

# Investigating teacher professional identity & The publishing process

Prof. dr. Perry den Brok, February 21, 2018  
Graduate Centre Talk



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# Personal background Perry den Brok

- Full professor in education and learning sciences
- PhD on teacher behaviour and student outcomes (Utrecht University, 2001)
- Experience as teacher educator (since 2005), researcher (since 1996) and consultant (since 2003)
- Chair/director of a group on education and learning (since 2017, Wageningen University and Research)
- Dean of teacher education at Eindhoven University of Technology (2015-2017), director of research (2010-2015)
- Expertise: learning environments, teacher-student interpersonal relationships, multicultural education, science & engineering education, teacher professional development

# Wageningen University and Research



Focus: agriculture & life sciences  
12,000 students  
1,975 PhD students  
5,961 Staff  
#1 in education in NL  
#1 worldwide in agriculture  
#4 in environmental science  
#47 in Times Higher Ed World rankings

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# Education and Learning Sciences Group

- 35 staff (+many assistants)
- Serving > 3000 students per year
- Courses in skills education, entrepreneurship education, environmental education, teacher education
- Research on competence development, educational environments, teaching and teacher education, higher education
- Valorisation: professional development courses, evaluation of schools, curriculum development

# Part 1: Research on teacher professional identity

1. Identity roles, identity standards/frames and situation appraisals
2. Tensions and dilemmas
3. Interpersonal role identity: an example
4. Professional identity and educational innovations

# Professional identity: a complex concept (Beijaard et al., 2004)

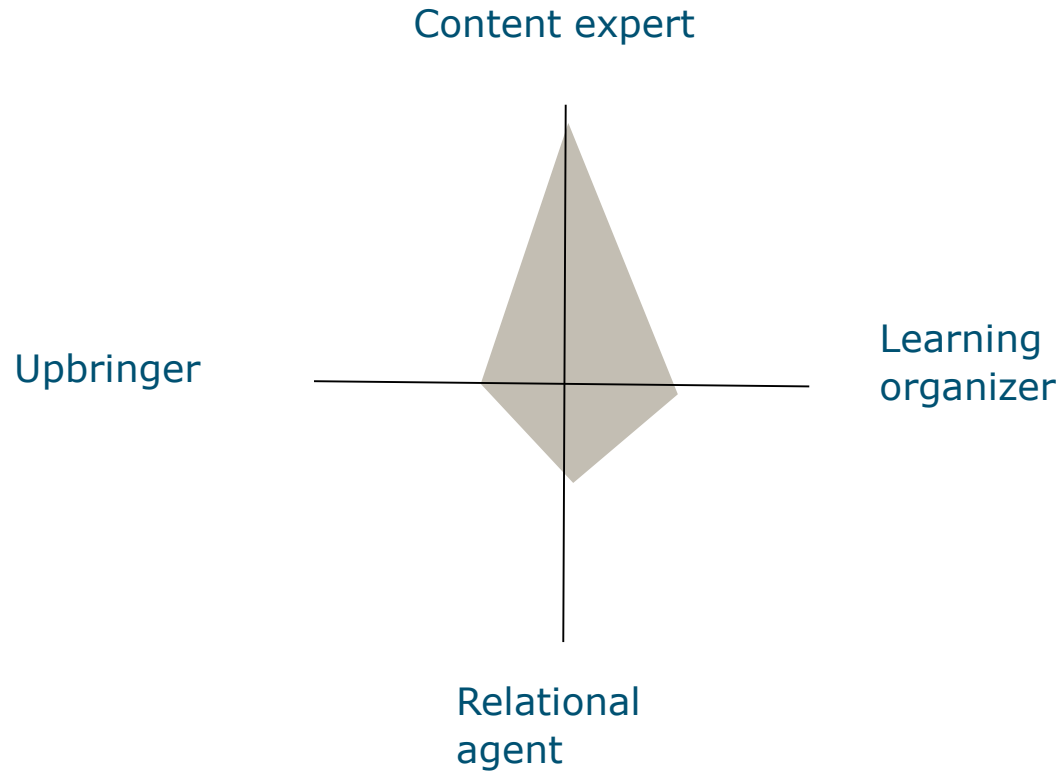
- Interaction between teacher as '**person**' and teacher as '**professional**'
- Personal and professional aspects may 'conflict': tensions / stress (Pillen, den Brok & Beijaard, 2013)
- **Professional identity roles** (may align or conflict):
  - Interpersonal role
  - Content expert role
  - Learning supportive role
  - Pedagogical role
  - Role as member of school organisation

