Chapter 5
Teacher Identity (Re)Construction within Professional Learning Communities:
The Role of Emotions and Tensions

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ABSTRACT

The research on teacher professional identity mostly focused on the process of teacher professional identity formation, the characteristics of teacher professional identity according to the teachers themselves as well as the researchers, and the representation of professional identity through teacher narratives in written and spoken discourse (Beijaard et al., 2004). However, there is much to explore in teachers' tensions and emotions regarding the issues between teacher cognition, and personal and professional sides of teacher identity (Day & Leitch, 2001). In this chapter, we have reviewed the literature on teacher professional identity in relation to communities of practice, imagined identity, and imagined communities. Various definitions of emotions and tensions as well as their roles in teacher professional identity construction have been presented and relevant studies on teacher identity construction, emotions and tensions have been discussed.

Teacher development, in-service education and training, staff development, professional development and lifelong learning are only some of the terms coined to describe the need for educational improvement through various activities teachers engage in. While there is no consensus on the definition of these terms and the qualities of effective professional development programs, the role of the teachers as active agents of change has been widely acknowledged. It is not only that teachers are now perceived as key

initiators of change, but also they are "often the preferred source of ideas for other teachers" (Fullan, 2007, p. 75). Thus, collegiality, in other words, teacher interaction/collaboration in the form of mutual support is seen as a strong determinant of educational change (Fullan, 2007). This purposeful interaction in the form of sharing and jointly developing teaching/learning processes calls for Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of legitimate peripheral participation, a framework that explores the multiple identities and levels of participation in a community of practice. Since the mid-1990s, teacher communities of practice and professional learning communities have been two important concepts explored to see the extent to which they facilitate teacher learning, professional development, and school improvement at large (Liu & Xu, 2013).

As McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) indicate, "a collaborative community of practice in which teachers share instructional resources and reflections in practice appears essential to their persistence and success in innovating classroom practice" (p. 22). In that sense, teachers are no longer consumers of knowledge but reflective practitioners whose theories and practices benefit each other (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). In such a framework where teachers are at the center of educational change, teacher professional identity is an important concept to be discussed as it encompasses teachers' beliefs, roles, practices as well as motivation and commitment to change.

In this chapter, we will review the literature on teacher professional identity in relation to communities of practice, imagined identity, and imagined communities. Various definitions of emotions and tensions as well as their roles in teacher professional identity construction will be presented and relevant studies on teacher identity construction, emotions and tensions will be discussed.

THE PROCESS OF IDENTITY (RE)CONSTRUCTION

Identity has gained importance in many fields as an analytical tool to understand human-behaviors in general, and teaching and learning processes particularly in education. According to Gee (2000), the concept of identity refers to "being recognized as a certain kind of person in a given context" (p. 1). Thus, identity should be evaluated in relation to particular contexts rather than described through fixed attributes such as gender, race and social group. Li (2011) emphasizes the role of context in identity construction as it "reflects how individuals see themselves and how they enact their roles within different settings" (p. 5). Adams and Marshall (1996) also state that interactions with the other members in one context have an impact on the understanding of identity, thus each context creates its own impact on identity construction.

Based on the perception of identity as a fluid and unstable construct depended on context and shaped by interaction with others, identity (re)construction is seen as a dynamic process changing from one context to another, and even leading individuals to develop more than one identity in one particular context (Danielewicz, 2001; Gee, 2000). Bullough (2005) also highlights that "identity formation is not a passive but a dynamic affair, that involves a giving and a withholding which simultaneously alters oneself and one's context, with the result that alternative identities may form" (p. 146). Gee (2000) presents these multiple, but interrelated identities as follows.

