



## THE ROLE OF COLLEGIALITY IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

The paper deals with the phenomenon of collegiality in the relationships between future teachers and their educators and its role in the processes of constructing professional identity. Using the method of discursive psychology, this paper investigates the perceptions of 22 students of Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Kralove in the Czech Republic who, along with the standard model of teaching practice, also underwent a year-long model of practice aimed at intensive support of their professional learning. The utterances of the prospective teachers confirm that the new experiences in relationships with educators gave rise to constructions of professional learning and self that are clearly preferred by prospective teachers over existing ones and used to construct teacher identity. The prospective teachers strived for an image of themselves as constantly developing, respected and supported actors in their own professional development. Drawing on these new discursive resources, they also successfully confronted the ever-present deficit constructions of the teacher that do not provide them with enough space to negotiate their professional identity.

*Keywords:* Discursive psychology, subject position, interpretative repertoire, future teachers, professional identity

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## 1. Introduction

A shortage of qualified teachers is currently one of the most serious problems facing the Czech educational system. Despite there being a sufficient number of students in preparation, only some of them start to teach after graduation, while others leave teaching not long after starting. Moreover, the teaching profession is the first choice of career for only 50% of teachers with less than five years of practical experience (CSI, 2018a). Although, the current salary conditions in the education sector are primarily responsible for this negative trend, a whole range of other influences working on various levels have been described as contributing to this problem such as pressure to perform; non-conceptual and insufficiently substantiated changes; unavailability of teacher support throughout his / her career; absence of career growth prospects, unsystematic in-service teacher training programs etc. (CSI, 2018b).

The area of teacher professional preparation is also not devoid of problems. The underfunding of the massified higher education sector in the Czech Republic resulted in a substantial reduction in the practical component of experience, with the argument that the teacher would gain experience and practice primarily after starting the profession. However, as it turns out, the preparedness of recent graduates assessed by their employers, as well as their own confidence regarding professional competences, is insufficient (Janík et al., 2017; Vítečková, 2018). In an effort to contribute to the improvement of this situation, the urgent question is how to more effectively support the development of future teachers' professional competencies. Collegiality turns out to be one of the important aspects of teacher support (e.g., Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Kelly & Cherkowski, 2015), not only for professional or instrumental help, but also for emotional support (Löfgren & Karlsson, 2016). This paper examines its role for the professional identification processes of future teachers.

### 1.1. Theoretical research frame

#### 1.1.1. Identity and the process of professional identification

Modern and primarily post-modern theory emphasises the view of identity as a process within the centre of which is a teacher's active self in continuous interaction with a specific socio-cultural context (Beijaard et al., 2004). The development of a teacher's identity therefore is not a question of accumulating new knowledge, values and beliefs, but a highly complex social-construct process whose result is uncertain. The expansion of the existing understanding of oneself as a teacher, which is defined by a new level of complexity, arrangement and cohesion, is the result of demanding cognitive and emotional work on one's identity (Day, 2018). Working on one's identity is typically aroused by so-called critical events (Schutz et al., 2018) during which an individual's specific dispositions and expectations are in conflict with institutional expectations and new experiences. The need to regain an equilibrium between the self and others (Kegan, 1994) or between the individual "I" positions within the self (Hermans et al., 1992) motivates one to a reaction which, however, can vary from active identity negotiation, through rejection or passive acceptance to defensive reactions (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018).

#### 1.1.2. Collegiality

In their systematic review using the method of qualitative synthesis, Van Lankveld et al. (2017) came up with three main contextual influences that support the identity development of university teachers:

(1) a direct working environment perceived as collegial, supportive and collaborative; (2) most contact with students; and (3) staff development activities. In their review, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) name similar contextual influences with an impact on the identity of primary- and secondary-school teachers. Apart from the culture of a chosen discipline, the school environment and the nature of the pupil population, the influence of colleagues and of the school management are also mentioned. These results are in accordance with a statement by Gee (2000) that to develop their identity, people need recognition from others. According to the author, people start thinking about themselves “in a certain way” only when this type of consideration is confirmed by others. He noted that in postmodern society, institutions are no longer strong enough to support for individuals in this regard, and the influence of affirmation through shared discursive practices, representational and semiotic processes in affinity groups is growing. We become who we are due to our experience from the social groups we are members of. Affinity groups provide access to certain experiences to ensure that they will experience themselves and others in a certain way (Gee, 2000).

