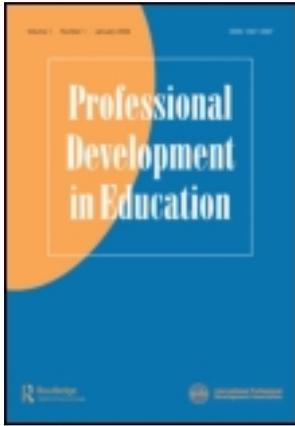


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## Professional Development in Education

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjie20>

### Teacher educators: their identities, sub-identities and implications for professional development

Anja Swennen<sup>a</sup>, Ken Jones<sup>b</sup> & Monique Volman<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands

<sup>b</sup> Swansea Metropolitan University, UK

Available online: 15 Feb 2010

To cite this article: Anja Swennen, Ken Jones & Monique Volman (2010): Teacher educators: their identities, sub-identities and implications for professional development, *Professional Development in Education*, 36:1-2, 131-148

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19415250903457893>

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# Teacher educators: their identities, sub-identities and implications for professional development

Anja Swennen<sup>a\*</sup>, Ken Jones<sup>b</sup> and Monique Volman<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands; <sup>b</sup>Swansea Metropolitan University, UK

In this article we address the question: ‘What sub-identities of teacher educators emerge from the research literature about teacher educators and what are the implications of the sub-identities for the professional development of teacher educators?’ Like other professional identities, the identity of teacher educators is a construction of various aspects or facets, which we prefer to call sub-identities. We are interested to learn what sub-identities might constitute the main identity of what we generically refer to as ‘teacher educators’ and, to achieve this, we set out to analyse the research literature relating to teacher educators to search for ways in which such sub-identities might be explicitly or implicitly described. Based on the research literature we found four sub-identities that are available for teacher educators: schoolteacher, teacher in Higher Education, teacher of teachers (or second order teacher) and researcher. We also found a view on teacher educators as teachers in a more generic way. There seems to be a broad understanding that teacher educators have to transform their identity as teachers to become ‘teachers of teachers in Higher Education’ and (increasingly) to become researchers of teaching and teacher education. The development of these sub-identities depends on the context of teacher education in various national and institutional contexts and the development of teacher educators over time.

## Introduction

In her book *Powerful Teacher Education*, Linda Darling-Hammond vividly describes the ‘impossible task’ of teachers and argues that teacher education seems even more impossible than teaching itself: ‘... especially given the challenge of preparing a wide range of individuals who become teachers who can in turn enable an enormously diverse group of students to meet much higher standards than have ever before been expected of education systems’ (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 8). Increasingly the role of teacher education is recognised as an important instrument for the education

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\*Corresponding author. VU University, CETAR, De Boelelaan 1105, Amsterdam, 1081 HV, The Netherlands. Email: a.swennen@ond.vu.nl

of future teachers, and with this recognition there is now an emerging, but still limited, body of knowledge about teacher educators. Yet, the professional development of teacher educators is still an under-researched area and little is known about who the teacher educators are and about the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of their professional development (see, for example, Smith, 2003; Murray & Male, 2005; Loughran, 2006). We agree with Cochran-Smith (2003), who states that the identity of teacher educators has to be defined before the professional development of teacher educators can be seriously considered. However, even taken as a starting point, the identity of teacher educators is a very general notion and many aspects of the role and remit of teacher educators need to be considered before we can begin to understand and define teacher educators as a professional group and to identify their professional development needs.

In this article we address the question ‘Who are the teacher educators?’ by investigating a variety of approaches that have been taken to define a professional identity of teacher educators. The main research question is, ‘What sub-identities of teacher educators emerge from the research literature that are available for teacher educators and what are the implications of these sub-identities for the professional development of teacher educators?’

Like other professional identities, the identity of teacher educators is a construction of various aspects or facets (Klecka *et al.*, 2008), which we prefer to call sub-identities (Beijaard *et al.*, 2004). We are interested to learn what sub-identities might constitute the main identity of what we generically refer to as ‘teacher educators’ and, to achieve this, we set out to analyse the research literature relating to teacher educators to search for ways in which such sub-identities might be explicitly or implicitly described. By studying various interpretations of the ‘identity’ of teacher educators we should understand better how their role may be defined and how their professional development may be best supported. Through the work of Beijaard *et al.* (2004) we can begin to seek an understanding of these perceptions of identity and to enable those involved in teacher education to explore ways to support their own professional development.

In doing this, we view teacher educators as a specialised professional group within education with their own specific identity and their own specific professional development needs. In saying this, we are aware that the concept of teacher education has changed markedly in recent decades. In many countries the emphasis has moved away from the receptive model of ‘trainee’ teachers attending a ‘teacher training course’ in higher education where they attend lectures on the theory of education interspersed with blocks of classroom experience in schools, after which they are assessed by their higher education tutors before qualifying to become teachers. Now, there is increasingly a distinction between the experience of ‘initial teacher training’ and that of continuing professional development, with the latter typified by school-based models of mentoring and coaching, professional learning communities and peer-focused support. Inevitably, therefore, the perception and definition of the term ‘teacher educator’ must extend to those professionals who are practising in schools and who have formal or informal involvement in the professional development of other colleagues.