The first way of viewing identity, nature-identity, is related to the internal state or a fixed attribute of a person, which is independent from an individual effort. People acquire such identities without any

Table 1. Four ways to view identity

	Process	Power	Source of Power
Nature-Identity: a state	developed	from forces	in nature
Institution-Identity: a position	authorized	by authorities	within institutions
Discourse-Identity: an individual trait	recognized in	the discourse/ dialogue	of/with "rational" individuals
Affinity-Identity: experiences	shared in	the practice	of "affinity groups"

(Adopted from Gee, 2000, p. 3)

efforts such as being a twin (Gee, 2000). The second perspective, institutional perspective is perceived as a type of identity which is owned through authorities' decision about a person's position such as being recognized as a teacher or an academic in an institution (Gee, 2000). The third perspective is discourse-identity, which emerges in one's conversations with his/her acquaintances whose interpretations or perceptions influence one's own perception of his/her identity (Gee, 2000). As the last perspective, affinity-identity is formed by social enterprises in "affinity-groups" (Gee, 2000, p. 12).

According to Danielewicz (2001), different identities are constructed as a result of internal (self-evaluation) and external (other people's evaluation) processes, which occur after an active engagement in a wide variety of discourses. These processes occur unsystematically, but in a way that inform each other to develop one's identity (Danielewicz, 2001). Adams and Marshall (1996) also propose that identity is the naturally-met requirement of being a human as everyone wants to feel different from others. However, this identity formation is not a one-way process because people and the other living systems in their social environment mutually construct their identities and shift their natures accordingly (Adams & Marshall, 1996).

Before moving on to the next section, we would like to sum up the few points emerging from the socially-constructed definitions of identity mentioned above:

1. Identity (re)construction is an evolving or changing process dependent on contexts and social relationships, and
2. One's identity (re)construction should be evaluated in regards to its social functions as identities are co-constructed and exist beyond the boundaries of self.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: IMAGINED COMMUNITIES AND IMAGINED IDENTITIES

As we discussed so far, identity (re)construction is a relevant process for any social practices that take place within a community of practice (Wenger, 2010). More specifically, as people engage in the social activities of their communities, they construct and reconstruct their identity (Wenger, 1999). There are two dimensions of our belonging to communities of practice, participation and nonparticipation, both of which contribute to the identity construction (Wenger, 1999). Participation, in that sense, refers to

"the social experience of living in the world in terms of membership in social communities and active involvement in social enterprises" (Wenger, 1999, p. 55). On the other hand, 'nonparticipation' is also relevant to identity construction as Wenger (1999) states:

We not only produce our identities through the practices we engage in, but we also define ourselves through practices we do not engage in. Our identities are constituted not only by what we are but also by what we are not. To the extent that we can come in contact with other ways of being, what we are not can even become a large part of how we define ourselves. (p. 164)

According to Wenger (1999, 2010), as people engage in communities of practices, they develop relationships of identification as a way to make sense of both the social system and their position across the whole system. These three modes of identification (i.e., modes of belonging) to a community of practice can be named as engagement, imagination, and alignment. Engagement is a process of "active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning" (Wenger, 1999, p. 173), that is, an actual experience in practice. Imagination is the construction of an identity no matter if one actively engages in social practices or not, that is, beyond the boundaries of engagement. As the last mode, alignment refers to the accommodation of one's engaged practices to the nature of the community of practice (Wenger, 1999). In other words, people can engage in activities within a community of practice; however, their practices should align with the existing practices within the community.

Drawing from Wenger (1999), Kanno and Norton (2003) discuss the notion 'imagined communities' referring to "groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination" (p. 241). Both language teachers and learners, in that sense, can construct an imagined identity through their practices targeting an imagined community, and thereof; develop a higher investment for the target language and a sense of belonging to the target language culture (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007).

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

As the focus of many studies (e.g., Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004; Flores & Day, 2006; Lasky, 2005; Sutherland, Howard & Markauskaite, 2010; Wilkins, Busher, Kakos, Mohamed & Smith, 2012), teacher professional identity refers to "how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others" (Lasky, 2005, p. 901). In most studies, teacher identity is defined as a continuous process of negotiating between one's personal self with one's professional self when becoming a teacher (Beijaard et al., 2004). Based on their review of contemporary conceptions of self and identity, Rodgers and Scott (2008) highlight four aspects of identity formation. These are;

