

Teacher identity and implications for educational improvement

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Abstract

This paper arises out of an exploration of teachers' professional identity as an important factor in education reform and school improvement. It builds on previous work such as the 'Future of the Teaching Profession' survey commissioned by Education International using research tools designed in that project to explore how teachers construct their professional identities in the context of their particular institutional circumstances – their schools. The focus on identity here seeks to move the analysis beyond the limitations of concepts such as the behaviourist 'staff training' and the more sophisticated 'continuing professional development'. The hypothesis explored here is that educational change and improvement requires that we pay attention to the more fundamental question of how teachers see themselves as professionals. The paper also analyses the organisational conditions which support and sustain the growth of particular forms of professionalism.

I write from my perspective as a school leader in an English secondary school where I hold the post of Assistant Headteacher responsible for Continuous Professional Development (CPD). I am undertaking doctoral research to support me in understanding which forms of CPD can best support school improvement. I am also on the management group of the HertsCam network (www.hertscam.co.uk), an organisation which supports teachers in leading projects in their schools and developing their sense of teacher leadership. In this paper I explore the concept of professional identity and make the case for the centrality of its role in my school's improvement. I then explore how, as a school leader, I can influence dimensions such as leadership and culture in my school so as to enhance teachers' professional identities. I have already begun a three-year project to support the growth of teachers' professional identities. I am currently at the end of my first year of the project and am evaluating the exploratory steps I have taken so far.

Conceptualising teacher professional identity

Identity is broadly defined as 'the sense that someone has of who they are, and of what is most important about them' (Haralambos & Holborn, 2000: 885). Alongside this, we possess a social identity which is 'negotiable and is created in the process of human interaction' (Haralambos & Holborn, 2000: 921). These concepts are important for me for two reasons; the first being that our identities affect our behaviour and practice. Stryker & Burke (2000: 285) succinctly distill Mead's (1934) much-quoted work on identity to the formula 'society shapes self shapes social behaviour'. Potentially then, should the influence of 'society' be sufficiently positive and conducive to teacher development, this could in turn influence the behaviour and practice of teachers, thus enhancing learning and school improvement. This leads on to the second reason why identity has particular relevance for me as a school leader; if identity can be shaped by society, could my shaping of our school 'society' potentially shape the identities of teachers within it? This of course requires understanding of what comprises 'society' – does it extend to the whole of society, the whole of the teaching profession, our school or a narrower group still? Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989) offers guidance as it identifies that although one's work organisation is an influence on one's social identity, 'social identity may be derived not only from the organization, but also from his or her work group, department, union, lunch group, age cohort, fast-track group, and so on' (Ashforth & Mael, 1989: 22). The notion of a single or blended organisational identification is thus 'problematic' in most complex organisations.

Therefore, a challenge for my role, working in a school with a multitude of different faculties and teams, is attempting to ensure as much coherence as possible if I want to influence the identities and actions of teachers in a positive way.

Given its potential to support teachers' practice in schools, the specific area of teachers' professional identity has been the subject of much analysis and research. In their comprehensive review of literature on teachers' professional identities, Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop (2004) identified four features emerging from all the studies they examined, found in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Features of teachers' professional identities

- Professional identity is an ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences.
- Professional identity implies both person and context.
- A teacher's professional identity consists of sub- identities that more or less harmonize.
- Agency is an important element of professional identity, meaning that teachers have to be active in the process of professional development.

(Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004: 122)

As a school leader, these features are potentially very helpful. Firstly, the 'ongoing' nature of identity development offers the hope that teachers can change. Secondly, 'context', such as my school environment, has a role to play, and this is a variable that potentially I have some influence over.

