to meet competing demands and expectations, and this can lead to a sense of volatility and uncertainty (Woods and Jeffrey, 2002: 105).

Another aspect of a teacher's sense of identity is expert knowledge. Beijaard et al. (2000) investigated this in a sample of secondary school teachers in the Netherlands. They looked at subject-matter expertise, didactical expertise and pedagogical expertise – the teacher not only as expert in terms of what was taught, but also in terms of how it was taught and how the learners were understood. Most of the teachers saw themselves in terms of a combination of these identities, although it was interesting that many perceived a transition from subject expertise towards learning expertise as their careers developed.

Similarly, Volkmann and Anderson (1998) discuss the development of identity in relation to chemistry teaching. Their conclusion is that the formation of teacher identity is a complex issue, which involves not only the identity of the teacher as a scientist, but also issues of conflict, dilemma and mentoring. One observation from the study is of particular relevance: 'Policymakers who impose top-down change never understand the disrespect they exhibit to the veteran teacher's professional identity' (1998: 308). This suggests that experienced teachers who have practised before the reforms of