# Short assignment

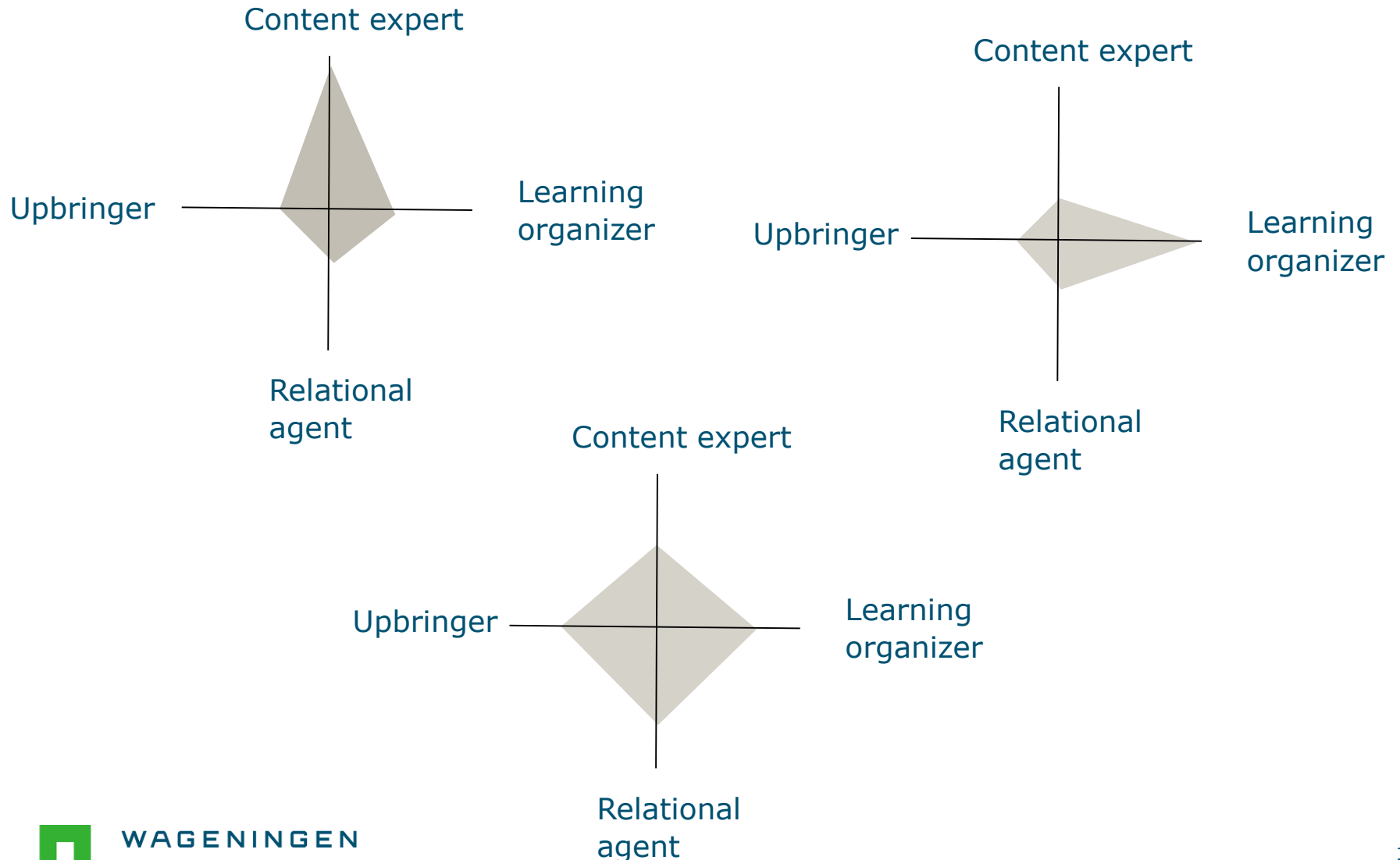
- *Imagine you have 100 points to assign among different teacher roles you can play*
- *How would you divide your points across:*
  - *Role as content expert*
  - *Role as organizer of learning activities / classroom environment creator*
  - *Role as relational agent*
  - *Role as 'upbringer' (pedagogical coach)*