The fourth bullet point struck me most powerfully. This was particularly useful as it included agency as an important component of teachers' professional identity. Agency involves being self-directed and having the capacity to make a difference, explored more fully in another paper in this symposium and elsewhere (Bandura, 1982, 1989, 1997; Frost 2013). This suggests that teachers' identities are not just influenced by the workplace they teach in but can be influenced by their level of involvement and interaction with school life, their own professional development and the school's improvement. This echoed my own experiences in schools; a teacher's sense of self could be greatly enhanced when they worked proactively within the school. This also resonated with my experiences with the HertsCam network and the International Teacher Leadership (ITL) project, also discussed in another paper in this

symposium, where the pursuit of an enhanced professional identity for teachers have been key goals of the Teacher Led Development Work programme which aims to support teachers to lead projects for themselves (Creaby, 2012). The importance of agency has implications for the way in which I attempt to affect the school environment – I need to ensure there are mechanisms in which teachers are able to exercise agency. This concept of agency and its importance in a teacher’s professional identity resonated with the literature distinguishing professionalism and professionality which I go on to explore.

Conceptualising teacher professionalism

Understanding fully the scope of what it means to be a professional seemed essential as I was embarking on a project to enhance teachers’ professional identities. Hargreaves & Fullan (2012: 80) make a distinction between ‘being professional’ from being ‘a professional’ helpful. They describe ‘being professional’, a rather behaviourist notion, as what teachers do and how they behave such as maintaining high standards of conduct and performance. Within teaching, I would argue there is increasing emphasis on ‘being professional’. Hoyle (2008: 290) identifies this as resulting from a more general change in the use of the term professional from a noun to an adjective, where it has ‘connotations of ‘efficiency’, ‘competence’, detachment’ and even ‘ruthlessness’’. This interpretation of ‘professional’ certainly plays a role in any organisation (one would hope schools were both efficient and competent) but this is a rather limited conception of the potential agency teachers can exercise.

Being ‘a professional’ is distinguished from ‘being professional’ as it concerns the extent to which teaching is regarded as a profession by teachers themselves and others, with its own distinct knowledge base, rigorous training and autonomy, amongst other characteristics. In addition to the familiar concepts of human and social capital, Hargreaves & Fullan introduce ‘decisional capital’ as the third component of what they term ‘professional capital’. Decisional capital is described below.

Decisional capital here is the capital that professionals acquire and accumulate through structured and unstructured experience, practice and reflections – capital that enables them to make wise judgments in circumstances where there is no fixed rule or piece of incontrovertible evidence to guide them.

(Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012: 93)

The experience, practice and reflection that Hargreaves and Fullan outline as supporting mechanisms for the development of decisional capital, resonated with the practice of ‘extended professionals’ Hoyle first outlined almost 30 years ago.

A restricted professional was construed as a teacher for whom teaching was an intuitive activity, whose perspective was restricted to the classroom, who engaged little with wider professional reading or activities, relied on experience as a guide to success, and greatly valued classroom autonomy. *An extended professional* was construed as a teacher for whom teaching was a rational activity, who sought to improve practice through reading and through engaging in continuous professional development, who was happily collegial, and who located classroom practice within a larger social framework.

(Hoyle, 2008: 291)

Hoyle’s extended professional is one who is highly agential and likely to have a more enhanced professional identity. From a school improvement perspective, such an identity is arguably more likely to see enhanced outcomes for learners as their reading, continuous professional development and overall perspective could contribute to more effective classroom strategies. Not only would learners in the teacher’s classrooms be likely to benefit but, given their collegial relationships, learners in other classrooms may benefit also. Furthermore, the sense of agency is likely to support them to identify and develop broader aspects of school improvement. I believe that supporting teachers to develop such extended professional identities is essential if my school is to continue to improve. Important for me, as a school leader, is realising my role in supporting teachers to develop such enhanced identities.