Like teachers who become teacher educators in higher education, school-based teacher educators have to build an identity as teacher educators. But, unlike teacher educators based in higher education, they do not normally leave their context of primary or secondary education and they have the difficult task of being teacher educators in the first-order setting of primary or secondary schools (Bullough, 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Van Velzen & Volman, 2009). The larger part of the literature about teacher educators and their professional development is based on studies of teacher educators who worked as teachers in primary or secondary teaching, and only a few studies are about academics who become teacher educators. Nevertheless, the studies of researchers such as Kosnik and Beck (2008), Wilson (2006) and Zeichner (2005), who work in research-intensive universities, shed some light on the professional development of teacher educators in the more formal and academic setting of doctoral studies for teacher educators, and we have included them in our analyses.

It is also appropriate at this stage to examine the term 'teacher education' more closely. In England and Wales, government organisations use the term 'initial teacher training' whereas universities themselves prefer to use the term 'initial teacher education' or 'initial teacher education and training'. The terminology is important. If we were to use the term 'teacher trainers' rather than 'teacher educators' it would significantly limit our concept of the process of professional learning. Also, because 'teacher education' occurs throughout a person's professional career, we must see it as more than a linear route from the initial stages through qualification, induction, early professional development and continuing professional development. For the purposes of this article, therefore, we recognise that 'teacher education' includes initial teacher education prior to qualification and continuing professional development after qualification.

Teacher education is embedded in cultural and political national contexts, and the development of teacher education and teacher educators must inevitably reflect this (for an overview of teacher education systems in Europe, see Snoek & Žogla, 2009). In almost all western countries, teacher education has moved into higher education, but the structure of higher education still varies from country to country. For example, The Netherlands and Norway have a dual system of higher education, with universities that are mainly research intensive and higher education institutions that do not have research as their main focus. Teacher education in The Netherlands is mainly based in higher education institutions for professional education, and teacher educators often hold a bachelor or master's degree. It is only recently that teacher educators have been encouraged to do research (Lunenberg & Willemsse, 2006). In other countries such as Portugal or Israel (Yogev & Yogev, 2006; Murray *et al.*, 2009b), teacher education is part of a research-intensive university sector and teacher educators have a master's or Ph.D. degree and are actively involved in research. Such structural and cultural differences inevitably have an impact on the sub-identities of teacher educators, but in spite of these international differences, teacher educators have much in common. When we consider, for example, the research on beginning teacher educators, it is clear that they experience very much the same challenges and

problems during their first years regardless of the national or institutional context (see, for example, the articles in the first part of this special issue).

### Professional identity

The study we present here is part of a larger study into the development of the professional identity of teacher educators (see Swennen *et al.*, 2008b). Our view of identity is based on the work of Holland *et al.* (1998), who developed a notion of identity based on their anthropological research in both western and non-western cultural contexts. They conceive identity as ‘socially constructed selves’ and argue that identity manifests itself in what they call ‘figured worlds’. These figured worlds are not things or objects, but processes and traditions in which we participate. Every person is involved in several figured worlds that may, or may not, overlap and the identity of a person manifests itself differently in various figured worlds, depending on our place, status and power in that world (Holland *et al.*, 1998). Teacher education can be seen as a figured world that forms the identity of teacher educators and, at the same time, teacher educators form the figured world of teacher education. The notion of figured worlds resembles that of communities of practice as described by Wenger (1998). Our identity is constructed by our involvement in the communities of practice that we belong to, and our identity influences these communities. Professional learning is the development of one’s identity and the gradual growth into a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). We view professional development in general as the development of a professional identity. The development of a professional identity as teacher educator will for the larger part take place while working as a teacher educator and by interacting with colleagues, student-teachers and others involved in teacher education. It may also take place in more formal settings such as those created for the professional development of beginning teacher educators (formal induction settings) and experienced teacher educators, like undertaking a master’s course, doing a Ph.D. course or attending courses, workshops and other more structured professional development activities.

In their study of the identity of teachers, Beijaard *et al.* (2004, p. 122) conclude that there is no clear, uniform, let alone operational definition of identity, but they do distinguish four characteristics of professional identity:

1. Professional identity is an ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences. The development of a professional identity is therefore not only an answer to the question, ‘Who am I now?’, but also to the question, ‘Who do I want to be in the future?’
2. Professional identity implies both person and context.
3. A teacher’s professional identity consists of sub-identities that more or less harmonise. The notion of sub-identities relates to the teacher’s different contexts and relationships. Some of these sub-identities may be broadly linked and can be seen as the core of teachers’ professional identity, while others may be more peripheral.
4. Agency is an important element of professional identity, meaning that teachers have to be active in the process of professional development.

Consciously or unconsciously, teacher educators construct their own professional identity based on sub-identities that are available in their educational context. The teacher educator's choices for one or more sub-identities or the dominance of one specific sub-identity may be based on personal preferences, but is most likely also to be influenced by the availability of a sub-identity in a specific context.

The study of identity not only focuses on teacher educators as individuals. The identity of teacher educators develops within the social, political and historical contexts in which they work and, as a result, the professional development of teacher educators is shaped by their personal motivation and initiative as well as by the possibilities and impossibilities of the context of teacher education and the wider context of education.

