Early Professional Learning Project
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Professional Identity of teachers in their early development

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Introduction

In this chapter we discuss the professional identities of school teachers, based on a current research project within the UK secondary (11-18) school system. We argue that teacher identities do not emerge fully-formed on the completion of initial teacher education (ITE) or initial teacher training (ITT)[1], but emerge more gradually on the basis of their embeddedness in concrete work situations. The early professional development of teachers takes place in the specific spatio-temporal contexts of schools, and within the wider community of new entrants to the teaching labour force. Whilst the chapter refers to the Scottish context in the first instance, the literature on which it builds has been drawn from a wider international field, and we draw conclusions which are similarly applicable in a wider arena. We draw on several empirical research projects in diverse professional contexts to argue that there is a core professional identity, within most fields of work, which renders activities and tasks meaningful within that field. This core identity is constructed within the workplace and can only be represented, rather than reproduced, in the educational situations which precede it. It is difficult to disentangle professional identity from the wider contexts of life-course, social milieu, individual difference and self-concept, but we will argue that these core professional identities amount to more than the sum of competent or expert task performances. These core professional identities (CPI) evolve firstly within 'worlds' of purposeful and meaningful activity. Secondly, they involve the self-interpretation of ability by the persons involved. Thirdly, they invoke value systems which are both inherited from the past and directed

[1] The term 'ITE' is preferred in Scotland, whilst ITT is used in England, reflecting differences in approach between the two systems.

T·L·R·P TEACHING & LEARNING RESEARCH PROGRAMME
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towards the future. These three points link the concept of the CPI to the work of Heidegger (1962), and we shall enlarge on this link below.

In the first section, we review some of the existing literature on professional identity, looking both at teaching and also at other professional fields in which the social experience of work and the development of relationships and networks contribute as much to identity formation as does the acquisition of technical competencies. This involves a broad view of the constitutive elements of identity, since, for example, professional development activity, interactions between person and environment and levels of job satisfaction can all contribute to identity formation over time.

For the purposes of this book, the interaction between the rise of flexible work practices and the changing nature of professional identities is a crucial issue. In the UK context, labour market flows between teaching and other industrial sectors undoubtedly exist, but there has been a lack of research in the area of professional mobility and it is not possible to say with any certainty whether changes in work practices elsewhere in the UK have had any influence on the identities of teachers. In the UK, the use of unqualified or lower-qualified staff to assist teachers has in some cases reduced the range of duties performed by teachers, as is also the case in nursing (Chiarella 2002). The introduction of a national curriculum[2] has in some ways constrained teachers' ability to work flexibly. Our evidence also supports the view that the highly structured world of school education is a special case within the field of work practice and cannot be compared directly to the industrial or commercial sectors. Furthermore, the structures of school education have (arguably) a necessary function in terms of enabling teachers to cope with the complexity of their role.

The chapter draws on the initial results from research which we are currently conducting on the early professional learning of teachers (the EPL project which is part of the UK Teaching and Learning Research Programme[3]). The methodology of this study involves the engagement of part-time teacher-researchers as ethnographers, primarily in their own schools but also in those of teacher-researcher colleagues. By undertaking an ethnographic

[2] The National Curriculum in England and the 5-14 curriculum in Scotland have been implemented differently, with Scottish teachers having approximately 20% of their contact time available for flexibility in content and delivery, in contrast to the more rigid system in England.
[3] Teaching and Learning Research Programme

study in this way, we gain insights unavailable to researchers with indirect connections to the schools context. Future strands of the research will build on this data to formulate a robust model for the induction and enculturation processes of newly-qualified teachers in particular. For the purposes of this chapter, however, the data also provide considerable insight into the work identities of Scottish teachers in general.

The chapter thus critically examines current understandings of the development of the work identity of teachers. Although the literature uses terms such as 'praxis shock' and teachers themselves use metaphors such as 'sinking or swimming', these are not simple phenomena experienced by one-dimensional selves. Teachers have complex biographies which, as Alheit (1999) argues, enable them to make sense of difficult situations. Early experiences of teaching are, however, frequently problematic, as demonstrated by the variability of retention rates from time to time and from place to place (Ross & Hutchings 2003). We discuss stage-based models of development (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 1986) and conclude, with Eraut (2001; 2004) that these cannot capture the complexity of the process. It is also clear that models of individual, intuitive decision-making, such as that offered by Klein (1996), provide only a partial picture of the development of professional expertise, and thus of the work identity to which expertise contributes. Our model of professional identity is based on its embeddedness in social contexts and the need for expertise to be solicited by work environments, via an atmosphere of professional engagement, collegial support and communicative action.

We thus suggest a model of work identity which incorporates the six dimensions of:

- Multiple selfhood
- Collectivity
- Communicative action
- Recognition
- Professional expertise
- Spatial possession

This model is tested against our early data from the EPL project as well as data from other projects in relevant fields. We conclude that an awareness of these dimensions in the

planning and implementation of policies on teacher induction and early professional development may go some way towards alleviating common problems in this area.