Dimensions of an enhanced professional identity

To conceptualise, investigate and support the development of an enhanced professional identity which incorporated notions of decisional capital and extended professionalism, I was drawn to the survey tool used by Education International’s (EI) Research Institute which aimed to investigate teachers’ self-efficacy, voice and leadership (Bangs & Frost, 2012). The tool was developed following a summit between the US Education Department, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and Educational International where a consensus emerged about the importance of harnessing the teaching profession in a more systemic way to bring about reform (Bangs, 2011; OECD, 2011). This tool aimed to

assess the ability of teachers to ‘shape’ professional practice in their own schools (Bangs & Frost, 2012: 7) and in part took the form of a quantitative survey which asked respondents to comment on twelve aspects of professional identity on a two part scale: firstly, what is the case in their schools and secondly, what should be the case. This offered an insight into the reality of what takes place in schools compared to teachers’ values. This was then followed up by open ended, qualitative questions in a workshop setting, acting as a tool for discussion as well as data collection. The 12 themes are in Figure 2 below and centre upon teachers’ voice and autonomy in their role.

Figure 2: Twelve themes of teacher identity

1. Teachers’ leadership of innovation and development
2. Teachers’ influence in policy and practice
3. Choice and judgment in matters of pedagogy
4. Leadership of continuing professional development
5. Teachers’ roles in curriculum development
6. Responsibility for relationships and communication with parents
7. School evaluation / inspection
8. Teachers’ role in assessment of pupils’ learning
9. Teacher performance assessment/appraisal
10. The creation of professional knowledge
11. Teachers’ voice and influence
12. Strategies and policies that would enhance self-confidence and self-efficacy

(Bangs & Frost 2012)

This survey is helpful as its focus is on the teacher’s role in different dimensions of school organisation and leadership, identifying the potential for teachers to be agents of change in their schools. Having read the results of this survey (Bangs & Frost, 2012), its use in Joshevska’s (2012) exploration of teachers’ professional identity internationally, and having piloted this with small groups of teachers myself, I intend to administer this with teachers in my own school to gain an insight into the identity they possess themselves and understand whether the reality of school organisation and culture supports an enhanced identity.

How enhanced teacher identity can lead to school improvement

There are likely to be significant gains for student learning if teachers possess an enhanced and 'extended' professional identity. Teachers' images of themselves 'strongly determine the way teachers teach, the way they develop as teachers, and their attitude toward educational changes' (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004: 108). Furthermore, it has been found that one's professional identity strongly influences both judgement and behaviour (Nias, 1989; Tickle, 1999). Given the earlier analysis in this paper, such conclusions seem logical given that if teachers read, reflect, engage more proactively in school life and possess the capacity to lead change themselves, they are more likely to adopt more effective classroom practices, reflect on their impact on learning and share these more widely. John Hattie's now famous analysis of over 800 studies into 'what works' in schools identified interventions and strategies that had the highest effect sizes on learning. His overall conclusion is particularly pertinent to this analysis.

The remarkable feature of this evidence is that the greatest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching, and when students become their own teachers.

(Hattie, 2012: 18)

Supporting teachers to develop an extended professional identity will support them to become more effective 'learners of their own teaching', supporting students' learning more effectively and contributing to school improvement. Support for teachers to regularly reflect on their own practice has other, equally famous proponents (Stenhouse, 1975; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Ensuring systems exist in my school to ensure this is therefore essential.

My own research experience has developed my understanding of teachers' professional identities and the possibilities for my project. My Masters of Education (MEd) thesis (Creaby, 2011) documented a project I undertook to develop a teacher leadership programme within a secondary school. A key theme concerned the identities of a cohort of secondary school teachers who had all led projects involving developing their classroom expertise and leading change within their school. The teachers concerned were engaged in Teacher Led Development Work, a programme developed by the HertsCam network, a partnership originally formed between the University of Cambridge and the Hertfordshire local education authority, instituted to support the development of classroom practice and leadership amongst Hertfordshire teachers. The first cohort of teachers to experience this programme in my

school at the time had led projects successfully, demonstrating their own leadership skills, yet did not consider themselves to be leaders, a term they usually reserved for those in recognised positions of authority in the school. Through my role as the group's tutor, my MEd project design sought to develop the identities of a new cohort of teachers engaging in the TLDW programme as 'leaders' since perceptions of the scope of one's professional role had the ability to affect teachers' confidence and their ability to lead (Frost & Harris, 2003; Gronn, 1999).