# Draw your profile (see example)



# What is your teacher identity profile?



# Study 1: Professional identity tensions (Pillen et al., 2013)

- Literature study on professional tensions (teachers, nurses, care professionals).
- Interview study with 24 beginning teachers on tensions and dilemma's.
- Categorizing outcomes interviews based on theory (top-down) and on new findings (grounded; bottom-up).
- Distributing list of tensions as questionnaire to 182 student teachers.
- Repeating questionnaire study one year later (partly same sample).
- Establishing 'profiles' and changes in tensions.

# Identity tensions – some examples

**Which tensions do you recognize / have you encountered yourself?**

1	Wanting to care for students versus the expectation to be strict
2	Feeling incompetent versus the expectation to be an expert
3	Investing in private life versus in work
4	Feeling like a student versus the expectation to act like an adult teacher
5	Discrepancy in vision between teacher education institute and practice school: which to follow?

# Identity tensions - overview

Identity dilemmas in order from most occurred to least occurred		%
1	Wanting to care for students versus the expectation to be tough	60.4
2	Being eager to fulfil tasks well versus experiencing a lack of time to do so	36.3
3	Dealing with non-corresponding demands/offers between teacher education and practice school	33.5
4	Feeling incompetent versus the expectation to be an expert	26.9
5	Wanting to fulfil in students needs versus lacking the resources to fulfil those needs	26.9
6	Wanting to invest in private life versus in work	25.8
7	Wanting to treat students as a whole versus the need to asses students on basis of their performance only	23.6
8	Feeling dependent on your mentor versus wanting to go your own way in teaching	20.9
9	Wanting to keep a student's integrity versus feeling the need to interfere for the sake of others	17.6
10	Feeling like a student versus the expectation to act like an adult teacher	16.5
11	Feeling like a peer of students versus wanting to take the responsibility as a teacher	15.4
12	Differences in demands of both teacher education and practice school: which to follow?	13.2

# Overarching themes in tensions

- The changing role from being a student to becoming a teacher
- Conflicts between desired and actual support given to students
- Conflicting conceptions of learning to teach

# Identity tensions – emotional responses

Feelings in order from most reported to least reported		Total frequencies across all dilemmas %
1.	Feeling helpless	17.5%
2	Feeling to fall short	14.3%
3	Feeling angry	9.3%
4	Feeling insecure/ doubtful	9.1%
5	Feeling to not be taken seriously	8.2%
6	Feeling a lack of motivation	8.1%
7	Feeling frustrated	7.7%
8	Feeling uncomfortable	7.5%
9	Feeling resigned	6.8%
10	Feeling fed up	5.8%

# Identity tensions - reactions

Used strategies in %	Total frequencies across all dilemmas in %
Searching for solution yourself	30.7%
Speaking to a significant other	48.4%
Offered help	0.9%
Putting up with the situation	18.9%
Total	100%



# Identity tensions – profiles (cluster analysis)

Profiles	N teachers	Average % Theme 1 (roles)	Average % Theme 2 (support)	Average % Theme 3 (conceptions)
Teachers struggling with significant others	69	29%	15%	<b>58%</b>
Teachers with care-related tensions	25	22%	<b>75%</b>	21%
Teachers with responsibility-related tensions	57	<b>42%</b>	0%	8%
Moderately tense teachers	75	32%	36%	14%
Tension-free teachers	135	9%	0%	9%
Troubled teachers	12	<b>60%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>65%</b>