### The study

To answer the research question, 'What sub-identities of teacher educators emerge from the research literature about teacher educators and what are the implications of the sub-identities for the professional development of teacher educators?', we analysed 25 articles relating to teacher educators and their professional development. We conducted a search for articles in the main academic databases—ERIC, Science Direct and the university database Picarta—with the use of the words 'teacher educator(s)', 'identity of teacher educator(s)' and 'professional development of teacher educator(s)'. We then searched in these sources for other references to teacher educators and their professional development. We limited the articles to those published since 2000 and to research articles published in academic journals. We realise that by doing so we exclude older and more recent important research on teacher educators (see, for example, Ducharme, 1993; Russell & Korthagen, 1995; Loughran, 2006). We also restricted our research to articles that have a focus on teacher educators and not to articles that address teacher educators and teachers as one group, although these articles may reveal interesting aspects of the identity of teacher educators as teachers. Neither did we include articles that focused on subject teaching that can be found in journals for teaching mathematics or science.

The articles we used in this study differ from each other with regard to content, methodology and national context, and our effort to find patterns was frustrated by the overlapping content and even the overlap between contents and methodologies, as in the self-studies in which research is both the means and the end (Dinkelman *et al.*, 2006a). The articles cover themes such as beginning teacher educators and their transition from teachers to teacher educators; teacher educators as researchers (and learning to be researchers); and professional learning of teacher educators and teacher educators' (practical) knowledge. Self-study is now an accepted and common methodology for teacher educators who study their own practice (Kosnik *et al.*, 2006; Berry, 2007; Loughran, 2006), and six articles are based on this methodology (see Figure 1, articles in italics). Although Cochran-Smith (2003, 2005) and Zeichner (2005) argue strongly for teacher educators to engage in self-study research, they do not refer to their own research in this way. The remaining articles

1	TaTE	2002	John	The teacher educator's experience: case studies of practical professional knowledge
2	EJTE	2002	Lunenberg	Designing a curriculum for teacher educators
3	TaTE	2003	Cochran-Smith	Learning and unlearning: the education of teacher educators
4	EJTE	2003	Smith	So, what about the professional development of teacher educators
5	TaTE	2005	Cochran-Smith	Teacher educators as researchers: multiple perspectives
6	STE	2005	Kitchen	Looking backward, moving forward: understanding my narrative as a teacher educator
7	TaTE	2005	Loughran & Berry	Modelling by teacher educators
8	TaTE	2005	Murray & Male	Becoming a teacher educator: evidence from the field
9	TaTE	2005	Zeichner	Becoming a teacher educator: a personal perspective
10	STE	2006	Dinkelman, Margolis & Sikkenga	From teacher to teacher educator: experiences, expectations, and expatriation / From teacher to teacher educator: Reframing knowledge in practice
11	EJTE	2006	Lunenberg & Willemsse	Research and professional development of teacher educators
12	JTE	2006	Wilson	Finding a Canon and Core: Meditations on the Preparation of Teacher Educator-Researchers
13	STE	2007	Berry	Reconceptualising teacher educator knowledge as tensions: exploring the tension between valuing and reconstructing experience
14	THE	2007	Hau-Fai Law, Joughin, Kennedy, Tse & Yu	Teacher educators' pedagogical principles and practices: Hong Kong perspectives
15	TaTE	2007	Lunenberg, Korthagen & Swennen	The teacher educator as a role model
16	EJTE	2008	Harrison & McKeon	The formal and situated learning of beginning teacher educators in England: identifying characteristics for successful induction in the transition from workplace in schools to workplace in Higher Education
17	EJTE	2008	Kosnik & Beck	In the shadows: non-tenure-line instructors in pre-service teacher education
18	EJTE	2008	Koster & Dengerink	Professional standards for teacher educators: how to deal with complexity, ownership and function. Experiences from the Netherlands
19	EJTE	2008	Murray	Teacher educators induction into Higher Education: work-based learning in the micro communities of teacher education
20	EJTE	2008	Swennen, Volman & Van Essen	The development of the professional identity of two teacher educators in the context of Dutch teacher education
21	ATE	2008	Klecka, Donovan, Venditti & Short	Who is a teacher educator? Enactment of teacher educator identity through electronic portfolio development
22	TTip	2008	Swennen, Lunenberg & Korthagen	Preach what you teach! Teacher educators and congruent teaching
23	TTip	2009	Bullock	Learning to think as a teacher educator: making the substantive and syntactic structures of teaching explicit through self-study
24	TaTE	2009	Murray, Campbell, Hextall, Hulme, Jones, Mahony, Menter, Procter & Wall	Research and teacher education in the UK: Building capacity
25	EJTE	2009	Timmerman	Teacher educators modelling their teachers?
Italics = self-study				
Grey = special issue about teacher educators				
				JTE = Journal of Teacher Education THE = Teaching in Higher Education ATE = Action in Teacher Education TTip = Teachers and Teaching, theory and practice EJTE = European Journal of Teacher Education TaTE = Teacher and Teacher Education STE = Studies in Teacher Education

Figure 1. Overview of journal articles published after 2000 related to the identity and professional development of teacher educators

are based on a variety of research methodologies and methods, but they are all relatively small-scale studies.