Through being more strategic in my choice of language when engaging in dialogue with teachers and through more careful framing of activities to reinforce notions of leadership, in my role as the group's tutor, I provided more effective support for teachers to reflect upon and develop their own identities as leaders of change. Interviews with the new cohort of teachers 'reflected a reconceptualisation of their roles, moving beyond developing practice in their own classrooms to developing practice in conjunction with others' (Creaby, 2012: 33). Furthermore, the teachers were empowered by the experience and expressed greater confidence in their ability to lead change and considered themselves leaders. This led to significant improvements in a variety of areas of our school practice, from homework to literacy strategies, supporting learners in many more classrooms than would have been possible otherwise.

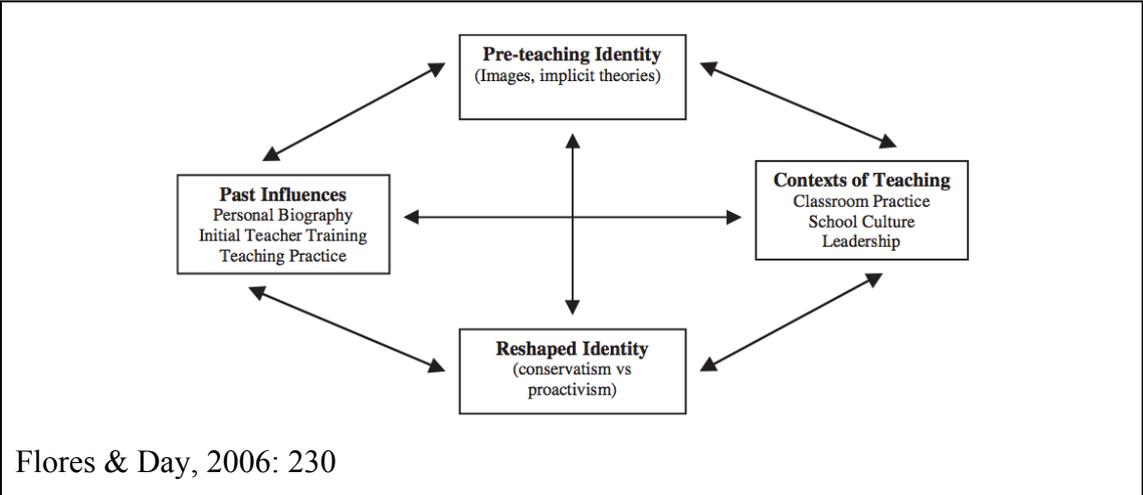
Looking back on that work now, from the perspective of a school leader seeking to improve educational outcomes, it reminded me of the powerful role that teachers' professional identities play in supporting enhanced classroom practice and its role in realising and releasing capacity to change and enhance learning across the school. I am now in a position to influence the CPD systems within the school which I intend to design to support the building of teachers' identities.

The role of school leaders

I found it useful to explore further the specific factors that play a role in developing teachers' professional identities. This was important for me in order to design appropriate interventions that could have a positive impact. From their longitudinal study of the development of professional identity of new teachers, Flores & Day (2006) developed a model of the influences on identity formation, below in Figure 3. The 'reshaped identity' of a teacher is

influenced by ‘past influences’, before their career in teaching and during training, ‘Pre-teaching Identity’ and the ‘Contexts of Teaching’. The contexts of teaching are particularly relevant to me as this is an area I can potentially have influence over, unlike teachers’ pre-teaching or past influences. The contexts of teaching comprise of the teacher’s experience of classroom practice, the school culture, and the school’s leadership, all, to a certain extent, within the scope of influence in my school. A teacher’s ‘re-shaped identity’ is affected by the interplay between the different influences and the impact of each varies depending on the teacher concerned. For example, Flores and Day identified some teachers’ identities were negatively influenced by the school culture and leadership (factors in ‘Contexts of Teaching’) when it was poor, whereas despite similar contexts, those teachers with strongly positive intrinsic ‘Past Influences’ maintained a more positive identity. Ultimately, both contextual and personal influences played ‘significant’ (Flores & Day, 2006: 230) roles in explaining differences in teachers’ identities.