Van Lankveld et al. (2017) further found that apart from feelings of being valued and understood, professional identity was closely related to several other psychological processes: a sense of connectedness, a sense of competence, a sense of commitment and imagining a future career trajectory.

### *1.1.3. Positional Identity and the process of identification*

Professional identification is therefore not only about the characteristics of the environment, but also about experiencing the interaction with this environment and interpreting it in a certain way. Post-modern approaches conceptualise a teacher’s identity as a dynamic process and enable to capture the struggle with doubts, dilemmas and uncertainties teacher often experience. They are based on the assumption that people, as participants in various communities, do not have a single central self; their self is decentralised into a number of contexts and can therefore be viewed as a composite of various “I” positions or as a dialogue between them (Hermans et al., 1992). At the same time, the self is not a purely intrapsychic process, but more of a relational phenomenon that includes one’s social environment. Other people are an important influence on an individual’s self, as they motivate him/her or discourage him/her from acting in a certain way and are part of his/her speech (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). This way of conceptualisation enables to observe the processes of how “the voices of others” become an ever more structural part of our thinking and how an individual often starts to appropriate them when he/she speaks using the words of significant groups (Bakhtin, 1981).

The way the self relates to a broader context can be described by the degree of its agency, a way of asserting one’s own ideas, achieving goals or transforming a given context (Day et al., 2007). The agency of prospective and beginning teachers is generally threatened and weakened by new, often unexpected demands and experiences that lead them to doubt themselves and feel anxiety or fear (Alsup, 2018; Lasky, 2005), and their self may be too vulnerable to start working on remedying their teacher’s identity. Therefore, their need for support along their path toward the profession is being emphasised (Hong et al., 2017; Manning, 2017; Melville & Bartley, 2013; Nichols et al., 2017; Richardson, 2019).

Similarly to the self, its agency is also viewed by a situated perspective as a relational variable within the framework of a given context. Holland et al. (1998) emphasise the close relationship between identity-agency and the experiencing of “everyday relations of power, respect and demands and social affiliation and distance” (p. 61). Within the framework of each such experience, it is important from what subject

("I") positions it is experienced. Subject positions as sub-components of the self are constructed in specific discourses within the framework of which they can provide the most meaning (Hall, 1997, p. 56). Only specific environments or discourses can provide prospective teachers with access to certain subject positions to which the actors subsequently respond in various ways: acceptance and personification, refusal, conflict or improvisation (negotiation). According to Holland et al. (1998), these ways of reacting can become the foundation of their positional identity, a recognisable heading towards a certain subject position that is part of a teacher's identity. A teacher's identity can therefore be viewed as the result of his/her self's answers to the profession's diverse demands, which include experiencing the everyday relations of power, respect, demands and proximity.

## 2. Problem Statement

From the position of educators of prospective teachers, we consider it meaningful to ask within the context of these findings how various aspects of specific educational contexts contribute to the construction of specific subject positions and positional identities and to what extent these constructs benefit the processes of working on a teacher's professional identity. In this study, we will focus primarily on the role of subject positions construed in relationships between prospective teachers and their educators within the context of pedagogical practical experience in the processes of creating a teacher's identity.

## 3. Research Questions

The main research questions this article is looking for an answer to is: *How do the subject positions of prospective teachers formed in the discourse of student pedagogical practical experience contribute to how a teacher's identity is constructed?*

We divided the analytical process into two steps, which are encompassed in the following research sub-questions:

- i. *What subject positions are constructed by prospective teachers in two different models of pedagogical practical experience?*
- ii. *Which of the available subject positions are used to construct a teacher's identity?*

In agreement with social identity theory (Holland et al., 1998) and the theory of interpretative repertoires (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), we viewed *subject positions* as self-images made accessible by certain versions of reality. Therefore, in our analysis, together with subject positions, we also focused on versions of professional learning as versions of interactive reality in which subject positions are construed and made accessible.