# Some conclusions - tensions

- Beginning teachers experience a variety of tensions
- Many tensions are related to classroom management / teacher-student interpersonal relations or changing roles (from student to teacher)
- Beginning teachers receive little help, and often deal with tensions individually
- There are different profiles recognizable in perceptions of/dealing with tensions
- Tensions change quite considerably over the first few years of the profession

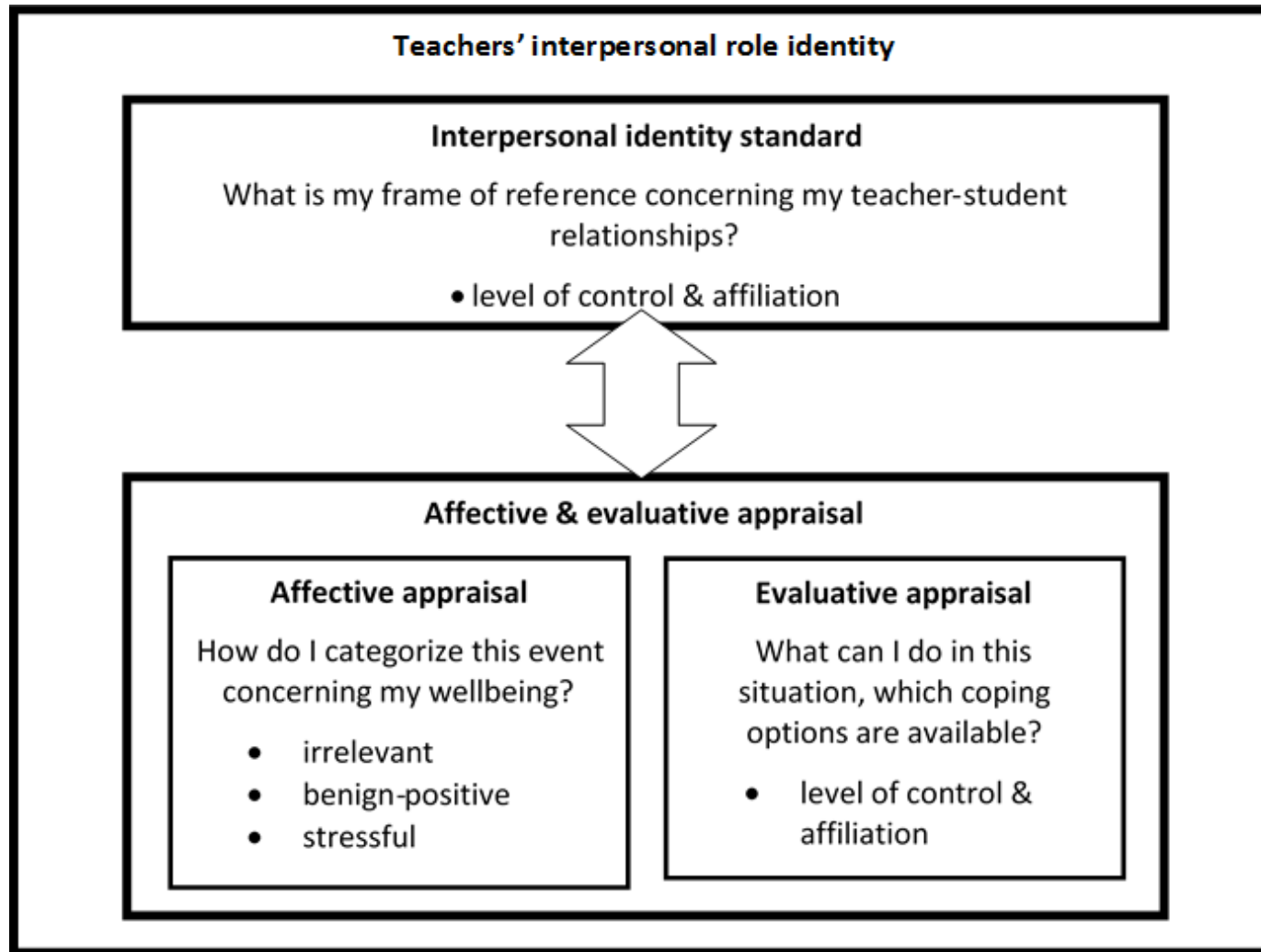
# Study 2: Interpersonal role identity (van der Want, den Brok & Beijaard, 2015)