We then made an inventory of the information that gives insight into the sub-identities of teacher educators in the articles. To uncover references to such sub-identities, we refined the search using the terms ‘Those who ...’, ‘Teacher educators are ...’, ‘Developing an identity as ...’—using the name that was used to indicate teacher educators, the definition of teacher educator and other information that would contribute to finding and understanding available sub-identities of teacher educators. This also led us to information about the professional activities that were described in the articles to enhance the sub-identities. Due to restrictions in space it is not possible to show the complete overview, but Figure 2 shows an example of the inventory. From our analysis, four sub-identities emerged and these are discussed in the next section.

### The sub-identities of teacher educators

In this section we present the results of the analysis of 25 articles (see Figure 1). We found four sub-identities of teacher educators in the literature: teacher educators as school teachers, teacher educators as teachers in higher education, teacher educators

Author and title	Name and definition	Professional development activities	Sub-identity
Cochran-Smith, 2003 Learning and unlearning: the education of teacher educators	Those who teach the teachers.	"I suggest that the education of teacher educators in different contexts and at different entry points over the course of the professional career is substantially enriched when inquiry is regarded as a stance on the overall enterprise of teacher education and when teacher educators inquire collaboratively about the assumptions and values, professional knowledge and practice, the contexts of school as well as Higher Education, and their own as well as their students' learning. Inquiry skills, collaborating skills".	Teachers of teachers, researchers
Murray & Male, 2005 Becoming a teacher educator; evidence from the field	TEs are second order teachers. As such, teacher educators induct their students into the practices and discourses of both school teaching and teacher education For those working mainly in initial teacher education, their academic 'discipline' is their knowledge of schooling, of the first-order context. They enter HE with practical experiential knowledge and understanding of school teaching as a major strength (...) often tacit.	The acquisition of pedagogical knowledge and experience appropriate to being teacher educators in HE. The enhancement and generalisation of their existing knowledge base of schooling. Developing an identity as researcher. Developing ways of working with mentors in school-based setting. Acquiring pragmatic knowledge of the HE institution and how it operates.	Second order teachers, researchers

Figure 2. Example of inventory of sub-identities and related professional development activities  
 Note: HE, higher education; TE, teacher educator

as researchers and teacher educators as teachers of teachers (or second-order teachers). In the process of analysing we also found a view on teacher educators as teachers in a more generic way. We hesitate to call this a sub-identity of teacher educators, as a teacher educator as a generic teacher is vague and not mentioned as an identity, let alone a sub-identity, in the literature. Nevertheless, this view of a teacher educator as a generic teacher was visible in quite a number of articles, and especially in those dealing with standards for teacher educators.

*Teacher educators as school teachers*

Although in some countries teacher educators are academics and hold a Ph.D. degree, most teacher educators worked as school teachers before they entered teacher education (Murray & Male, 2005; Zeichner, 2005) and as such they bring with them an identity as teachers. According to Klecka *et al.* (2008), who studied the portfolios of 14 teacher educators, the most prominent facet of the teacher educator's identity was that of teacher. Dinkelman *et al.* found in their self-study that they started in teacher education with strong identities as teachers, but over time developed their identity as teacher educators and '... maintained elements of their former K-12 teacher identities and continuously sought ways to integrate the two worlds, increasingly valuing the complementary nature of the twinned identities' (2006b, p. 120). Teacher educators cherish their sub-identity as school teachers for two reasons. Based on their experience they know how to teach their subject or subject area and often they discover that teaching their student-teachers is not as difficult as they thought it would be. This often gives novice teacher educators confidence to teach in the new context of higher education during the stressful first years (Murray & Male, 2005). Teacher educators also cherish their identity as teachers because their past experience gives them credibility in their work with student teachers and mentors (Dinkelman *et al.*, 2006b).

The former identity of teacher educators as school teachers is not just accepted by teacher educators, but also embraced by policy-makers and administrators in many

countries. Fundamental to the work of teacher educators is that they have experience of more than one classroom and school environment (either from first-order teaching or second-order supervision of others) and it is this breadth of experience that adds to the advice and support they can give to others. In The Netherlands, as in England and Wales, teacher educators are often appointed on the basis of ‘recent and relevant experience in teaching’ (Harrison & McKeon, 2008, p. 164), and having experience as a school teacher is regarded as a precondition for being a good teacher educator.

Timmerman (2009), in her study of 13 secondary education teacher educators, found that teacher educators do not only use their own experience as teachers, but also look back upon some of their secondary education teachers as ideals and/or models. If this research could be generalised, then this could be—besides the strong fact that most teachers worked as school teachers—one explanation why teacher educators identify with school teachers.

It is understandable that teacher educators identify with their former identity of school teachers because the knowledge and skills they have developed in their previous career are the basis of their knowledge and skills as teacher educators. Nevertheless, school teachers who become teacher educators leave primary or secondary education to become teacher educators in higher education. The sub-identity as school teachers is an identity that belongs to their professional past (Kelchtermans, 1993). According to the authors we studied, simply being a good school teacher is not enough for being a good teacher educator. The process of change from school teacher to teacher educator is characterised as a transition (Murray & Male, 2005; Harrison & McKeon, 2008; Swennen *et al.*, 2008b).