Section 1
The literature of professional identity

In this section we address some of the approaches to professional identity which emerge from the literature, mainly in the field of teaching (Sachs 1999) but also in other relevant areas such as medical education (Ryynånen 2001). We need to distinguish here between concepts of "professionalism" and professional identity. Sachs (1999) sees two conflicting models of professionalism, a 'democratic' and a 'managerial' model, which inform the wider context in which teachers work. This conflict is expressed within the stories of new teachers and other workers as a divergence between the 'job', i.e. teaching as pedagogical activity in the classroom and elsewhere, and the work context, in which structural and institutional demands are made through managers and management. Identity thus emerges at the intersection of the job and the work context. Brott & Kajs (2001) suggest that professional identity is formed at the junction of the 'structural' and 'attitudinal' levels, or more simply, at the junction of external requirements and the "subjective self- conceptualisation associated with the role". Citing McGowen & Hart (1990), they claim that "issues of professional identity stem from professional socialisation and development". The idea that development is an integral part of being a professional has emerged more strongly in recent years, and in the Scottish context, statutory provision for continuing professional development is contained in the McCrone agreement on teachers' career structure and conditions of work (SEED 2001).

Another way of approaching the topic is via person-environment studies such as Lawson's (1993) theory of work adjustment. This in turn draws on the Minnesota model of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist 1984), which distinguishes between job satisfaction (for the employee) and job satisfactoriness (the employee's performance as perceived by the employer). Job satisfaction in turn can be characterised as either one-dimensional or two-dimensional (Boreham 2005; Herzberg 1966). The two dimensional approach assumes that there are distinct facets of the job which create satisfaction (satisfiers), whilst there are other facets which detract fron satisfaction (dissatisfiers) but are not polar opposites of satisfiers. In the EPL project we have developed an instrument (*Jobsat*) which specifically incorporates

satisfiers and dissatisfiers relevant to new teachers. Our preliminary tests of this instrument suggest that the two-dimensional approach is correct, and that significant dissatisfiers can arise even for new teachers who are satisfied with the job as a whole.

Coldron & Smith (1999) provide an important discussion of the role of social theory in the construction of teachers' identities. They argue that Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' provides a theoretical basis for discussion of teachers' locations within social space. It provides a framework for the identification of the effects of structure and agency, and the flows of power between them.

> …identity as a teacher is a matter of where, within the professionally pertinent array of possibilities, a particular person is located. Teachers need, however, to distinguish between the location they are each given and that which they achieve. To borrow the form of Malvolio's aphorism[4], some of their identity is born with them, some is achieved, and some is thrust upon them. (Coldron & Smith 1999, p.714)

This, of course, reinforces the role of social and personal biography in establishing identity, for which the EPL project provides empirical evidence, and we return to this theme below. Biographies, however, are influenced by cultural precedents, and Coldron & Smith go on to describe four traditions from which teachers can draw possibilities for identity formation and practice. These are the *craft*, the *moral*, the *artistic* and the *scientific* traditions. The craft tradition legitimises the competence-based approach to vocational training which has emerged from government policy in recent years, which as Atkinson (2004) points out, fails to 'capture what it is like to teach'. The moral dimension consists essentially in the ability to make defensible judgements about the relative value of instructions, practices and structures. The artistic tradition moves beyond the making of judgements to take account of teachers' aesthetic responses and emotional engagement with their work. Finally, the scientific tradition calls for teachers to base their practice on research and to incorporate research into their practice. As Coldron & Smith suggest, the importance of this tradition lies in the way that the scientific method is appropriated to legitimate policy decisions, whilst at the same time the same method enables a critical approach to evidence, often in opposition to the same decisions. It also supports a view of teaching as a rational process and teachers as rational