- Investigating 24 teachers over 3 years period (9 beginners, 8 mid-career, 7 experienced)
- Videotaping 3 lessons during the year
- Conducting stimulated recall interviews, investigating 3 situations from video (lesson start, order problem situation, positive student behaviour situation)
- Conducting interview each year concerning 'interpersonal ideal in the classroom and personality'
- Annual teacher questionnaire on well-being (efficacy, stress, motivation)

# Identity standards and appraisals

- **Identity standards:** frame of reference – defines what you find important, who are you as teacher, who do you want to be
- **Situation appraisal**
  - **Emotional** appraisal: does this situation support my frame of reference or not?
  - **Cognitive/regulative** appraisal: what options do I have to change my frame of reference or my handling of the situation?

# Concepts & analysis framework



# Interview questions

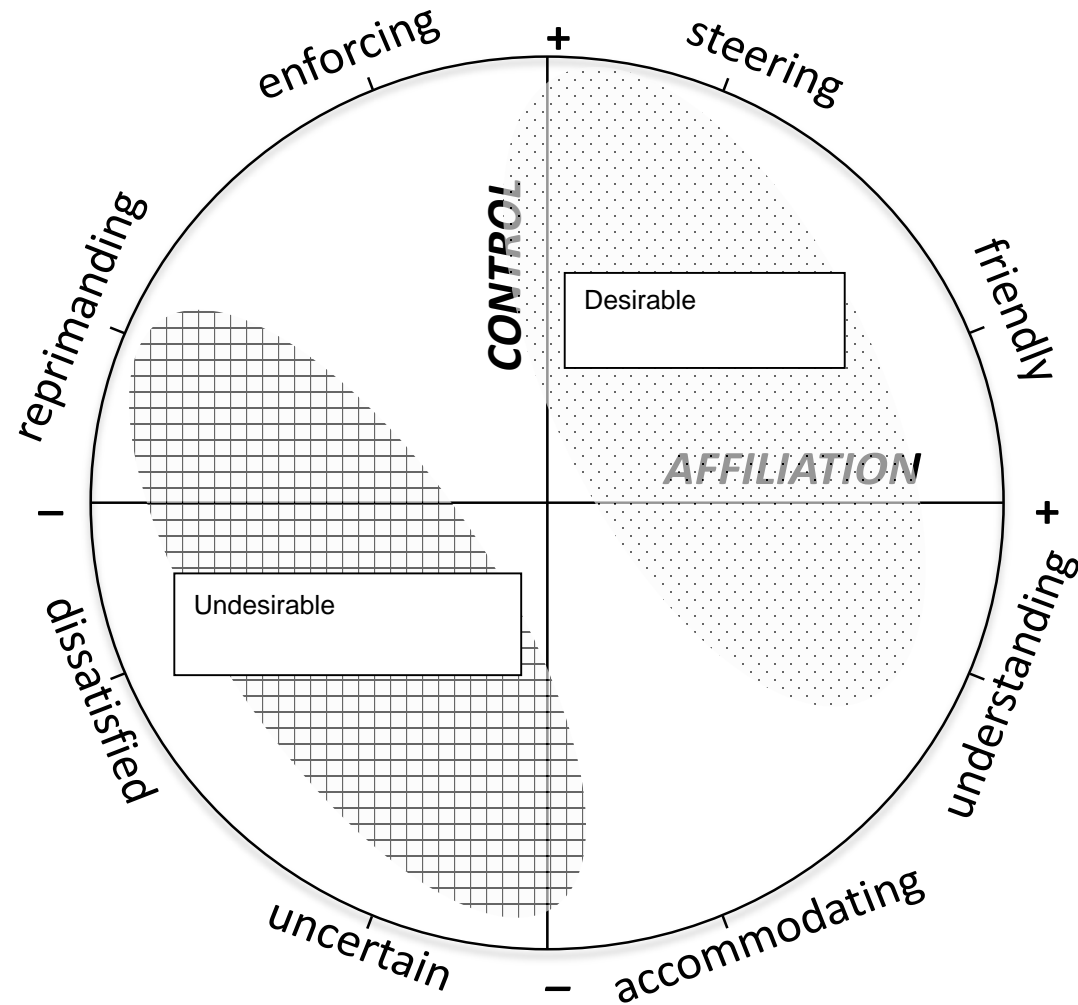
## Identity appraisals (stimulated recall questions)