Figure 3: Key mediating influences on the formation of teacher identity



Such a model is also applicable to more experienced teachers (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000). For both new and experienced teachers then, the school context within which they worked had a bearing on the formation and development of their professional identity which provided scope for me to act strategically to harness its influence. The three areas of classroom practice, school culture, and school leadership were areas in which I would make deliberate attempts to change in a way that would provide opportunities for characteristics of professional identity such as those advocated by Bangs and Frost (2012) to be realised. My thinking about how these opportunities could be best designed was influenced by Schifter’s (1996) collection of teacher narratives about their role as maths teachers.

These teachers enact multiple identities: as mathematical thinkers, as managers of classroom practices, as monitors of their students' learning, and as members of the wider education community. 'Identities' in this sense – more a matter of what one does than who one thinks one is – are constructed in and realised through practice.

(Schifter, 1996: 2)

The potential influence of 'what one does' on a teacher's identity caused me to formulate a criteria when planning strategic interventions: would this intervention actually lead to a meaningful change in teachers' actions? For example, if collaboration supports the growth of professional identity, then teachers need to be engaging in meaningful collaboration as part of their practice. Likewise, if they are to be autonomous, autonomous decision making must form part of their practice. I now go on to outline the ways in which I have already and intend to further shape these dimensions of the school context to enhance teachers' professional identities.

Harnessing and developing my leadership of CPD opportunities

My role in school is a school leader primarily in charge of teachers' CPD. This involves writing policies and yearly plans outlining opportunities for teachers and engaging in a process of review throughout the year to evaluate the impact of various strategies on teacher learning and student outcomes. This role therefore provides me with an opportunity to influence the nature of professional development experiences teachers in my school experience, with a view to enhancing those opportunities so that they serve to enhance professional identity.

A significant component of teachers CPD experiences in the UK is 5 days of statutory in service training (INSET) that the school must provide for its teachers. It is typically designed to support the implementation of the school's annual plan. When I arrived at my school in September 2012, this was made up as follows: one day at the start of the academic year in September, a two-day mid year residential staff 'conference' and two days of INSET disaggregated to 6 after-school or 'twilight' sessions. Three fifths of the statutory INSET time was delivered in a traditional 'staff training' format where teachers are taught about an effective classroom practice by one of their peers. Schifter's (1996) idea that what teachers 'do' can be influential in developing their identity struck a chord with me as I reflected on the school's existing CPD provision. Opportunities for collaboration, research, autonomy and

decision making were rare within these INSET opportunities so if Schifter's (1996) reflections are true, it is understandable that teachers' in my school may have a limited view of their professionalism as what they do is largely decided by someone else, and the practice of CPD leaves little room for critical reflection. Despite the rather passive nature of the mode of this INSET, and therefore potentially providing an opportunity for re-development, school priorities were such that they should remain largely in their current format.

However, what was within my sphere of control was the remaining two thirds of INSET time, the twilight model outlined in the table above. Its mode contrasted to a training model as there are three sessions on the same theme and between each one there is an expectation that teachers trial the new strategy. When returning to the next session, there is time allocated for teachers to reflect on their experiences, to share ideas about how they have used the strategy or approach and an opportunity to create and develop new resources. In this model, time is allocated to reflection and development. This contrasts to the 'training' model where any reflection or development of resources are done out of the allocated INSET time. On the surface, this model already had the potential to enhance teachers' professional identities as it offered opportunities for reflective practice. However, having experienced and reviewed this model over the past year, the quality of reflection varied, often as a result of teachers not necessarily trialling new strategies in their lessons. This could be a result of their lack of credibility, a lack of accountability, a lack of ownership from the teachers, or some other barrier.