For our analysis, we followed the procedures recommended by Wiggins and Potter (2007). During coding, we proceeded iteratively, returned to the transcripts and recordings repeatedly, and verified data across the corpus. We also applied the *principle of variability* (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) and looked for various constructs of professional learning and subject positions not only across all data, but also within the framework of individual interviews. Furthermore, using the method of *constant mutual comparison*, we made the identified constructs more exact. After identifying the available versions of subject positions, we focused on the type of action the found discursive constructs lead to the individual discursive constructs serve in the responses of prospective teachers and on their orientation on action. Last but not least, the

subject of the analysis was the functionality of discursive constructs for understanding oneself as a teacher, that is, for the formation of a teacher's identity.

#### **4. Research Methods**

##### *4.1. Research participants*

The participants in our research were 22 students of the third and fourth year of teaching at upper primary and secondary schools at Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové in the Czech Republic, 18 (82 %) of which were women, 4 (18 %) were men. The average age was 22,8 ranging from 21 to 26 years, all students had a double specialization in teaching, with majors including French, English, Czech, German, art education, physical education, ethics education, history, music education, mathematics, chemistry or biology. All the 22 students participated in both models of pedagogical practical experience during their professional preparation.

Other research participants were two reviewers (the first and the second authors of this article), who were in addition to their position also academics teaching both theoretical and practical disciplines, and one of the organisers and promoters of the alternative pedagogical practical experience focused on supporting prospective teachers.

##### *4.2. Two contexts (models) of pedagogical practical experience*

The standard model of teachers' professional preparation is dominated by pedagogy characterised by its relational hierarchy and the prevalence of dialogue-free interaction between educators and student teachers. However, this model appears to be unsatisfactory in the long term for the majority of student teachers. The primary complaint is dissatisfaction specifically in the organising of pedagogical practical experience, within the framework of which there is a lack of ongoing quality feedback and deeper, more intense contact of student teachers with educators, teacher trainers and experts in subject didactics (Juklová, 2014; Pišová & Hanušová, 2016).

Within the framework of efforts to resolve this unfortunate situation, the Faculty of Pedagogy accepted a call from the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MŠMT) in 2016 to support the pedagogical practical experience of prospective teachers. The leadership of the faculty was asked to collaborate with a specific focus on innovations in education, and after several months of intense talks, a proposed model of pedagogical practical experience for prospective teachers was created (hereinafter project or alternative practice). The project focused on support of future teachers during teaching internships. Its implementation was bound by time constraints lasting only 48 months, specifically from April 2018 to April 2020. The main differences between the two models can be expressed by the length and the method of collaboration between the prospective teachers and their educators. Whereas in the standard model, the student enters the practical experience on his/her own and is in short-term contact with multiple teacher trainers and in occasional contact with an expert in subject didactics, in the alternative model the student, for the duration of one academic year, becomes a member of a fixed collaborating "cell" consisting of a fixed teacher trainer, another prospective teacher with whom he/she can work in tandem, an expert in subject didactics, and last but not least, a mentor.

36 prospective teachers participated in the alternative model of pedagogical practical experience. Participation in the project was voluntary and required weekly attendance for the duration of at least six

hours of pedagogical practical experience and subsequent attendance at reflective seminars organised for this entire group of prospective teachers. A total of 31 students completed the project; nine of whom we did not succeed in contacting for the purpose of data collection. One year after the completion of the alternative practical experience, in total, 22 prospective teachers were interviewed, the majority of whom were still studying at the Faculty of Education (in their fourth or fifth year) or were completing their master's thesis. Some of them had started teaching part-time as they were completing their studies.