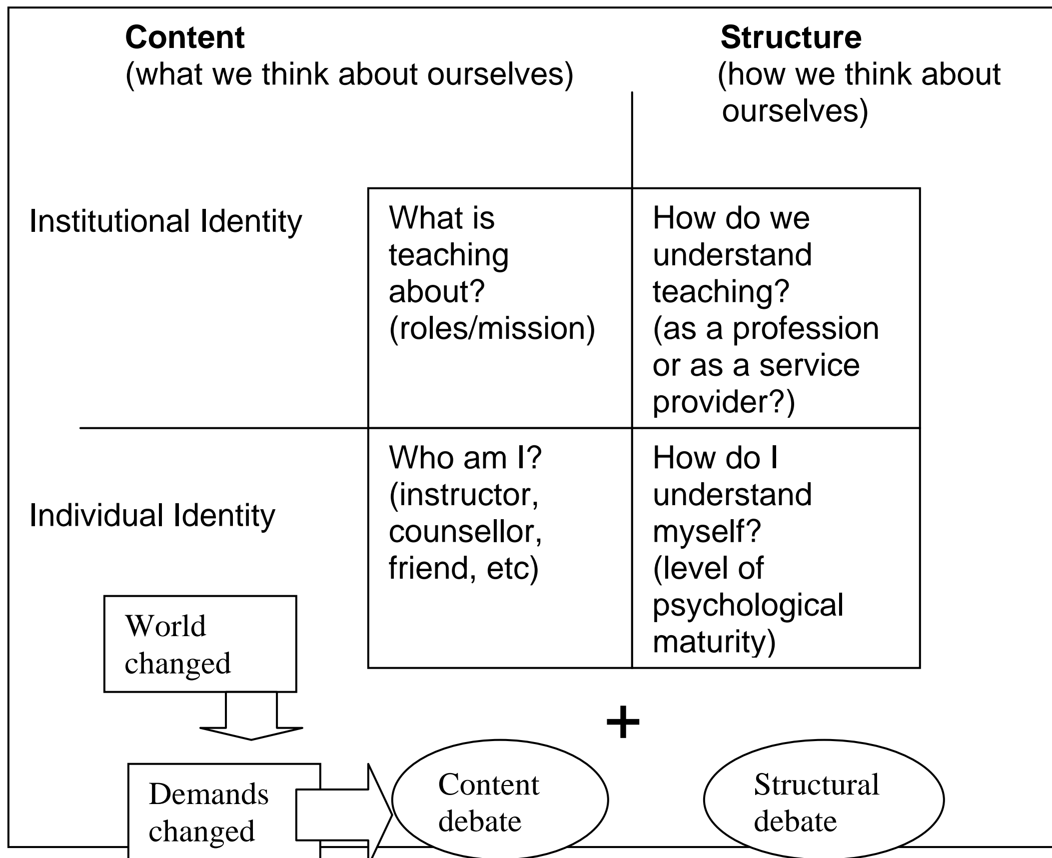
[4] Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night,* Act II, Scene 5

agents, and as Atkinson (2004) suggests, there may be other, counter-rational processes at work, such as the operation of the unconscious.

Within the model which is emerging from EPL, we can see that there is little overt mention of tradition, but there is an obvious role for experienced teachers, and observation of their teaching by new teachers, in passing on professional traditions. This is not unproblematic, however, since new teachers also bring expectations of autonomy and of reshaping the role which they inherit in order to become ‘authentic’ teachers (Heidegger 1962). In turn this is a function of what Alheit (1999) calls ‘biographicity’, which he defines as an ‘individual knowledge resource to deal with modern reality’. The importance of this concept for our purposes is that it reaffirms the importance of individuals ‘stretched’ across time and space and provides a way of reconstructing the ‘fragmented possibilit[ies] suggested by Stronach et al (2002). It also forms a middle ground between Atkinson’s (2004) view that there is no transcendental self to which individuals can relate when reflecting on their own practice. Rather, subjects are formed and reformed through reflective practice. Atkinson sees each of these subjects as ‘policed by its particular ideological framing that maintains specific psychosocial identifications of teaching’. Using the notion of biographicity, however, it can be argued that subjects may or may not see these ideological framings for what they are, depending perhaps on whether they have read Lacan or Althusser, or whether they perceive their teaching as more or less satisfactory. What they will do, however, is deal with immediate problems with the ‘real’ in ways which their biographies suggest will be effective. Atkinson’s Lacanian/Althusserian view of [beginning] teachers as operating with fantasy conceptions or ‘false consciousness’ of the ideological assumptions behind the education system does not, therefore add much to our understanding of the professional identity of beginning teachers. The use of psycho-analytic models is fraught with problems not least the question of the ‘false consciousness of the researchers involved.

As Forsythe et al (2002), in considering the changing nature of professionalism of US Army officers, point out, identities have both content and structure, and that they are formed at the junction between public and private conceptions or expectations of the role. These conceptions are inevitably acquired as part of biographical experience, which may provide a misleading account of ‘what happened’. As with teachers and other professionals, army officers are expected to function ‘in increasingly complex and ambiguous environments’.

Public expectations emerge from this environment both as the mediated statements (in a wide sense) which constitute policy, and the traditions or 'heritage' of the profession, which transcend policy. We will return to the question of heritage below, but the following diagram helps to make this conflictual situation explicit (adapted from Forsyth et al 2002)



The content of teaching, the 'what is teaching about' question, seemed to be important for all our participants. Clarke & Hollingsworth (2002) suggest that the ultimate goals of teaching, and thus of new teachers, are 'student learning outcomes', although this is a rather colourless view of what teaching is about, and our own participants used more emotional language to express the joy which they felt in having successfully steered a class, or individual pupils, towards such outcomes.