These sessions have been re-designed for the new academic year to ensure they are more effective at both impacting on classroom practice and enhancing professional identity. The new format, including opportunities for example for action research, observation of peers, opportunities to draw upon feedback from students, has been developed by reflecting on the facets of extended professionalism (Hoyle, 2008) and ensuring that they all provide opportunities for teachers to more rigorously reflect upon their classroom practice (Flores & Day, 2006). In the model in Figure 3 above, a teacher's experience of the classroom on a day to day basis has a role in influencing their identity as a teacher. Therefore, the design of CPD opportunities to explicitly support classroom practice, and reflection with others is central to supporting teachers' identity development. Further still, providing opportunities for teachers to reflect and learn about their own teaching (Stenhouse, 1975; Robinson, 2007; Hattie, 2012; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) are argued as a vital mechanism for improving student learning.

These new CPD opportunities were developed in conjunction with teachers at my school. Central to an enhanced professional identity is the role of autonomy and decision making and therefore, it was important for me as a school leader to ensure teachers had the opportunity to influence the form of CPD opportunities available in our school. I met with a group of teachers to review the existing CPD provision and to develop some proposals for new forms. An unintended but rather helpful consequence of this discussion was the emergence of a set of principles that the group felt should be borne in mind when designing a CPD framework for our school. These are in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Principles for designing CPD decided upon by teachers in my school

1. Opportunities for teachers to choose their CPD opportunities.
2. Opportunities for feedback on one's own teaching practice.
3. Opportunities to visit and learn from other classrooms.
4. Sharing and collaboration.
5. The learning from CPD should influence the direction of teaching and learning in the school.

Deciding upon such principles was not an intended outcome of this meeting but it was perhaps the most informative part. The form of CPD that was sought was very different to the 'staff training' model. Principles 1 and 5 reflect a desire for teachers to have a voice in their own development and in that of the school's direction. This resonated with Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) 'decisional capital', which they argue is a key component of professionalism. Principles 2 and 3 reflect that as part of the CPD experience, teachers engage in watching others teach and have their own lessons observed. This would support their learning of their own teaching (Hattie, 2012). This interested me because as part of the teacher performance management process in our school, teachers are observed teaching twice a year and given a judgement on the grade of their lesson. However, the teachers in my discussion wanted less judgemental but more regular formative feedback on their teaching as part of the CPD provision to enhance their understanding and learning about their practice. Principle 4 reflected their desire to share practice with other staff and to collaborate within CPD time, rather than outside of it.

This feedback clarified the nature of CPD opportunities that teachers desired. Firstly, that the mode of CPD should provide opportunities for teachers to develop their classroom practice and receive feedback. This should not just be a lone process teachers engage in outside of

allocated time for CPD. Secondly, that the teacher learning taking place throughout CPD opportunities about effective classroom practice should be documented and feed into future school policy. Thirdly, the values expressed by this group of teachers reflected their desire for agency and decision making, which confirmed to be that the 'Future of the Teaching Profession' survey tool would be a useful one to use to investigate the values of a wider range of staff during my research project.

In addition to statutory INSET CPD provision, I was keen to supplement this with other opportunities. For example, I negotiated and sourced school funding for teachers to attend high profile education festivals and lectures from prominent academics and policy makers, opportunities that proved popular. In addition, I supplemented the in-school CPD programme the HertsCam Teacher Led Development Work programme. Teacher Led Development Work is a programme developed within the HertsCam network, a partnership originally formed between the University of Cambridge and the Hertfordshire local authority, instituted to support the development of classroom practice and leadership amongst Hertfordshire teachers. Three teachers volunteered for this programme and each developed projects which not only enhanced their own classroom practice but those of their colleagues. One of the participants wrote a particularly powerful reflection about her experience.