#### 4.3. Data source

The source of research data was semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted by two interviewers (the first and the second authors of this article) with 22 student teachers specified above. In accordance with our research questions and with the recommendation of Potter and Wetherell (1987, p. 171), we focused on obtaining statements allowing to identify "discernible routines of arguments, descriptions and evaluations that can be found in the speech of prospective teachers", within the framework of which certain subject positions, related to the rights and obligations of subjects and their position in the system of rights, are made accessible. We sought to do this by asking a few main widely open questions, followed by asking for detailed and specific descriptions and clarifying the meaning of what was said as well as arguments and evaluations. The basis of the semi-structured interview was the following three questions: (1) What was your experience with professional learning in both models of pedagogical practical experience?; (2) Which of your experience was of particular importance to you and why?; and (3) What did you learn from this experience about what kind of teachers you would like to be?

These interview questions were inspired by similar studies (e.g., Alsup, 2018) and were pilot tested by the first author of this study on four student teachers participating in both models of pedagogical practical experiences for their ability to elicit utterances directly related to our research questions. Modifications to the originally proposed interview questions consisted mainly of simplifying them and adding additional questions related to clarifying the meanings and reasoning communicated.

After all of the interviews were carried, their recordings were transcribed verbatim and the names of all of the participants were changed so that they could not be identified.

#### 4.4. Data analysis

The data were analysed through discourse analysis, in particular the approach of discursive psychology (DP) (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) based on discursive constructionism. In general, it focuses on studying "how psychology in everyday interactions is construed, understood and interpreted, be it within the framework of institutional or less formal functioning" (Potter & Hepburn, 2008, p. 275). It is studied via discourse that is understood as "a medium through which actions are realised, a medium through which versions of the world are constructed, given meaning or re-worked as trivial and irrelevant" (Potter & Hepburn, 2008, p. 281).

The theoretical principles of DP are based on three key findings about the nature of discourse (Wiggins & Potter, 2007). Discourse is both constructed and constructive. It consists of a range of various sources with varying degrees of structural organisation. By gathering the words and repertoires embedded in each other in a certain way, it tries to stabilise certain versions of the world, actions or events of mental life. Another characteristic of discourse is its action orientation. The arrangement of symbolic sources and

is organised for action rather than as some abstract principle of an exact description. Last, but not least, the discourse understood as situated a specific sequential environment that is essential for interaction. It stems from and orients itself immediately preceding speech, while at the same time it creates the conditions for what will follow. Institutional situatedness of discourse is expressed by its meaning within institutions and rhetorical situatedness is given by the constructions in speech in a way that responds to the relevant alternatives. To fully understand discourse, it must be investigated in situ, as it is happening, in relation to the situational context (Potter & Hepburn, 2008).

We studied discourse arranged in the form of speech by prospective teachers in interviews with two researchers on the topic of their experience in both models of pedagogical practice and their usability for their future profession. Our objective was to identify clusters of topics, ideas and images used by the participating prospective teachers to construct available versions of professional experiences and of themselves as teachers. In agreement with Wetherell (1998), we used interpretative repertoires as the analytical concept and viewed subject positions as highly random and situated in the context of the surrounding text.

## 5. Findings

### 5.1. Construction of self

Sensitised to the recommendations by Wetherell and Potter (1987), we found four subject positions in the testimonies of prospective teachers participating in both models of pedagogical practical experience that were part of four different constructs of interactive reality of professional learning distinguishable from two main characteristics: (1) the degree of a student's autonomy in learning processes; and (2) the nature of available support. In the following text, we will briefly introduce these constructions, indicate their orientation to action and illustrate them with interview excerpts.

#### 5.1.1. Subject position of respected actor: professional learning as safety

The first of the identified subject positions is part of the constructions of reality we called safety. Students often use the word "safe" to describe situations when they are at a loss or do something wrong during their practical experience. A safe experience stems from the approach educators take towards the student, which in this case is helpful and supportive. In Extract 1 below, the speaker uses the terms "darling" and "sweetie" when describing the reaction of a teacher trainer and an expert in subject didactics when she makes a mistake or doesn't know something. This is a reaction that keeps the student calm ("we sat down together to talk about it in peace and quiet, no big deal"), doesn't attack or question ("without grudges or reproach"), and thanks to which she has an opportunity to adopt an understanding attitude towards her own failure ("it just didn't go well") with hope for a better performance next time ("I'd try again next time"). The educators' approach in Extract 1 is also demonstrated by clichés such as "a maternal approach" and "a grandmotherly approach", which the student uses to refer to a relationship with a parent or a grandparent as a metaphor for a relationship based on kindness, care and interest despite imperfections and mistakes.

