Co-constructed Identity:

Reflections on how EAP Learning Materials can enhance the transition and development of the EAP Student and the EAP Practitioner.

University of Reading

BALEAP PIM

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1. Introduction

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I. Theoretical background information and Aim

Campion (2016)
Cascio & Gasker (2001)
Charles & Pecorari (2016)
Ding & Bruce (2017)
McCune (2021)
Tsui (2011)
Turner (1987)

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II. Context
(of our reflection)

→

III. Definition of the EAP practitioner

(for this reflection)

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IV. Definition of Materials
(for this reflection)

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V. Presentation Outline

I. Theoretical Background & Aims [1]

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Turner, (1987): self concept, self identification, group identity.

McCune, (2021): how do academics in teaching intensive roles in research intensive universities maintain their identities and care for teaching?

McCune, (2021): What encourages or restrains transformative learning and teaching? = Understanding how best to support the teaching intensive practitioner.

Cascio & Gasker, (2001): ID continually evolves!

This presentation: Reflections on supporting practitioner development.

I. Theoretical Background & Aims [2]

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> Ding & Bruce, (2017): multiple & varying routes into EAP

<u>Ongoing Practitioner development is key to the EAP role.</u>

Aim of Presentation:

1. **how tacit knowledge in situ can be obtained.**

2. **how transition into the EAP role can be further established.**

Co-identity Construction: Both the practitioner-educator's and student-learner's professional-academic identity are encouraged to evolve, not in isolation, but rather synchronously.

II. Context of our reflection

Recent Module Convenor [MC] experiences convening EAP practitioners and extending exploration of professional academic identity development from Sharon's doctoral research.

1. Parallel undergraduate and postgraduate modules: oral and written genres.
2. Time and Duration: Summer 2022; 6-week Module.
3. Teaching Team: 20+ practitioners across 2 modules.

Summative Assessments:
A. Postgraduates [PG]: **a *critical review* & a reflective oral presentation**
B. Undergraduates [UG]: **a *case study* & a reflective oral presentation**

Note: The role of materials as a tool for co-identity construction, development, and transformation is not unique to these modules but offered opportunity to explicitly reflect on a previously more implicit transformative function of materials.

III. Definition of the EAP Teacher VS. the EAP Practitioner

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Charles & Pecorari (2016)

The **role** extends beyond the classroom to involvement with:

1. Materials, and lesson, development.
2. Scholarship.
3. Research.

Thus EAP <u>Practitioner.</u>

Practitioners in a community of practice

IV. Definition of Materials [1]

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1. Student-facing learning materials for:

    [A] live taught lessons;
    [B] guided independent study (GIS) sessions.

2. Comprehensive teachers' notes included in the lesson and GIS materials.

3. Weekly Overviews (both student and practitioner facing).

4. Support Videos and Guides (both student and practitioner facing).

5. Weekly Staff Meetings.

6. MS TEAMS (upcoming) lesson posts.

7. MS TEAMS chat with teaching teams.

8. Induction Sessions

9. Standardisation Sessions

IV. Definition of Materials [2]

1. **Present** *[Materials, skills and tasks presented to the practitioner in the learning materials, weekly meetings, via TEAMS posts, or in induction and standardisation sessions].*

2. **Practice** *[Practitioner is given space to practice and concept check to reinforce understanding and/or development, supported with videos or instructional guides or 1:1 Q&A and support within a developing community of practice].*

3. **(Re-)Production** *[The practitioner can reproduce their understanding to lead, and guide, the students through the lessons, tasks, and the materials as they work to complete assessments and achieve the module's learning outcomes].*

V. Outline

Professional Academic Identity of the Teaching-Intensive Practitioner:

1. Developing professional identity;
2. The role of the role model;
3. Gaining expertise;
4. The role of technology;
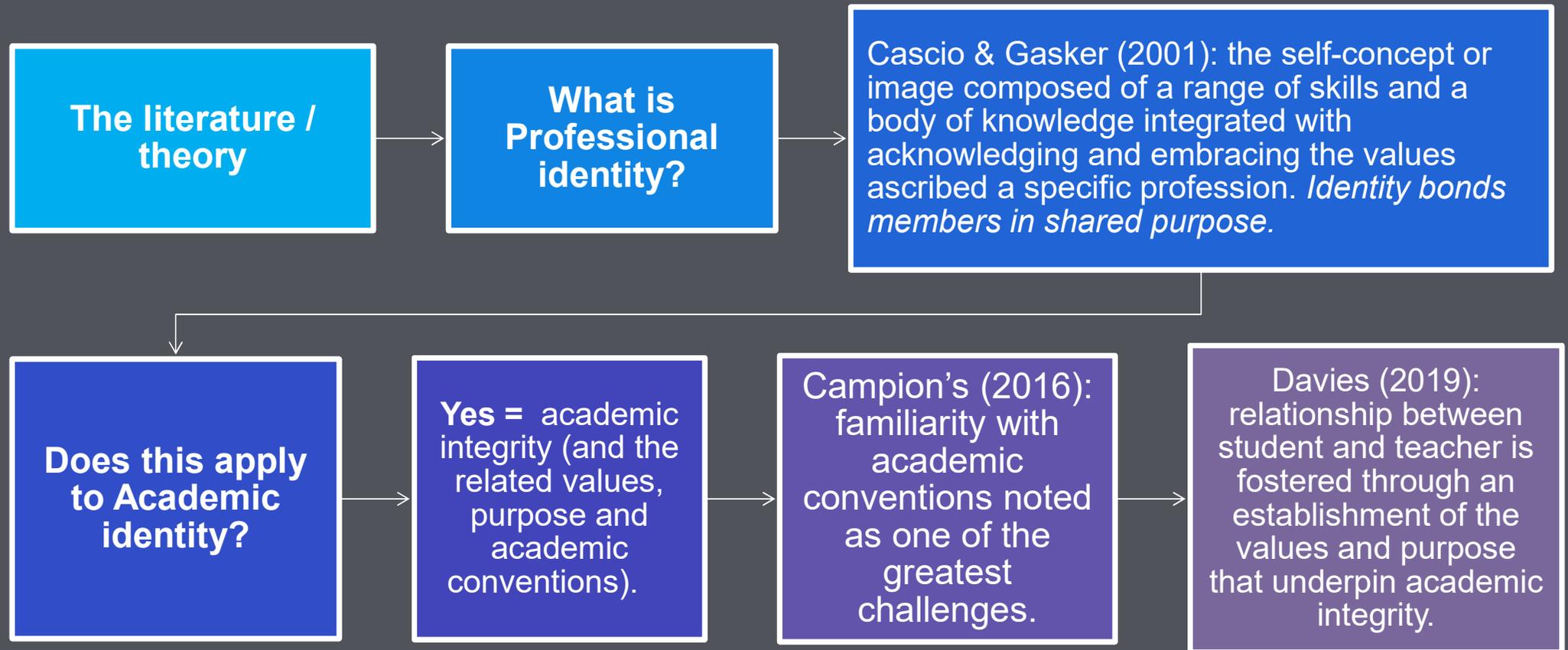5. Developmental and guidance opportunities.

>>>> To develop and/or meet:

A. Greater Autonomy.

B. Conceptual Understanding.

C. Learning Outcomes (of the module).

2. Developing Professional Identity [1]

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| The literature / theory | → | **What is Professional identity?** | → | Cascio & Gasker (2001): the self-concept or image composed of a range of skills and a body of knowledge integrated with acknowledging and embracing the values ascribed a specific profession. *Identity bonds members in shared purpose.* |

| **Does this apply to Academic identity?** | → | **Yes =** academic integrity (and the related values, purpose and academic conventions). | → | Campion's (2016): familiarity with academic conventions noted as one of the greatest challenges. | → | Davies (2019): relationship between student and teacher is fostered through an establishment of the values and purpose that underpin academic integrity. |

2. Developing Professional Identity [2]

This relationship extends across the university uniting student, teaching staff, and researcher.

How was this achieved in the module?
Building a sense of community, belonging, and identification: meetings, in-person and online informal communication channels, and peer support and collaboration, autonomous self-directed materials.

Link to **co-identity construction:**
Purposefully building a sense of trust, and support: regular meetings, open channels of communication, and peer support; ***"No question is irrelevant".***

Further reflected in scaled-response student feedback option ***"I feel part of the academic community"***.

3. The Role Model: The Module Convenor and the "Buddy" [1]

Houston et al. (2006): teaching academics should align identity development with teaching community, the department, colleagues, or teams.

Ibarra (1999): adopt a role model as the initial action required for identity development.

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory: through observation and social relations one builds experience and self-efficacy.

Lave & Wenger (2001): evolving into a fully recognised member in a community of practice rather than belonging to the periphery.