> Right well, a high point would definitely be when I just feel I've got through to some specific kids that are really… I mean I suppose that's just kind [of] more a general teacher thing rather than a probation thing, but I mean, , I had one wee[small] boy yesterday it was like he had finished all his work and I said he could go onto the computer and look up some stuff on the heart and he found some and he was like, 'Miss, look, look at this' and it was just so nice, you know, that he's obviously now so into that and if I can keep that going, you know that could be fantastic. And another wee boy that the first day I was like, 'Oh my god, what is this

> boy doing he's gonna be such a nightmare and he's just fantastic'. He just comes up shows me his work all the time, 'am I doin' it right? I'm like, yeah that's fantastic.' So it's that… it's that kinda personal… human side of it that is exactly what I came in here for. (NT interview p.41)
> (Interviewer): ...are you glad that you [came] back [to teaching]?
>
> Yes, definitely I am, because there's little moments, I mean there's moments that you could tear your hair out, but there are moments that are just so priceless, like my fourth years today asking me if they could play the 'Who am I game?' that I've invented to help them learn all the different blood vessels and chambers of the heart and things. Because they'd really enjoyed it, that's the kinda feeling that's great, and plus I don't think I'm the world's best teacher now, but I think in a few years I'll not be too bad, so I can see progress, definitely

The above extracts illustrate the importance for new teachers of coming to terms with the dilemmas of the job, in this case, the dilemma of whether individual attention to problematic pupils is justified in specific cases.

Stronach et al (2002:109) see the question of professionalism as '...bound up in the discursive dynamics of professionals attempting to address or redress the dilemmas of the job'. Professional identity is thus a 'disorderly' business which is inherently contradictory, dialectical and which resists closure or generalisation. In the remainder of this chapter we will examine how this disorderly business might be understood, through the use of various theoretical approaches and in the first instance, the project data gathered to date.

Multiple selfhood and professional identity

Mainstream, psychological identity theory focuses on such constructs as role salience or role commitment. However, as Desrochers (2002) points out, these constructs fail 'to address the reflexivity of identities', thus leaving the way open for the postmodern concept of the 'fragmented' or 'de-centred' self, and rendering subjectivity problematic. This de-centring of the self has been accomplished by a number of writers. Rorty (1989) argues that it was primarily Freud and Nietzsche who enabled the self to exhibit "alternative modes of adaptation" to contingency, alternative, that is, to being centred on reason. Nietzsche validates the self as "strong poet", riding the storm of contingency in order to tell her heroic tales in new, stylish ways. Freud, in suggesting that random childhood events were responsible for the greater part of self-formation, undercut the possibility of an intentionally-unified self. But Freud takes into account only a fraction of the childhood events and experiences which might contribute to a sense of self. The hypotheses of the unconscious and repression make it harder to argue against the Freudian self, since, as numerous critics

of Freud have pointed out, none of us can be assumed to be free of the influences that we argue against.

One problem with discussing the self is that there is a great deal of conceptual confusion about the different meanings of ‘self’ and ‘subject’. We take ‘self’ to be those aspects of being a person which persists through time and is inextricably linked to the body, although neither of these conditions implies a static entity. The subject, on the other hand, is where and how that self is positioned, whether discursively or otherwise, at a given point in time. There is, as Lakoff and Johnson (1999:268) point out, ‘not one subject-self distinction, but many’, and the self is metaphorically constructed in language as ‘either a person, an object or a location’. It is this distinction which, as self-consciousness, enables us to have concepts of identity at all. The concept of work identity is therefore dependent on which version of the self-subject distinction is in play in a given situation.

Paradoxically, the transient subjectivity of an individual can be as or more essential to identity than the persistent self, and our participants confirmed this. The identity of being a teacher tended to take over lives and to be the main way in which people described themselves. In terms of the theory of identity status, these individuals are in the process of ‘identity achievement’ (Waterman 1988). Waterman is emphatic that this process is one of maintenance and continual revision rather than an outcome, and there is evidence from the transcripts that this is the case with teachers. It would be a mistake to over-emphasis the uncertainty aspect, however. As one new teacher put it:

> I feel like I’ve been here forever; I feel like part of the furniture. I don’t expect things to go wrong.

Elsewhere, one of our colleagues has referred to this aspect of new teachers’ experience as a desire for ‘reciprocal ontological security’ (McNally 2005). By this we mean that new teachers seek to achieve self-understandings of teaching which accord with those of their peers and colleagues. This does not, however, equate to passive acceptance, since in gaining recognition, there may well be a need to facilitate changes to practices within the school in order to make the transition from tradition to heritage. Although the official signifier of identity achievement was the successful completion of the SFR, even experienced teachers (interviewed as key informants on the induction process) acknowledged that learning to be a

teacher was an ongoing process, and that new teachers contributed new knowledge to this process as well as acquiring established knowledge and practice from colleagues.