1.   That identity is dependent upon and formed within multiple contexts which bring social, cultural, political, and historical forces to bear upon that formation;
2.   That identity is formed in relationship with others and involves emotions;
3.   That identity is shifting, unstable, and multiple; and,
4.   That identity involves the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time. (p. 733)

While the concept of identity was intensively examined by the researchers in psychology and philosophy in the 20th century, teacher identity has emerged as a new research interest in second language teacher education in the last decade (Beijaard et al., 2004). Thus, language teacher education lacks sufficient knowledge in terms of teacher identity construction which provides information about teaching and learning processes for a variety of reasons (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Olsen, 2008; Sachs, 2001). First, learning about the process of teacher identity construction gives insights into what teachers bring to the classroom with them, and how teaching practice is influenced by it. Furthermore, knowing about teacher identity not only sheds light on the meaning making processes of teachers in teacher education programs (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), but also informs teacher educators in terms of how novice teachers develop as a teacher and the challenges awaiting them in their new workplaces. Varghese, Morgan, Johnston and Johnson (2005) highlight the significance of investigating teacher identity as follows:

From two different directions (sociopolitical and sociocultural dimensions), then, it became apparent that in order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers; and in order to understand teachers, we need to have a clearer sense of who they are: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them. (p. 22)

In that sense, we can talk about teacher identity construction within professional learning communities where the community provides a platform for professional development. However, constructing an identity is not an easy task since identity cannot be readily-adopted; on the contrary, it requires enhanced opportunities to effectively participate in social communication (Coldron & Smith, 1999). For clarity, teacher professional identity construction is bound to diverse factors such as social domains in which teachers can establish relationships with others by their own efforts or through socially-framed practices in professional learning communities. Zare-ee and Ghasedi (2014) list four categories of factors affecting teacher professional identity construction:

These factors include historical factors related to personal experiences such as early childhood experiences or early teacher role models; sociological factors related to what surrounds a prospective teacher, what parents expect of her, or where she stands compared to a native speaker; psychological factors related to the significance of self-perception in TPI formation; and cultural factors related to (student) teachers' perceptions and notions of professional community in their geography, of government policies, of language education policies, and of power and status issues. (p. 1993)

To summarize, teachers' professional identity construction is a complex, multi-faceted and socially-constructed phenomenon, and bound to various cultural, social, perceptional as well as affective issues such as emotions and tensions experienced within professional learning communities.

EMOTIONS IN TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

The role of emotions on human behavior has been investigated in many fields in social sciences such as psychology, sociology, psychobiology, philosophy, anthropology, cultural studies or feminist studies. In parallel to this trend, in recent years, there has been a considerable amount of interest in examining educational settings from the perspective of emotions as well (Zembylas, 2003). The interest in research-

ing emotional labor in teaching is twofold. First, teaching and learning not only involves "knowledge, cognition, and skill" (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1056), but also "a considerable amount of emotional labour" (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009, p. 3). Second, the high number of teachers leaving their jobs, students' poor performance and the poor quality of education in general not only lead to negative emotions experienced in educational settings (Schutz & Zeymblas, 2009) but also a result from them.

According to Schutz, Hong, Cross and Osbon (2006), the term emotion refers to "socially constructed, personally enacted ways of being that emerge from conscious and/or unconscious judgments regarding perceived successes at attaining goals or maintaining standards or beliefs during transactions as part of social-historical contexts" (p. 344). In that sense, emotions are perceived as analytic tools for exploring teachers' workplace and indicating how they cope with challenges, change, and their experiences at large (Kelchtermans, Ballet & Piot, 2009).

According to O'Connor (2008), "the idea of identity refers to the means by which individuals reflexively and emotionally negotiate their own subjectivity" (p. 118). Thus, the role of emotions in teaching and teacher identity, and its effects on teachers' personal lives have been examined by many researchers (e.g., Day & Leitch, 2001; Zembylas, 2005). The concept of identity and emotions are so intertwined that they reveal each other's meanings both "on a conceptual and personal level" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 214). In other words, all factors influencing emotions are also relevant to the concept of identity to the same degree.