Not surprisingly, as most teacher educators come from a background of teaching in schools, there was no mention in the research articles of the professional development of teacher educators as school teachers or of ways in which teacher educators can enhance their knowledge of teaching in schools. First of all, teacher educators who are former school teachers are expected to have the necessary knowledge about teaching in schools; and secondly, many authors argue that the identity of school teachers has to be transformed into an identity of teacher educator and that professional development should focus on this transformation. We would argue that this is true, but it is also likely that the transformation from teacher to teacher educator involves getting a more general view on school teaching, including the subject or subject area, and the development of the ability to use one’s own individual experience to educate student-teachers who are of a different age and have different, or less, life experience.

### *Teacher educators as teachers in higher education*

In most countries the move of teacher education into higher education was completed some time ago and initial teacher education is now situated within research-intensive universities, or in what might be referred to as professional universities. In the United Kingdom, these were previously referred to as teacher training colleges before they were subsumed by established universities or took on university status themselves. As

a result, teacher educators are essentially identified as teachers in higher education simply because of the fact that they work in higher education and are part of the community of practice of higher education. For some authors of the articles we analysed, the sub-identity of teacher educators as teachers in higher education is dominant. For example, the study of Hau-Fai Law *et al.* (2007) about the principles and practices of teacher educators at the University of Hong Kong focuses on teacher educators as good teachers in higher education. But not all teacher educators have a strong identity as teachers in higher education, especially when they were former school teachers (Harrison & McKeon, 2008). Throughout the analysed articles, authors stress that school teachers who start working in higher education have to develop specific knowledge and skills to work with adult students, to work with different pedagogical teaching and assessment methods, and to work in a different, and often larger, organisational context (Harrison & McKeon, 2008; Kosnik & Beck, 2008; Murray, 2008).

When teachers move from schools to become teachers in higher education they still need a period of induction as teacher educators, even though they may have a considerable number of years' experience in teaching. This area of professional development has been given some attention in research, with particular emphasis on the strategies and activities that are used to induct teacher educators in higher education, rather than on the content of the induction programme. In many countries in Europe, teachers in higher education now have to undertake formal courses to teach in higher education, such as the recently introduced Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education in the UK or the Basic Qualification for teaching in Higher Education in The Netherlands. As most teacher educators have a teaching degree, they do not have to take these courses—and in some institutions this may leave teacher educators with limited access to formal sources of professional development. As a result, the induction of teacher educators is often informal and can be characterised as workplace learning that, when well planned and organised, is a strong way of inducting professionals. However, where workplace induction is less well planned, '... the resulting individual learning may become ad hoc and reactive' (Murray, 2008, p. 129). The induction of teacher educators takes place in the 'micro communities' (Kosnik & Beck, 2008; Murray, 2008) within teacher education departments, often with the help of senior staff members who act as mentors. Although the support of a mentor may be of help for teacher educators to learn about their daily work as teachers in higher education, learning strictly within a local community also poses problems such as '... "insularity", and fragmented and fractured provision. Such fragmentation may mean that sight is lost of teacher educators' commitments to communal discourses, practices and values held within the wider, national and international teacher education communities' (Murray, 2008, p. 131).

If there is limited attention given to the induction of teacher educators as teachers in higher education it may be due to the lack of time that senior staff members are able to give, but according to Murray (2008, p. 129) a much graver situation may be at the heart of this problem as it may indicate 'lack of awareness of what might constitute a full curriculum of work-based learning in teacher education'. It may also be due

to the prevailing culture of individualism that tends to exist in higher education rather than the fully collaborative culture needed to ensure that induction programmes for new teacher educators are managed and operated effectively.

*Teacher educators as teachers of teachers (or second-order teachers)*

Most authors of the studies we analysed do not give a definition of ‘teacher educator’ as they simply use the term ‘teacher educator’. They often add that teacher educators are the ‘teachers of teachers’. It is not always clear from the examination of the literature whether ‘teachers of teachers’ is just a synonym for ‘teacher educators’ or an indication of the unique identity of teacher educators. But even when used unintentionally, the notion of ‘teachers of teachers’ applies only to teacher educators, and this qualification indicates that teacher educators differ from the school teachers they once were and from other teachers in higher education.

The identity of teacher educators as teachers of teachers is explicitly or implicitly acknowledged by almost all studies we analysed and is operationalised in the concept of teacher educators as models for their student-teachers. This notion of teachers as models and modelling is present in almost all articles we analysed. As teachers of teachers, teacher educators always, consciously or unconsciously, model teaching and their values about teaching (Loughran & Berry, 2005; Swennen *et al.*, 2008a). One meaning of modelling that is reflected in the American Standards for Teacher Educators is synonymous with exemplary behaviour:

Modelling means exhibiting behavior that is observed and imitated by others. Effective modeling of desired practices is at the heart of successful teacher education programs at pre-service and in-service levels. Teachers are powerful and meaningful role models for students at all levels, and the way they act influences both learning and motivation. Modeling of behavior relates to teaching, service, and scholarly productivity. Teacher educators must use research-based, proven best practices in order for those behaviors to be appropriately applied teaching teachers. (See <http://www.ate1.org/pubs/Standards.cfm>)

However, most researchers stress that good modelling is not enough to make students aware of what good teacher educators want to show their students and why they teach as they do. Teacher educators should explain their teaching behaviour through what is referred to as explicit modelling (Loughran & Berry, 2005; Lunenberg *et al.*, 2005), which can manifest itself in techniques like ‘unpacking teaching’ and ‘debriefing’. Loughran and Berry (2005, p. 193) describe explicit modelling as a desirable professional competence of teacher educators: ‘(It) is the ability to articulate the purposes underpinning practice for oneself and others’. The articulation of knowledge of practice is a difficult and complex task that demands considerable awareness of oneself, pedagogy and students. Lunenberg *et al.* (2005) found three reasons for modelling by teacher educators:

1. It can contribute to the professional development of student-teachers.
2. It is a way to change education, when teacher educators show how innovations work in practice.
3. It can improve the teaching of teacher educators.