Teaching and the embodied self

The work of Lakoff & Johnson (1999) provides convincing evidence for the grounding of cognitive structures in embodied action. We wish to argue here for a concept of selfhood in which the body integrates and crosses boundaries between activity systems (Ryynånan 2001). Our emphasis on embodied action, and embodiment in general does not mean that notions of the 'de-centring' or “fluidity” of the self have no relevance - far from it. Nor does a concern with embodiment eliminate the need to consider conflicts and tensions within or between the self and/or the subject. Individuality is constructed from the body, and sometimes in painful opposition to the body (Michelson 1998).

What we wish to avoid is "…an unmanageable heterogeneity of changing selves" as Schrag puts it (Schrag 1997, p.31). Susan Bordo argues even more strenuously against this multiplicity:

> To deny the unity and stability of identity is one thing. The epistemological fantasy of becoming multiplicity - the dream of limitless multiple embodiments - is another. What sort of body is it that is free to change its shape and location at will, that can become anyone and travel everywhere? If the body is a metaphor for our locatedness in space and time and thus for the finitude of human perception and knowledge, then the postmodern body is no body at all (Bordo 1990 p.145, quoted in Gregory 1994, p.164)

Different roles, such as those of teachers who are also parents, come into conflict and produce tensions. These tensions are produced across a common body which enacts the stories attributable to any given role. Professional identity, from this perspective, can thus be seen as more than just the naming of a role or the assignment of a role to a material body. Rather, it is the theme of a unifying narrative within which conflicts are played out and reconciled. The body is thus in a sense the author of the narrative, and is also the route by which the world enters the story. At this point, therefore, we need to consider the role of sign systems, or language, in relation to identity formation.

A semiotic framework for understanding professional identity

We might choose to understand professional identity as a sign system elaborated and combined within a set of cultural codes. Semiotics reached a baroque level of complexity and opacity during the 1980s, but the earlier writings of authors such as Barthes (1957) and C.S. Pierce provide a grounding for semiotic readings of sign systems. Although semiotic analysis depends on the existence of texts, the meaning of 'text' in this context is a wide-ranging one. In the current context, professional identities are increasingly formed against a discursive background of defined competencies and 'codes of conduct'. In the case of new teachers in Scotland, the discursive background is operationalised in the Standard for Full Registration (SFR), a document negotiated between stakeholders such as local education authorities, the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED), the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), teacher trade unions and the teacher education institutions (TEI). Codes, as Chandler (1999) notes, 'transcend texts', and the meaning of a code of conduct is not immanent within a specific text but is only transparent against a deep social consensus as to what constitutes professional conduct. This can in turn be considered as an ideology as well as, or instead of a consensus, since the emergence of discourses of professionalism, as Morriss (2002) suggests, is evidence of the exercise of power. Professionals exercise power through a variety of semiotic strategies. In Scottish schools in the recent past, it was customary to wear the black gown of academic distinction to signal one's identity as a teacher. Current practice tends towards the wearing of business-style clothing which links teaching to a wider set of professional activities. Specialised personnel such as ambulance crews signify different kinds of professional identity through their own uniform styles, but are equally involved in the exercise of power, albeit in a benign way. These signs are not incidental details of professional identity but are fundamental components of it. In the case of teachers, one of the most significant components of identity is the classroom as the unit of space in which identity is created and power deployed. We discuss the spatial aspect of teacher identity below, but we must first explore further the concept which we introduced above whereby the body was seen as the 'author' of a narrative within which different roles, conflicts and perhaps selves were enacted.

Clark (2001) discusses the importance of Bakhtin in developing 'translinguistics', a theoretical framework for understanding the interaction of language, thought and society via the study of texts. As Clark puts it:

> Bakhtin's development of *translinguistics* was a result of his studies of the novel...He focused on developing a dynamic theory of language and meaning emphasising the interrelationship between three categories: (i) the active and productive capacity of language; (ii) the evaluative nature of meaning; and (iii) social subjectivity**.** (Clark 2001, p.3)

In this understanding of language, actors involved in communicative action are both creators of meaning and creations of a discursive universe. What it means to be a teacher is determined both by dialogue, and by the possibilities offered by the discourse of teaching. To give an example:

> *Interviewer- What have you learnt from the kids*
> (NT)- Lots or things. Lots of new phrases I didn't know, I began to feel I am getting old because there's all these new phrases. That's a worry. Kids want to be listened to. They want to be heard. The major thing I've found is kids really want you to set boundaries in the classroom. For example with that S2 I asked them to make up their own rules and said I'd choose the five most common and I was panicking because I thought they'd say no rules no rules no rules but not one kid did that. Every single kid wrote no shouting out; always arrive on time, these kinds of rules that are school rules. Every kid in that class wrote that in their jotters. It made me feel better it reassures me about my discipline because I felt I was expecting that in my classroom it made me realise that kids want teachers to tell them what to do they're just kids. It's the same in a classroom if there are no boundaries the kids will just riot. They want the teacher to say no.