Teacher emotions and the way teachers make sense of them become more evident in discourses with surrounding people; that is, emotions are continually (re)constructed with other emotions during interactions with other people (e.g., teachers, administrators, and students) in school settings. Zembylas (2003) explains the relationship between emotions and teacher professional identity as follows:

Emotions find expressions in a series of multiple features, and they encounter other emotions and expressions that profoundly influence most aspects of a teacher's professional life and growth. Teacher identity is largely a constituted outcome of this continuing dialogue with students, parents, and colleagues. (p. 223)

It is this professional interaction with the members of their community of practice that leads teachers to reify their emotions in specific discourses. That's why, different emotions may appear towards the same event or student in class for different teachers. The diversity in these feelings can stem from the socio-cultural context in which teachers' reactions are shaped (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). On the other hand, it is also suggested that there are some moments when almost all teachers react the same way. For example, positive emotions such as happiness and satisfaction are experienced upon seeing student progress, and pride and pleasure appear when visited by former students (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In terms of negative emotions, teachers feel frustrated and angry in response to students' bad manners in class and violation of school rules (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Zembylas (2003) mentions two issues in relation to the role of emotions in teacher professional identity:

1. Apart from being relevant to personal traits or psychological aspects, emotions are also considered as political and social experiences as the outcome of the teaching occupation, and
2. Conventional dichotomies such as public/private and emotion/reason have a basis on political control and power relations.

Therefore, emotions are not only personally constructed, but also shaped by the external sources such as cultural values, norms, social relationships and power relationships in different contexts (Zembylas, 2003). For example, the fact that teachers do not have a voice in determining the curricula, educational approaches, methods and techniques to be implemented after the state-mandated educational reform in the United States can lay the groundwork for negative emotions like anger and shame on teachers owing to the power relations in educational settings (Schutz et al., 2006). Thus, teachers' feeling powerless or lack of control can lead to emotions of vulnerability, indicating the interplay between emotions and power relations (Schutz et al., 2006).

In their study with student-teachers, Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2012) suggest that emotions have positive effects in promoting "problem-solving, objectivity and creativity in the choice of multiple instructional stages" (p. 431), and negative emotions like disappointment can be easily suppressed with the help of a continuous and strong emphasis on positive moments in one's teaching practice. In short, emotions are not only an indispensable part of one's identity but also play an important role in cognitive activities and teaching processes. As decision-making processes are directly related to emotions as well as power relations in professional communities (Zembylas, 2003), it is inevitable to examine the role of emotions in teachers' decision-making processes and teaching practices when evaluating professional identity or a professional role (O'Connor, 2008).

TENSIONS IN TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL CONSTRUCTION

Most teachers experience tensions in the process of their professional identity construction (Pillen, Beijaard, & Brok, 2013) especially if there is a dissonance with teachers' personal wants, beliefs and the demands of the teaching profession, making professional identity construction a challenging process (Beijaard et al., 2004). According to Pillen, Brok and Beijaard (2013), professional identity tensions refer to:

… internal struggles between aspects relevant to the teacher as a person and the teacher as a professional. Such tensions may challenge a teacher's personal feelings, values, beliefs, or perceptions and, as a consequence, they are often not (easily) resolvable. (p. 86-87)

Therefore, teachers' attempts to balance their understanding of the occupation and the actual demands of the teaching profession can appear as professional identity tensions (Pillen et al., 2013). However, coping with tensions is not always easy since this dissonance "can lead to friction in teachers' professional identity in cases in which the 'personal' and the 'professional' are too far removed from each other" (Beijaard et al., 2004). As far as novice teachers are concerned, coping with tensions seems more difficult as they may not be able to benefit from the tensions as part of their professional identity development, especially if there are not enough consultancies and guidance for them within their professional learning communities.