Extract 1

**Interviewer 1:** *How was it during the practical experience? What was the most important for you?*

**Petra:** *I really have to say that I could not have chosen a better cell. Iva is really a sweetie, a darling. Whenever I couldn't do something, we sat down together to talk about in peace and quiet, no big deal, without grudges or reproach; it just didn't go well and I'd try again next time. This was a maternal approach. The same applies to Lenka; she was like a grandmother...*

The safety repertoire constructs student uncertainties and failures during practical experience as a legitimate part of the learning process and a starting point for additional work on themselves. In this case, it consists of close collaboration between the prospective teacher and the educators within the framework of "cells", which was the name for the fixed collaborating groups in the alternative model, which consisted of two student teachers, a teacher trainer, an expert in subject didactics, and a mentor. Interactions and relationships between the cell members are constructed as close and long-term, which for instance is obvious from calling the educators by their first name and using informal language. Students work intensively on their first instruction outputs with a teacher trainer and another student with whom they plan instruction, teach in tandem, and subsequently reflect on the instruction together. Furthermore, the feeling of safety is related to the utilisation of some new tools for learning from one's experience. Within the context of the safe experience repertoire, the prospective teacher is constructed as a colleague at the start who, despite their uncertainties, lack of knowledge and mistakes, is respected as a unique being and intensively supported. At the same time, their newly acquired tools and contact with mentors enable them to become ever more autonomous in their work on their own development. The prospective teacher thus has an opportunity to use an active approach where they are a person who has a certain capacity to change themselves and those around them.

#### *5.1.2. Subject position of authentic colleague: professional learning as sharing*

The next identified subject position is part of an interpretative repertoire called **sharing**. Similar, to the safety repertoire, the sharing repertoire construes the prospective teacher's failures as a natural component of professional development and simultaneously uses them as an opportunity for broader collegial collaboration and learning together in a group of similarly advanced colleagues.

#### Extract 2

**Interviewer 1:** *What did you learn in the project, ... as a result of your practical experience?*

**Jitka:** *...I gained a lot by all the Thursday seminars we had together. There..., it helped me a lot that I was able to share all my experiences with other students who were experiencing the same things I was and at the same time were probably experiencing other situations as well that I wasn't..., and by talking about them.... when such a situation happened to me next.... I knew how to cope with it... At first, I perhaps thought that I was alone in feeling this way, feeling nervous, but then I saw that there were many others without experience.... feeling the same way, being uncertain as to how to behave in the class or within their teaching qualification subject, so I slowly began to gain confidence...*

Within the context of this version of reality, prospective teachers have the opportunity to construe themselves as collaborating and mutually supportive colleagues who can simultaneously authentically express their needs, share their failures, ask for and expect help, and be of help to others.



### 5.1.3. Subject position of examined student: professional learning as a threat

The interpretative repertoire called **threat** represents a version of professional learning which demands preparedness and perfection from the prospective teacher. Uncertainty and failure are construed here as proof of insufficiency or a consequence of moral failure (unpreparedness) of the student and are usually the starting point for critical feedback in the form of condemnation or questioning. This version of interactive reality provides the prospective teacher with access to the vulnerable “examined student” subject position. Such a student should follow the external instructions of educators and demonstrate his/her preparedness and adequacy. Extract 3 below represents very common constructs of the examined student subject position within the framework of the threat repertoire.