In this example the identity of the teacher is constructed in dialogue with the class, as someone who can 'set boundaries', whilst at the same time her identity, as so constructed, remains within the boundaries of the discourse of teaching. There is of course the possibility that a radical alteration of this discourse will take place, in which the children assume

positions of authority, as happened during the Cultural Revolution in China (Chung & Halliday 2005).

The essential point in relation to identity is that it is neither fixed nor infinitely malleable, but is continually renegotiated through communicative action within discursive boundaries.

Communicative action

By communicative action, directed at others, actors insert themselves into networks. The semiotic framework outlined above provides a way of analysing such communicative actions, as signs relating to cultural codes. The identity of actors is developed and legitimated through communicative action, or even inaction, since silence is in many cases a communicative act. In the case of teachers, the act of communicating with others is at the core of their professional lives, and ‘getting through to the children’ is frequently cited as a significant developmental stage in becoming a teacher. ‘Getting through’ sets up a metaphorical schema in which communication is seen as the act of moving objects through barriers (Lakoff & Johnson 1999). This is not the only possible schema. The idea of the classroom as a site for co-learning and mutual enquiry produces other metaphors.

In our empirical research with the EPL project, communicative action has emerged as central to any form of professional identity and to professional learning, as the following extract indicates:

> George - Well, no. I don’t know. I may have asked a couple of other people in the maths department how they deal with something, just to get another opinion. Other times I’ve just been talking about what’s going on and they say, ‘I do this,’ and it helps, so… nothing in particular though, just in general conversation. I say something that’ll prompt them to say what I could do.
>
> *CS - And what about outside the department, people you talk to there, does that give you useful insights?*
>
> George - Well that was what I was talking about in general conversation…

CS - Ah, general conversation outside the maths department.

George - …sort of outside the maths department, just talking to people. Yes, most people have been fine, I've chatted to, so there's no problems there.

It could be argued that there is a narrative of the self which relates its various components to each other, and it is in the telling of stories that the self evolves as a whole entity, a concept which Alheit & Dausien (1999) call 'biographicity'. In our interviews, the telling of these stories to the researcher itself contributes to the construction, and, more importantly, the security of identity. Our interest in the EPL project lies in the flows of influence which are brought to light within these stories.

You know, it's very much… it's an act, you've just got to go in and you don't expect trouble, so you don't get it. But he's actually going in and he's expecting trouble.
(AI, p.85)

As a student she could focus more on the actual teaching whereas as a teacher she had to know and deal with registration and absence procedures, which had previously been done for her by the class teacher. She felt well supported by probationers meetings but was getting a little frustrated that much of her free time was being filled up with house-keeping and school procedural things and she wasn't getting time to do as much lesson preparation as she would like. (AI, p.43)

Professional identity cannot be considered in isolation from other forms or aspects of identity. Following Marx, the concept of work as labour power delivered over to economic imperatives implies its converse, the concept of domestic labour and recreation. The teachers in our current study are not merely teachers but are also parents, partners or simply individuals with a wide range of interests outside their work situation. Whether this multiplicity of roles results in conflict or not, and in many cases it does, the idea of having an unproblematic sense of one's own identity is hard to sustain in an environment where contingent factors are continually impinging on that sense of identity. As one TR put it, "acceptance within department and in school (not punted in the corner like a student)" was a significant satisfier in terms of job satisfaction and therefore of professional identity.

The spatiality of professional identity

On the basis of the initial EPL data, there was clear evidence for a physical-material or spatial dimension to the learning experience of new teachers. This manifested itself as a need for one's own classroom, or in some cases a shared workspace, over which some autonomy could be exercised. Illeris (2002), the theorist currently closest to our own argument in his assignment of dimensions to learning processes, subsumes this spatial dimension within learning under an institutional or societal (and thus ultimately social) dimension. We feel, however, that the spatiality of learning is an important dimension in its own right, albeit one which is closely bound up with the social and emotional aspects of learning. In order to analyse spatiality, we use the three sub-dimensions of proximity, mobility and possession.