Murray and Male (2005) distinguish between the work of teachers, as first-order teaching, and the work of teacher educators as second-order teaching. Teachers teach in a first-order situation as they teach their pupils. Teacher educators distinguish themselves from teachers because they are practising second-order professionals: 'As second-order practitioners teacher educators induct their students into the practices and discourses of both school teaching and teacher education' (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 126). To become second-order practitioners, novice teacher educators not only need to acquire new knowledge and skills, they also need to redefine their professional identity. Murray and Male doubt whether all teachers who start to work in teacher education will be able to make that change. They argue that there will remain teacher educators who derive their professional identity solely from being former teachers in primary or secondary schools, and that teacher educators who are not able or willing to make this transition are more likely to show a negative attitude towards research and identify more closely with schools and pupils than with teacher educators.

The sub-identity of teacher educators as second-order teachers not only refers to the work, tasks and roles of teacher educators, but also to a shift in their identity. However, in the studies we analysed we found hardly any research that is related to the professional development of the sub-identity of second-order teacher.

#### *Teacher educators as researchers*

Over the past 5–10 years, professional universities in many parts of the world have increased their research capacities and, by emphasising that teaching should be underpinned by research, teacher educators as teachers in higher education have become increasingly engaged in research. The sub-identity of researcher could be viewed as a part of the sub-identity of teacher in higher education, but in the literature we studied developing a research identity (Murray, 2008; Murray *et al.*, 2009b) is seen by most authors as crucial for the development of teacher educators and the improvement of teacher education. This is not only the view of the authors of the analysed articles, but also of the teacher educators they studied who value research (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Klecka *et al.*, 2008).

The need to develop a sub-identity as researcher varies between countries, the kind of higher education institution (research-intensive or professional university) and the personal preferences and priorities of teacher educators. Teacher educators who work in research-intensive universities in which being a researcher is one of their dominant sub-identities will have a contractual as well as a professional obligation to undertake research and to publish their results. However, most teacher educators work in professional universities with no contractual requirement to undertake research or to publish, and, arguably, research for them will have a lower priority than their teaching and supervisory work with student-teachers (Berry, 2007). But this is changing. For example, in The Netherlands, although both primary and secondary teacher education is the remit of the professional universities, both the government and the administrators of these institutions have attempted to stimulate staff, including teacher educators, to undertake research and to work towards the completion of Ph.D. studies.

Teacher educators are encouraged to undertake practitioner research, especially self-study research, in order to improve their own practice (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Loughran & Berry, 2005; Zeichner, 2005) and it is this intertwining of research and practice that is characteristic of teacher educators. Cochran-Smith (2005, p. 219) uses the phrase 'working on the dialectic', and explains:

We used this phrase because we wanted to point out that there were not distinct moments when we were only researcher or only practitioners and this to emphasize the blurring rather than dividing of analysis and action, inquiry and experience, theorizing and doing in teacher education. (Cochran-Smith, 2005, p. 219; see also Wilson, 2006)

Teacher educators are involved in studies into their own practice, with the main aim being to improve their own knowledge and practice and that of other teacher educators and to contribute to the academic knowledge of the educational community. In this respect, doing research in itself is a form of professional development for teacher educators, both underpinning the process of professionalisation and potentially providing an enhanced product.

There is also criticism of the one-sidedness of the research methodology that is used by teacher educators. Wilson (2006, p. 316) in her paper, 'Meditations on the Preparation of Teacher Educators-Researchers' writes: 'I worry that our field has swung too far away from a diverse set of research methods; to put it baldly, I worry that we have too enthusiastically embraced methods more interpretative and qualitative'. Her image of the well-educated professional is, 'Someone who appreciates, understands, consumes, and uses research that comes out of many disciplinary traditions, including large-scale work that is correlational or experimental'.

From the analysed studies we learn that there are at least three ways in which the research identity of teacher educators is enhanced. Teacher educators learn to do research and improve their knowledge and skills of research by their involvement in research. They learn by doing, often with the help or supervision of a senior researcher (Bullock, 2009; Dinkelman *et al.*, 2006a). The research skills of teacher educators are also improved more intentionally by introducing future teacher educators to research in doctoral studies. Kosnik and Beck (2008), Wilson (2006) and Zeichner (2005), all from universities in the United States, mention the education of teacher educators as researchers in doctoral courses. Thirdly, universities and governments are increasingly aware of the importance of research for teachers in higher professional education and are taking the first steps to engage teacher educators in research (see, for example, Murray *et al.*, 2009a).