Component	Question
Description	Can you describe this event? How relevant is this event for you?
Affective appraisal	What did you feel and think at that moment?
Evaluative appraisal	What were your options at that moment? What were you planning to do?

## Identity standards (semi structured interview)

Component	Question
Relationship description	Can you describe your relationship with students / class in general?
Relationship ideal	What would for you be the ideal relationship with students/class? What would fit you best?

# Model for interpersonal teacher behaviour



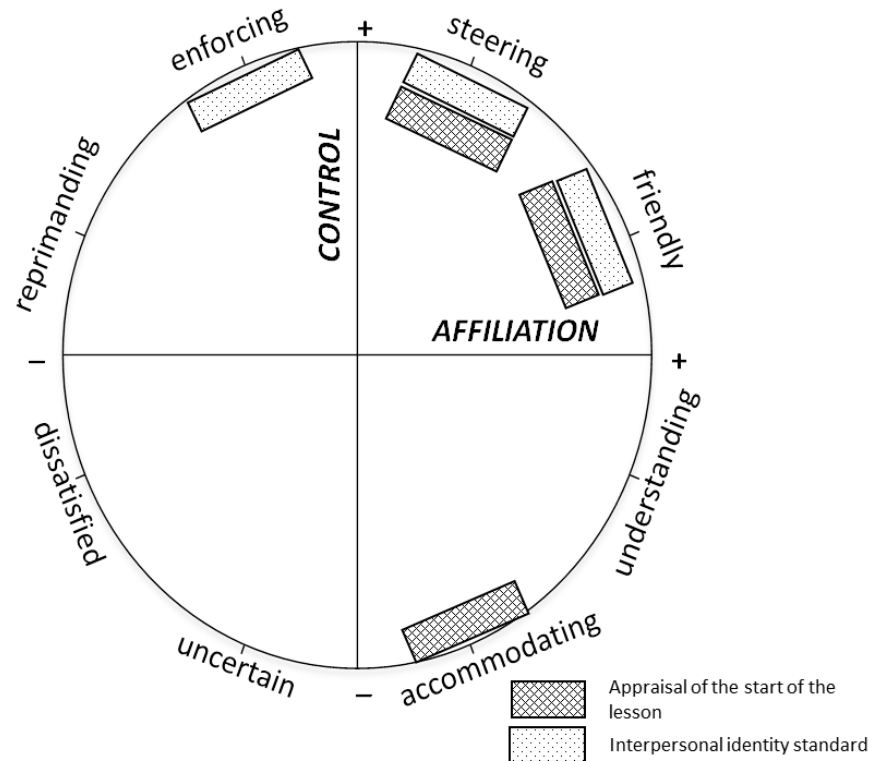
# Examples of analysis

## ■ Teacher Matthew (appraisal lesson start):

*"I give the students  
[accommodating  
or chitchat with  
all the time so I  
[accommodating  
positive about the*