'Spatiality', as we use the term here, represents the totality of the human experience of space. Space is used here on the basis that it is relational and depends on the presence of material objects, a view consistent with embodied realism (Lakoff & Johnson 1999). Elsewhere, we have developed the idea that proximity, mobility and possession are the three essential, qualitative dimensions of spatiality (Gray 2004a; Gray 2004b). Proximity is a relationship of distance, but is not the relationship of two inert objects lying at a quantifiable distance apart from each other. Rather, it is the distance established by human concern, and in concerning myself with a space such as a room I distance myself from it. My relation of mobility to the room, based on this proximity, is my ability to act over distance, to walk around it or to enter and leave it. But the room is not simply given; it has been built with a purpose in mind. Even if it is useless in a functional sense it may be a work of art or a religious symbol. My relationship with the room thus results from the social processes which determine its meaning. Even the absence of others from a space is a form of social interaction, since presence and absence are only meaningful given the existence of others. I use the term 'possession' to describe this social dimension of spatiality,

Teaching is inherently a public activity, but it was clear from the data that having control over spaces such as classrooms was important to new teachers' sense of identity. This related to their ability to organise resources and to display pupils' work as a means of validating their performance as teachers. In a way, the classroom acted as both a public and private space,

and, as a space with diverse functions and clientele, the classroom is thus 'heterotopic' (Foucault 1986, Gregory 1994; Soja 1996). In Relph's words:

> Heterotopia is...pluralistic, chaotic, designed in detail yet lacking universal foundations or principles, continually changing, linked by centerless flows of information; it is artificial, and marked by deep social inequalities. (Relph 1991, cited in Gregory 1994: 151)

The main purpose of describing a space as 'heterotopic' is to reveal some of the complexities which pervade any such space. The classroom conforms to all of the above criteria. It has a wide range of purposes and functions and its purposes are defined both by policymakers and by its users, who are diverse and 'generally chaotic'.

According to Inness (1992), a distinction can be made between privacy as passive in the sense of 'isolation *from*...' some external activity or thing, and privacy as autonomy or 'the right to control access *to*' e.g. an intimate space, information or the content of decisions] Reiman (1976: 310) argues that '[p]rivacy is a social ritual by means of which an individual's moral title to his [*sic*] existence is confirmed', and he goes on to suggest that:

> privacy is necessary to the creation of *selves* out of human beings, since a self is at least in part a human being who regards his [sic] existence – his thoughts, his body, his actions – as his *own.* (emphasis in original)

It also fits well with Lakoff & Johnson's work on the embodied mind, and their assertion (1999: 267) that:

> we have a system of different metaphorical conceptions of our internal structure... [a]nd there are a small number of source domains that the system draws upon: space, possession, force, and social relationships.

The cultural norms of Western society promote self-possession as a positively desirable state, as Lakoff & Johnson (1999: 273) point out, and this entails a high degree of control over one's bodily and mental functions. Loss of this control equates to a loss of privacy, and a corresponding loss of self.

Possession thus encompasses privacy and related concepts such as isolation and autonomy, and in doing so implies that space must be shared with others. In order to make this description of possession more theoretically coherent, I refer to the work of Heidegger.

In *Being and Time* (Heidegger 1962), the concept of *Dasein* refers to the locatedness of human being, literally it's 'being t/here' (Inwood 1999: 42). From a Heideggerian perspective, spaces are demarcated by *Dasein*'s 'concernful coping' and 'foresight'. Crowell (2001), shows that Heidegger, in Division II of *Being and Time,* develops another sense of the 'I' as the being of a being which can give reasons, or can take responsibility, for its actions including taking responsibility for itself.

In Heidegger's terms, then, the responsible 'I-self' is inseparable from, and gives meaning to, the 'world' into which human beings are always already thrown, in common with all others. By definition, *Dasein*, the human way of being t/here, 'opens up' or 'clears' spaces-in-the-world for itself and is therefore *always* spatial. But as Heidegger goes to great lengths to show, human being is unavoidably shaped by temporality, both by the past as either 'tradition' or 'heritage' and by the future as possibility, one's 'for-the-sake-of-which…' (Heidegger 1962; Blattner 1999). Possession, as I use the expression here, locates this temporal process in space, as, following Heidegger's own reasoning, it must be so located (Arisaka 1996). There are thus grounds for thinking that there must be a human capacity or process for integrating experiences of space with consciousness of time, and possession is the name which we give to this process-dimension of spatiality.

Thus, in becoming a teacher, one inherits the role from others who have played out their roles earlier, whilst being drawn through the process by a sense of future potentiality. In going through this process, spaces are occupied as 'somebody', and my relationship with spaces is mediated by the kind of 'somebody' that I am. Heidegger's temporal schema is itself an attempt to re-describe time, not as a series of 'nows', but as a 'unity of that horizon from which each being can present itself in the world' (Dastur 1996: 165). He argues that because human beings are capable of death, and are therefore subject to finitude, time can be experienced as a unity in which future and past 'co-temporalise' the present. One is 'thrown' into the present as a teacher, because of what 'has been' in the past, and projects oneself upon a future which, as a possibility for being, is also there in the present.