On a personal level, the overall TLDW experience has been empowering and I am confident that in the coming year the students will start to reap the benefits of the initiatives that have been agreed. ... At the HertsCam conference, [it was] said [that] "small fish can cause big ripples". I am proud to have started those ripples in the [school] pond and I look forward to spreading them further through with work with the Teaching School Alliance.

TLDW Participant 2012-13

This provided me with an indication that there could be an appetite from the teachers at my school for opportunities that supported an extended mode of professionalism, which gave me the confidence to continue to make available such opportunities. I now go on to outline some strategies I have undertaken in order to influence the culture of our school so as to enhance professional identities of teachers.

Harnessing and developing the school culture

Identified by Flores & Day in their model of teacher identity formation in Figure 3 above, culture has also been identified as a key factor influences teachers' ability to act and lead change within their schools by others (Bruner, 1996; Durrant & Holden 2006). With this in mind, I sought to create opportunities beyond the statutory CPD I was directly responsible for. I introduced a discussion group, aimed at providing an opportunity for critical reflection; to date this reflection has centred upon classroom practice, current high profile educational issues and the thinking of external speakers to the group. Despite at times low levels of attendance, the evaluation from attendees has been positive and I would like to further enhance and develop this forum with teachers going forward.

Keen to begin a more explicit approach to knowledge management (Hargreaves, 1999) and explore to the 5th principle of teachers' CPD values in Figure 4 above, 'the learning from CPD should influence the direction of teaching and learning in the school', I edited a school journal written by teachers and members of staff at my school about projects they had led throughout the year and reflecting on their impact for our learners. This not only provided contributing teachers with an explicit opportunity for reflection but served to bring together the learning of some 23 members of staff throughout the academic year. Mindful of the potential of teacher learning to enhance learning outcomes, and Viviane Robinson's (2007) explicit reference to the need for leaders not only to promote learning opportunities but for themselves to participate in such learning opportunities, I was keen to ensure that of the 23 contributors, leaders and teachers wrote articles about their learning in the same publication. The distribution of this journal to other teachers and sharing of its content interactively at a staff meeting provided an opportunity for celebration of the learning our staff had undertaken and an opportunity for me and the other school leaders in my team to reflect on how to harness the learning that had taken place. Going forward, maintaining this discussion group and journal would support the school culture in fostering agency, engagement in the wider context of teaching and more opportunities for teacher learning.

Going forward

My next stage of research will centre upon the collection of data from teachers in my school, in the form of a survey outlined above, interviews with a sample of staff and documentary

evidence. I will be operating largely as an action researcher, influenced by both participatory research and teacher-led development work, to further enhance CPD opportunities available in my school, after each data collection opportunity. In doing so, the involvement of teachers in the development of my project will be vital. If I act as the only decision maker in designing my school's CPD opportunities, despite good intentions, I could be missing an opportunity to develop more effective opportunities. More crucially, in leading too much in isolation from teachers, I could miss an opportunity to facilitate the development of their identity as they would potentially have little say in the mode and focus of CPD activities. The following comment has been particularly influential in my thinking.

Any narrowing of 'participation' to the implementation of what others have identified as good practice runs the risk of impoverishing dialogue, and turning the vital community of teachers into a blunt tool of policy.

(Coldron & Smith, 1999: 721)

From my meeting with a group of teachers to reflect on CPD opportunities, I found teachers' comments really helpful and they had expressed a desire for agency and decision making. If were possible to continue to incorporate teachers into the decision making processes I would undertake, then opportunities for dialogue could be maximised, not impoverished. In order to maximise the opportunities for teachers to exercise their autonomy as their CPD opportunities, I will continue to provide opportunities for teachers to design as well as participate in CPD activities which will hopefully shape their identities in a positive way. I am seeking to make them as 'active' in the construction of their professional identity (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Coldron & Smith, 1999) as I can.

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