Extract 3

**Interviewer 1:** *What was your experience in the standard model of practical experience?*

**Petra:** *... when I had my practical experience now, the teacher and I didn't have any rapport. Absolutely none whatsoever. And I even felt bullied by her, as in the lesson that I was teaching, she sat at the back and attacked me in front of the pupils when I made a mistake, and she had a tendency to correct me; there were moments when she actually said something like – in front of the kids – that I have gaps in my education, so it was absolutely terrible; this is something I wanted to mention that what I did in the project, the self-reflection was absolutely different from the practical experience at a standard school. In the project, I had absolutely no fear, but I went with fear to the standard school. Afterwards, I called my mom, bawling into the phone, and she told me to hang in there, there are only a few more lessons, you can do it.*

The student's attitude towards the teacher trainer is distanced. She no longer calls her teacher trainer by her first name, but talks about “*the teacher*”, i.e. in a way in which one talks about someone one needs to keep one's distance from. The high expectations of individual performances of prospective teachers put them in a vulnerable position in which there is no room for authenticity, as showing one's lack of knowledge will lead to questioning of the prospective teacher. This leads towards behaviour oriented towards masking one's uncertainties and lack of knowledge and towards avoiding situations in which they could be unmasked. Professional learning becomes an issue of survival. Within the context of this repertoire, the main tools for learning from experience are instruction and subsequent evaluation by the educator, usually a teacher trainer or an expert in subject didactics. In this version of professional learning, a student's subjectivity is usually forbidden.

### 5.1.4. Subject position of unwanted student: professional learning as side-lining

The last identified subject position is part of the interpretative repertoire called **side-lining**. Within the framework of this repertoire, a student's subjectivity, emotions, thoughts and/or concerns are of no interest to the educators, either due to a lack of time or competences (tools) on the part of the educators or the educators' conviction that a student's subjectivity should not be part of this process.

In Extract 4, Kristýna construes her testimony about the standard practical experience as an experience in which she remains alone, with no one to talk to about it. In her testimony, unexpressed emotions and experiences are related to a lack of interest, time and capacity on the part of the teacher trainers and experts in subject didactics. She contrasts her experience with that in the alternative model.

#### Extract 4

**Interviewer 1:** *Did you experience any differences between the models of practical experience?*

**Kristýna:** *...it seemed to me that the teacher trainers we were assigned to were not interested in us, but in having it over and done with as quickly as possible, completing it somehow and being able to move on to the next trainee. So they weren't much interested in how we felt during the lesson; we just explicitly discussed what we didn't do right and why, but more with regard to the subject matter than with regard to us, which in the project was completely about something else.*

Within the context of this repertoire, authenticity and open communication are presented as an impossible act incompatible with the vulnerable and uncertain position of a prospective teacher. Instead, the prospective teacher puts the blame on himself and expresses his understanding towards the teacher, who “*isn't ready*”.

Similar to the threat repertoire, the side-lining repertoire also construes the world of professional learning as a reality in which a prospective teacher's subjectivity is not respected and has no place. What matters is what the educator, who has all the power and agency in their hands, brings to the experience. The subject position into which the prospective teacher is placed in this version of professional learning is a position of someone whose ideas, emotions, needs and stances are not listened to as much as they need to be; of someone whose potential contribution is “suppressed”; as a result of which he/she will feel frustrated. At the same time, the prospective teacher is in the position of someone who is expected to react in only one possible way – by adapting.

#### 5.2. *Constructions of the self in the process of developing the teacher's identity*

The second part of the analysis looks at which of the available constructions are used to work on the development of the teacher's identity. In relation to emerging images of oneself as a teacher, three discursive sources have repeatedly appeared in the speeches of future teachers - the construction of oneself as a teacher who is; 1) actively developing; 2) who can establish a functional relationship with students; and 3) who can draw support from colleagues. All these resources are the product of experiences from the *subject positions of respected actor and authentic colleague*. These experiences of being *recognized as adequate* weakened the uncertainty and doubts about one's own competence and offered the promise of the opportunity to further increase one's competencies and expand one's resources; as a result of which compliance with the teaching profession became a real possibility (Extract 5).