### *Teacher educators as generic teachers*

As explained in the Introduction, the articles we studied do not always offer clear sub-identities and underlying some articles is the view of teacher educators as 'generic teachers'. We speak about 'view' instead of sub-identity, as the term 'generic teacher' is not identified as a sub-identity in the literature we studied, yet we think it is a view on teacher educators that influences the development of the sub-identities of teacher educators. Teacher educators are teachers in a generic

sense as they are members of the larger community of teachers (whatever level or subject) and as teachers of teachers they have a responsibility towards this larger community. For example, Kitchen—apart from being an advocate of teachers as researchers—identified seven characteristics of good teacher education: ‘Understanding one’s own personal practical knowledge; improving one’s practice in teacher education; understanding the landscape of teacher education; respecting and empathizing with preservice teachers; conveying respect and empathy; helping preservice teachers face problems; and receptivity to growing in relationship’ (Kitchen, 2005, p. 18). One can easily replace ‘teacher education’ by ‘education’ and ‘preservice teachers’ by any other profession without compromising the text.

We noticed that articles related to standards of teacher educators (Klecka *et al.*, 2008; Koster & Dengerink, 2008) reflect more the view of teacher educators as generic teachers. Klecka *et al.* offer an explanation. They conclude the discussion of the definition of teacher educator, related to the standards for master teacher educators of the Association of Teacher Educators (<http://www.ate1.org/pubs/home.cfm>), with the remark (based on Koster & Dengerink, 2001) that one of the challenges of creating standards for teacher educators is that they need to be ‘rooted within the broad definition of a teacher educator’ (Klecka *et al.*, 2008, p. 84). All teacher educators have to recognise themselves in the standards, and as a consequence the standards will represent the view of teacher educators as more generic teachers. Klecka *et al.* (2008) studied the identity of 14 teacher educators in the portfolios they made based on the standards, and identified five facets of the identity of teacher educators: teacher, scholar in teaching, collaborator, learner and leader. These facets of identity represent a view of teacher educators as generic teachers.

This view may also be influenced by the teacher educators themselves. Not all those who work in teacher education identify easily with being teacher educators (Klecka *et al.*, 2008) and therefore policy documents or standards for teacher educators, especially when developed with teacher educators, may present more a general view on good teachers than the more specific sub-identities that are offered in the literature.

## Conclusion and discussion

To understand who the teacher educators are, we analysed research about teacher educators and their professional development and found four sub-identities that are available for teacher educators: school teacher, teacher in higher education, teacher of teachers (or second-order teacher) and researcher. We also found a view on teacher educators as teachers in a more generic way. The sub-identities of teacher educators are constructed within the various figured worlds teacher educators belong to simultaneously and at various moments in their careers.

The identity of teacher educator, as for all identities, develops within the community of teacher education, and whether or not a sub-identity of teacher educator is available depends on the context of teacher education. This context, as discussed earlier, varies between countries and institutions. Figure 3 presents a tentative model of the connection between the sub-identities of teacher education and the various

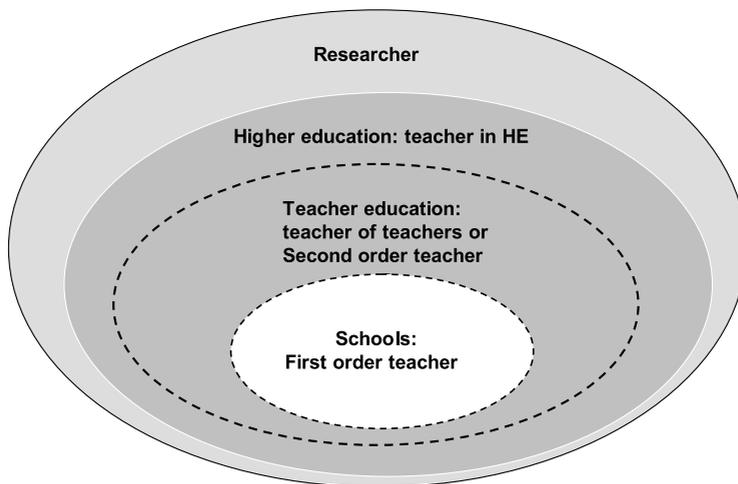


Figure 3. Sub-identities of teacher educators in the context of teacher education  
 Note: HE, higher education

contexts to which teacher educators can belong. The figure depicts a cross-section of the various contexts of teacher educators and their sub-identities. In the centre is the first-order context of school teachers, which, transformed and generalised, is a vital sub-identity of teacher educators as it is a source of their knowledge about teaching and teachers. When making the transition from first-order teacher to second-order teacher in higher education, it is crucial for teachers to acknowledge that, within the larger community of practice of education, the figured world of teacher education (as a second-order context) differs from that of primary or secondary education (as a first-order context). In the context of higher education and teacher education, then, the two intertwined sub-identities of ‘teacher in higher education’ and ‘teacher of teachers’ or ‘second-order teacher’ are available for teacher educators. The sub-identity of researcher spans the other sub-identities as the ‘teacher educator as researcher’ may study the teaching and learning of school teachers, student-teachers and teacher educators as well as the wider context of teaching and teacher education.