We have, then, our own ways of possessing (or haunting) spaces. If, for example, I study in my own room, in a house in which I enjoy friendly relations with the other occupants, then my sense of possession of the space will probably be strong. If I study in a corner of a bus station then my sense of possession of that space will be weak. This is not to say, however, that possession is distributed solely along an axis representing power (strong/weak, low/high). The important point about possession is that as humans we occupy space, and as embodied creatures, we cannot avoid occupying space temporally. Possession is to have a temporal relationship with that space, to make it a haunt, to dwell there, or, conversely, to be prevented from having had a temporal relation with it, to be dispossessed.

Possession, however, is not just a temporal relationship. Because we spend time in spaces, we cannot avoid having an affective relationship to them. As Heidegger perceptively argues, even indifference is a mood (Heidegger 1962: 172-179). Indifference to a space is an attitude, a way of standing-towards it.

The three forms of spatial knowledge of the site are thus in tension. There is tension between the architecture and its function, tension between its representation, its intended use and the uses made of it.

The point of the above discussion is to show that possession is the dimension through which power-relations are manifested in spatiality. As the discussion here revolves around embodied spatiality, I now need to bring out the relationship between embodiment and possession. As an embodied being, I 'own' my body, but it is never entirely mine to dispose of as I wish, given my involvement in a world of practical entailments and normative actions. My body is placed in certain ways by the requirements of the institution. This placement is a negotiated settlement, as it were, between different proximities and mobilities. My attendance (or otherwise) at lectures reflects a 'compulsion to proximity' (Boden & Molotch 1994) and a degree of mobility. The ownership of my body and of the lecture theatre are intertwined – I own the space, I am at home there, but I am also 'owned' by the institution, as the legitimating, civil regime under whose auspices the lecture is held. Thus, possession is contested and even my non-presence in a space involves issues of possession, provided I have a proximity relationship with that space. My presence and absence are merely two sides

of the same possession. This possession is not a static 'slice in time' (Massey 1992: 68), but requires an element of time to realise it. Our relationships with spaces constantly evolve, in the way in which a house becomes a home over time, or a particular journey becomes habitual. Again, this evolution need not be experienced in a positive way. The feeling of wanting to be dispossessed of a space is familiar to airline passengers, or to students in an overcrowded lecture room.

Possession thus completes the spatial triangle which is based on proximity and set in action by mobility. Possession, therefore, can be regarded as a negotiation between self, space and other.

Recognition and possession

Without shared understandings of what one does with equipment - rooms, desks, books - life would be very difficult. But sharing understanding is not the same as sharing the same interpretation. It is worth noting that Levinas (1969) relates proximity specifically to the *recognition* of the existence of the Other, and not just to spatial distance. Honneth (1995:178) points out that recognition provides a conceptual link between autonomy and mutual interdependence.

> Since individuals must know that they are recognized for their particular abilities and traits in order to be capable of self-realization, they need a form of social esteem that they can only acquire on the basis of collectively shared goals

Possession involves a mutual recognition that space is shared and that this joint possession can be beneficial to the parties which are involved in that sharing.

Collectivity

Mackinnon (1996), drawing on Taylor (1989) argues that models of selfhood which ignore the socio-cultural influences which impinge on all actors are flawed. Teachers are especially implicated in collective action since their role is by definition concerned with working with others to promote learning. Mackinnon suggests that there is an element of *mimesis* in the process of becoming a teacher and that acquiring the 'manner' of other professionals is a key component of learning to teach. In current practice, however, there are few explicit opportunities for the sort of 'learning at the elbows' which Mackinnon advocates, albeit with the proviso that reflection on what is being learned from others is also necessary to avoid

acquiring sedimented practices. This is a problem which has been addressed in the literature on mentoring (Franks & Dahlgren 1996). The emphasis on the autonomy required to be a successful teacher and the spatial isolation of the typical classroom work against the kind of vicarious learning to which Mackinnon refers. There is thus a need to understand how, and how far, the experience of collegiality in schools and elsewhere can contribute to the formation of professional identity. One of our researchers suggested that 'staffroom anecdotes' were an important aspect of collegiality, a way to share practice in a non-threatening way.

Conclusions

In this section, we draw together the dimensions of work identity which emerge from our research together with the six dimensions to which we referred at the beginning of the chapter. These dimensions were:

- Multiple selfhood
- Collectivity
- Communicative action
- Recognition
- Professional expertise
- Spatial possession

A slightly different set of dimensions emerged from the data, which we characterised as:

Taking these in turn, we found that multiple selfhood was not a major issue for the participants in our research. There were conflicts between roles held by actors, such as those between domestic responsibilities and work roles where excessive travelling or evening duties were involved, but the issue of identity as such did not emerge as problematic in itself. Our participants seemed, for the most part, happy to be teachers, subject to the various stresses and strains which arose around the performance of teaching. This was born out by our work on job satisfaction. Successful integration of the core role of teaching with the external demands imposed by institutions and structures

The participants emphasised, and our early results from the use of instruments to measure interactivity support, the importance of collectivity, communicative action and recognition by others, all of which form part of the social dimension of teaching.

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