#### Extract 5

**Interviewer 1:** *What did the fact that you could share experiences bring to your profession?*

**Jitka:** *The project helped me see that absolutely everyone felt the same way, that the majority of prospective teachers feel this way, and that when we can share this experience and we can also share the worries, we can support ourselves. When I taught afterwards – now I'm doing ongoing practical experience – now I'm not as scared, as I know that I have gaps both in Biology and French, I admit that, but I'm not as scared now, as I believe that I have decades to perfect myself..*

This part of our analysis confirmed the assumed relationship between the availability of active subject positions for future teachers and the activation of work on professional identity.

## 6. Discussion

This paper investigates the phenomenon of collegiality in the processes of constructing the professional identity of prospective teachers. We verified the assumed relationship between the availability of active subject positions and engagement vis-à-vis negotiating a teacher's identity using a sample of 22 prospective teachers with experience from both models of pedagogical practical experience. Our analysis was led by main research question of *how do subject positions formed in relationships between prospective teachers and their educators in the discourse of student pedagogical practical experience contribute to the ways in which prospective teachers construct their teachers' identity?*

Four different subject positions were identified among prospective teachers: *respected actor*, *authentic colleague*, *examined student*, and *unwanted student* distinguishable in terms of the degree of autonomy and availability of support. The experiences of these teachers in different positions are related to different actions. Highly autonomous and supported constructions "respected actor" and "authentic colleague" were bound to the active actions of future teachers (using support and setting individual goals aimed at self-improvement), while subject positions *examined* and *unwanted student*, characterized by low autonomy and lack of support, led to passive actions of adjusting, keeping a distance and setting individual goals aimed at coping.

The second part of our analysis confirms the assumed relationship between the availability of active subject positions for future teachers and the activation of work on professional identity. How can this result be understood more deeply?

Identifying the space for one's own subjectivity as an important aspect of positioning with an impact on the student's motivation and actions is fully consistent with theories of self-regulated learning (Boekaerts & Niemivirta, 2010; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011), which postulate the need for opportunities to create their own conditions to activate the process of achieving one's own goals. It is also consistent with general developmental models of autonomy emphasizing the importance of exploring roles and focusing on one's own subjectivity in the context of the transition to adulthood (Arnett, 2000).

The transition from the role of student to the role of teacher requires not only space for independent self-exploration, but also for support. The constructions we identified represented the availability of tools and their sharing in the context of collegial relations. The nature of the available support in our identified constructions is linked to implicit cognitive structures, the concept of the role of educators and the concept of student failure. These concepts seem to function as filters through which situations are interpreted, appraised and then, goals are set and actions are managed. Other authors also found the importance of similar concepts in the functioning of educators and future teachers. Chen et al. (2018), for example, documented the relationship between the concept of a "good teacher" and Nichols et al. (2017) discovered the negative influence of rigid internal and external attributes for the processes of identifying with the profession.

Our research focused on a relatively small group of prospective teachers at one faculty of pedagogy. These prospective teachers voluntarily agreed to the offer of undergoing the standard model as well as the more time-demanding alternative model of practical experience. Due to this constraint, the constructs of the self and reality that emerged cannot be said to be an exhaustive and closed set of all of the possible

constructs of prospective teachers. However, it was not the objective of this paper to offer a representative picture but simply a vignette of a commonly accepted phenomenon.

## 7. Conclusion

The results of the discursive analysis of the identified interpretive repertoires confirm that the subject positions by which future teachers are seen as respected and supported actors of their development were more beneficial for working on teacher identity at this stage of development than positions constructing future teachers as deficit and passive. The availability of experience of autonomy and support from active subject positions during pedagogical practices has proved useful for overcoming initial uncertainties, actively drawing on diverse support and for rejecting the still present deficit constructions of teachers. Several variables contributing to their activation were named - the concept of educators and future teachers as colleagues; the concept of future teachers' failures as a legitimate part of the learning process; the availability of space for their own opinion and its sharing; and a lot of diverse support. These variables were also linked to institutional conditions of pedagogical practices, such as setting up long-term cooperation in permanent teams of educators or involving mentors in teams and developing collegiality at all possible levels.

## Data Availability Statement

Data is available upon request.

## Declaration of Conflicts Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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