In terms of novice teachers' tensions in professional identity construction, Pillen et al. (2013) propose four more tensions along with nine tensions that have been already reported in the literature and group them under three themes. The list of all tensions according to their themes is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Three themes and corresponding professional identity tensions

Theme	Tensions
2. The changing role from being a student to becoming a teacher	Feeling like a student versus being expected to act like an adult teacher (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998) Wanting to care for students versus being expected to be tough (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998) Feeling incompetent of knowledge versus being expected to be an expert (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Katz & Raths, 1992; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998) Wanting to invest time in practising teaching versus feeling pressured to invest time in other tasks that are part of the teaching profession (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Kälvemark et al., 2004) Feeling treated like a student versus wanting to take responsibility as a teacher (Pillen et al., in press)* Feeling like a peer versus wanting to take responsibility as a teacher (Pillen et al., in press)*
5. Conflicts between desired and actual support given to students	Wanting to respect students' integrity versus feeling the need to work against this integrity (Kälvemark et al., 2004; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011) Wanting to treat pupils as persons as a whole versus feeling the need to treat them as learners (or vice versa) (Berlak & Berlak, 1981) Experiencing difficulties in maintaining an emotional distance (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Veenman, 1984)
6. Conflicting conceptions of learning to teach	Experiencing conflicts between one's own and others' orientations regarding learning to teach (Alsup, 2006; Rajuan, Beijaard, & Verloop, 2007) Being exposed to contradictory institutional attitudes (Hatch, 1993; Olsen, 2010; Smagorinsky et al., 2004) Feeling dependent on a mentor (colleague/supervisor) versus wanting to go one's own way in teaching (Pillen et al., in press)* Wanting to invest in a private life versus feeling pressured to spend time and energy on work (Pillen et al., in press)*
*Tensions that were not found in the literature, but were mentioned by two or more of the interviewees.	

Apart from the themes presented in Table 2, Pillen et al. (2013) have categorized their participants under six profiles: "teachers struggling with (views of) significant others, teachers with care-related tensions, teachers with responsibility-related tensions, moderately tense teachers, tension- free teachers, and troubled teachers" (p. 96). More specifically, they suggest that teachers' belonging to one of the categories listed above may be dependent on the types of settings that they work in. For example, while most primary school teachers are reported as they had more care-related tensions; most of the troubled teachers were general secondary school teachers in their study. Therefore, they have suggested using these profiles as an analytic tool to examine tensions in teachers' professional identity construction (Pillen et al., 2013).

On the other hand, tensions are not totally considered as negative since prospective teachers' various tensions can function as a trigger to construct a better identity (Alsup, 2006). Therefore, tensions can be one of the constructive components of teacher identity construction as a result of its stimulating function. However, there is a need for "a mentorship or support for negotiating the dissonance" (Alsup, 2006, p. 183) when tensions are too powerful to cope with. For example, tensions can be beneficial at times as they help gain important teaching skills such as classroom-management or lesson planning (Smagorinsky, 2004). On the other hand, too many tensions between the imagined teacher identity and

the demands of real practices of teaching profession can cause negative emotions in the workplace, thus decrementing the process of professional identity construction.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have presented the concept of identity along with its various definitions. Then, identity has been related to communities of practice, imagined communities and imagined identities. Next, teacher professional identity, emotions and tensions have been defined, and their relevance to teacher professional identity construction has been presented. Furthermore, studies on teachers' professional identity construction and the role of emotions and tensions in this process have been provided.

The research on teacher professional identity mostly focused on the process of teacher professional identity formation, the characteristics of teacher professional identity according to the teachers themselves as well as the researchers, and the representation of professional identity through teacher narratives in written and spoken discourse (Beijaard et al., 2004). However, there is much to explore in teachers' tensions and emotions regarding the issues between teacher cognition, and personal and professional sides of teacher identity (Day & Leitch, 2001). Professional learning communities and in-service teacher educators should be informed about teacher emotions and tensions to provide support for both novice and experienced teachers as negative emotions and tensions can lead to destructive effects such as teacher dropouts in teacher training or even quitting their jobs (Pillen et al., 2013). We also suggest that teacher professional identity construction should be studied in relation to tensions and emotions experienced in professional learning communities through interviews and journals in a longitudinal design so that we can gain better insights into teacher professional development.

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