There seems to be a broad understanding that teacher educators have to transform their identity as teachers to become ‘teachers of teachers in higher education’ and, increasingly, to become researchers of teaching and teacher education. Kelchtermans (1993) distinguishes a retrospective dimension (looking back from the present to the past) and a prospective dimension (looking from the present to the future) of identity (which he prefers to call ‘self-understanding’) that is useful to understand the sub-identities and their relation to the professional development of teacher educators. The sub-identities of teacher educators that we found belong to the past, the present and future of teacher educators, but this is different for individual teacher educators according to their national and institutional contexts. It has already been mentioned that the sub-identity of ‘school teacher’ belongs to the past of teacher educators, but needs to be transformed and generalised to become an essential part of the present

identity. For beginning teacher educators, the sub-identities of ‘teacher of teachers’ and ‘teacher in higher education’ are future sub-identities. According to Murray and Male (2005) it takes two to three years for beginning teacher educators to make the transition from teachers to teachers of teachers and, as can be expected, ‘Becoming a confident second-order practitioner as an HE [higher education] teacher was the key indicator of achieving the new professional identity’ (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 139). Experienced teacher educators, too, have a past identity of school teachers, but unlike their novice colleagues they are likely to have made the transition from teacher to teacher of teachers in higher education, which may be their present identity, while becoming a researcher may be a future sub-identity.

The research we present here is based on studies of teacher educators in academic journals and is a small contribution to the understanding of the identity or sub-identities of teacher educators. More research is needed into the existing and future potential sub-identities of teacher educators. We also need to know more about the sub-identities teacher educators themselves experience or desire and whether these sub-identities are the same as the sub-identities that emerged from the literature. There are some indications that there is a difference between the sub-identities in the research literature and the perceived and desired identities of teacher educators. One question that needs attention in this respect is the role of the subject or subject area in the identity of teacher educators.

If one thing is clear from our research it is that we have limited understanding of the professional development of teacher educators (like the transition from teacher to teacher educator, or the development from novice to more experienced teacher educator) and of their professional learning. Research that is available concentrates on professional development and professional learning that is related to standards (Lunenburg, 2002; Smith, 2003; Klecka *et al.*, 2008; Koster & Dengerink, 2008), which, as we have seen, necessarily focus on the more generic qualities of teacher educators. There is some research about the transition of teachers into teacher educators, both from researchers who study this transition and from teacher educators who describe their own transition, but many questions remain (see also Wilson, 2006), such as:

1. What knowledge do teacher educators bring with them to teacher education? How can teacher educators use their formal knowledge as teachers to support the learning of student-teachers?
2. What is a second-order teacher educator? How does a first-order teacher develop a sub-identity as second-order teacher in higher education and what professional activities best support this transformation?
3. How can teacher educators develop a research identity and what professional activities best support this transformation?

The question ‘who will support the professional development of teacher educators?’ is not posed in the literature we studied. Few researchers refer to the existence of or need for experts to educate the teacher educators. Cochran-Smith (2005), Wilson (2006) and Zeichner (2005), all from the USA, refer to the provision of doctoral studies for teacher educators and their own role in these. Zeichner reflects on his role as

educator of teacher educators in a research-intensive context: 'I see my role as a faculty mentor of new teacher educators as one of carefully advising and supporting graduate students in their self-studies and in supporting their developing expertise in educating teachers' (Zeichner, 2005, p. 122). Teacher educators are in need of role-models, expert teacher educators who show them what it means to be a good teacher educator and support them in becoming second-order teachers in higher education and researchers. Perhaps it is too early to think about the nature, role and quality of 'experts' for the professional development of teacher educators as so much work has still to be done to enhance the quality of teacher educators themselves and to enlarge the research about teacher educators. Nevertheless, we believe that mentors of teacher educators, experts who teach courses for teacher educators and supervisors with the knowledge and skills to support teacher educators' research are needed to enhance the quality of teacher educators as individuals and teacher education as a profession. However, the micro-community in which teacher educators work (Kosnik & Beck, 2008; Murray, 2008) will remain important, and workplace learning as a means for teacher educators to grow into the community of practice of teacher education (Lave & Wenger, 1991) can never be replaced by formal learning. We need further research on how to strengthen the professional development of teacher educators, both those at the beginning of their careers and those who are more experienced, within the context of their own micro-communities and within the larger community of practice of teacher education.

### Notes on contributors

Anja Swennen works at the VU University Amsterdam. She is an associate editor of the *European Journal for Teacher Education* and of *Professional Development in Education*. Her research interests are the professional identity of teacher educators. She is the co-chair of the ATEE RDC Professional Development of Teacher Educators and the co-editor of the book *Becoming a Teacher Educator: Theory and Practice for Teacher Educators* (Springer, 2009).

Ken Jones is Dean of Humanities at Swansea Metropolitan University. After teaching in London, he returned to Wales to become involved in the training and continuing education of teachers and headteachers. He is Editor of the journal *Professional Development in Education* and is President of the International Professional Development Association (ipda). He has served on a number of working groups advising on aspects of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) including the setting up of a National Framework for the Professional Development of Teachers in Wales and the pilot for Chartered Teacher status.

Monique Volman holds a position as full professor at the VU University in Amsterdam. The main areas in her research are learning environments for meaningful learning, identity development, diversity and the use of information and communication technology in education, issues that she approaches from a socio-cultural theoretical perspective. In her work she aims to build bridges between educational theory and practice by applying and further developing methodologies for

collaborative design research, in which teachers and researchers collaboratively develop and evaluate theoretically-informed innovations.

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