Therefore, professional development and transition to EAP practitioner is best facilitated by a strong institutional ethos of benchmarking good practice and enabling guidance by example, either modelled by the MC or via a teacher buddy system.

3. The Role Model: The Module Convenor and the "Buddy" [2]

Module Convenor (MC) = A **guide**, and *support*, through the module and the materials.

MC Experience: Either teaching the module and/or central role in module mapping and development.

MC Role: *How was this achieved in the module?*

1. Ensures standards are maintained.
2. Draws on teachers' skills and individual expertise.
3. Ensures inclusion in COP (Buddy System).
4. Encourages contact.
5. Establishes trust (Practitioner requests for informal observation).

Link to ***co-identity construction:***

Builds on ***tacit knowledge***, e.g. oral presentation modelled by teacher on own learning, and continues to establish a ***community of practice***.

4. Gaining Expertise [1]

Fitzpatrick et al., (2022) : developing teacher expertise found four key areas, or themes:

1. EAP specific knowledge and training.

2. Qualification

3. **Insight and understanding of what students are asked to do.**

4. Observations of peers.

Point 3 = Our Focus

4. Gaining Expertise [2]

How was this achieved in the module? *& link to **co-identity construction:***

[1] Identification of Practitioner Needs:

1. Teaching notes,

2. TEAMS lesson posts,

3. Weekly meetings,

4. Instructional Videos & Written Guides for specific tasks and understanding:

   a. *Use of, and locating information in, online databases.*
   b. *Varying features such as hyperlinks, citations, and DOIs,*
   c. *Use of Turnitin (as a marker and from the student perspective),*
   d. *Implications of Similarity Reports on Turnitin.*
   e. *Poor Academic Practice VS. Academic Misconduct.*

4. Gaining Expertise [3]

How was this achieved in the module? *& link to* **co-identity construction:**

[2] Operational Structures of Module Convening:

1. Standardisation Sessions.

2. Assignment Submissions.

3. Use of the grading rubric.

4. Benchmarking.

5. Moderation Processes.

6. Induction Sessions and Tasks.

5. The Role of Technology

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Technology can often be a barrier to transition and transformation.

Leibowitz et al., (2012): competence in abilities = important in academic teacher identity.

How was this achieved in the module? & link to **co-identity construction:**

1. Practitioners were fully supported at programme and module level.
2. Practitioners were offered individual technical support, as required.
3. Practitioners learnt (developed technical skills) autonomously or through guided instruction and materials.
4. Practitioners shared additional materials and resources amongst themselves.

1-4 reinforces a sense of support, community, practice, and collaboration.

6. Development & Guidance Opportunities [1]

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Van Lankveld et al., (2017): a necessity to support the cultivation of strategies that will help strengthen teacher academic identity through:

- staff development activities focusing on teacher **agency** and **identity.**

- activities to empower both the individual and the collective.

BALEAP Competency Framework (2008)

Role Change provides the opportunity for:

[1] greater teacher **agency**,

[2] possible **emerging opportunities**,

[3] possibility for r**einvention**,

[4] **self-efficacy**,

[5] and **professional identity evolution**

(Gholami et al., 2021).

6. Development & Guidance Opportunities [2]

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How was this achieved in the module? & link to **co-identity construction:**

The overall delivery, and completion, of the course:

The role offers opportunity to further practitioner knowledge of genres whilst also allowing for an understanding of how research, analysis, and evaluation is carried out and presented in varying fields, and genres.

Materials allow for:

Simultaneous acquaintance, and development, with methodology, analysis, presentation, and delivery.

> **PG:** *Clear Critical Review Structure.*
>
> **UG:** *Academic knowledge of Recruitment and Selection Processes and Diversity & Inclusion.*

7. Concluding Reflections

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Schon (1987): reflection on professional practice must encompass reflection in and on action merging both practice and theory in order to sustain continual professional development.

Materials offers opportunity to develop and transition as EAP practitioners in multiple capacities.

Critical self-reflection is a necessary component enabling a restructuring of past life experience with present social and professional context and learning (Brookfield, 2017). This can, and should, occur at practitioner, convenor, and module level.

Overall, the focussed use of materials, which offer greater autonomy and conceptual understanding, can meaningfully contribute to developing of the academic identity of key stakeholders; both practitioner and student, in a mode of co-construction and shared understanding, as well as complementing existing competency structures, and facilitate effective practitioner and student outcomes.

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