**Teacher Mat**

*"(...) I am strict,  
have a problem,*



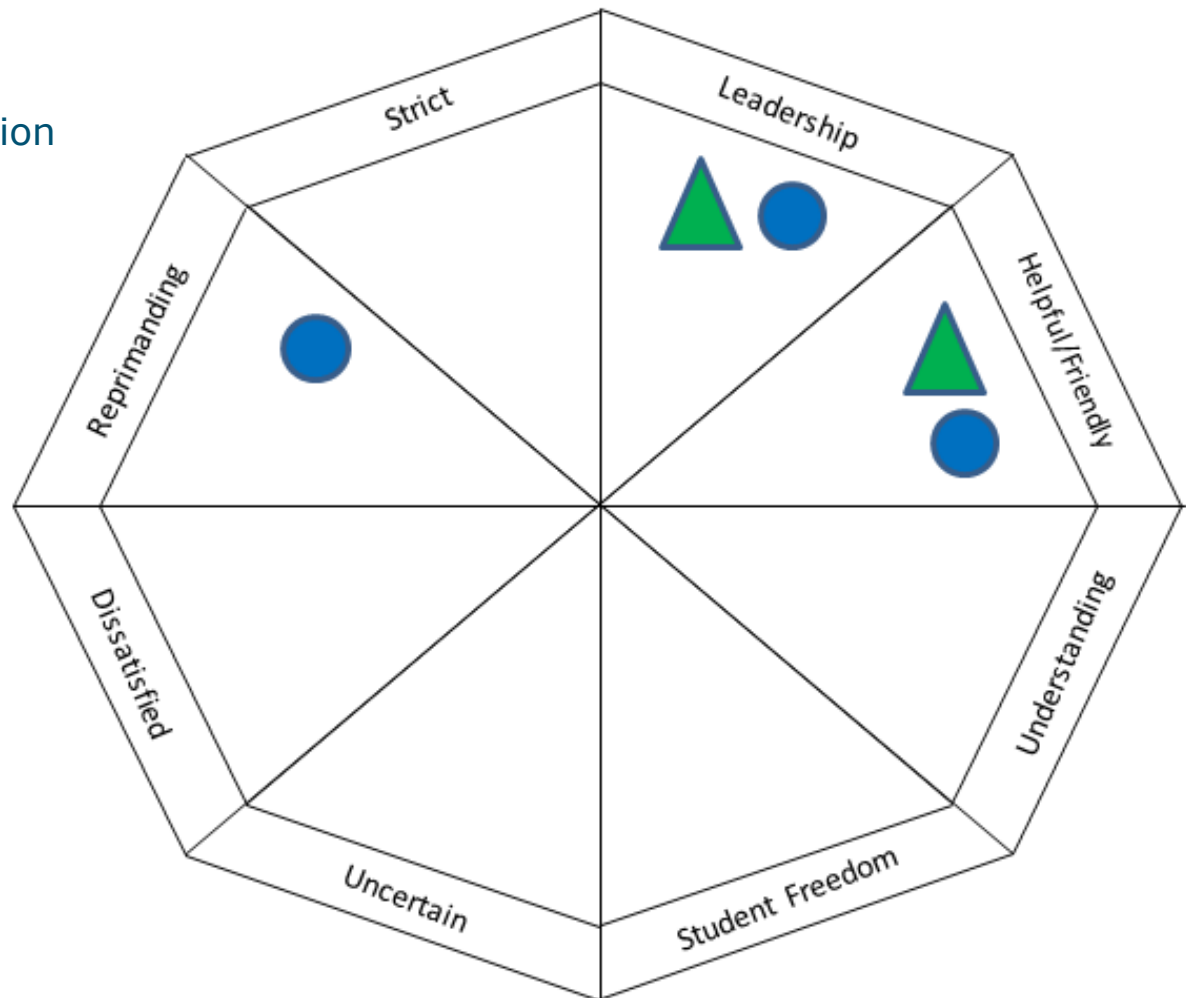
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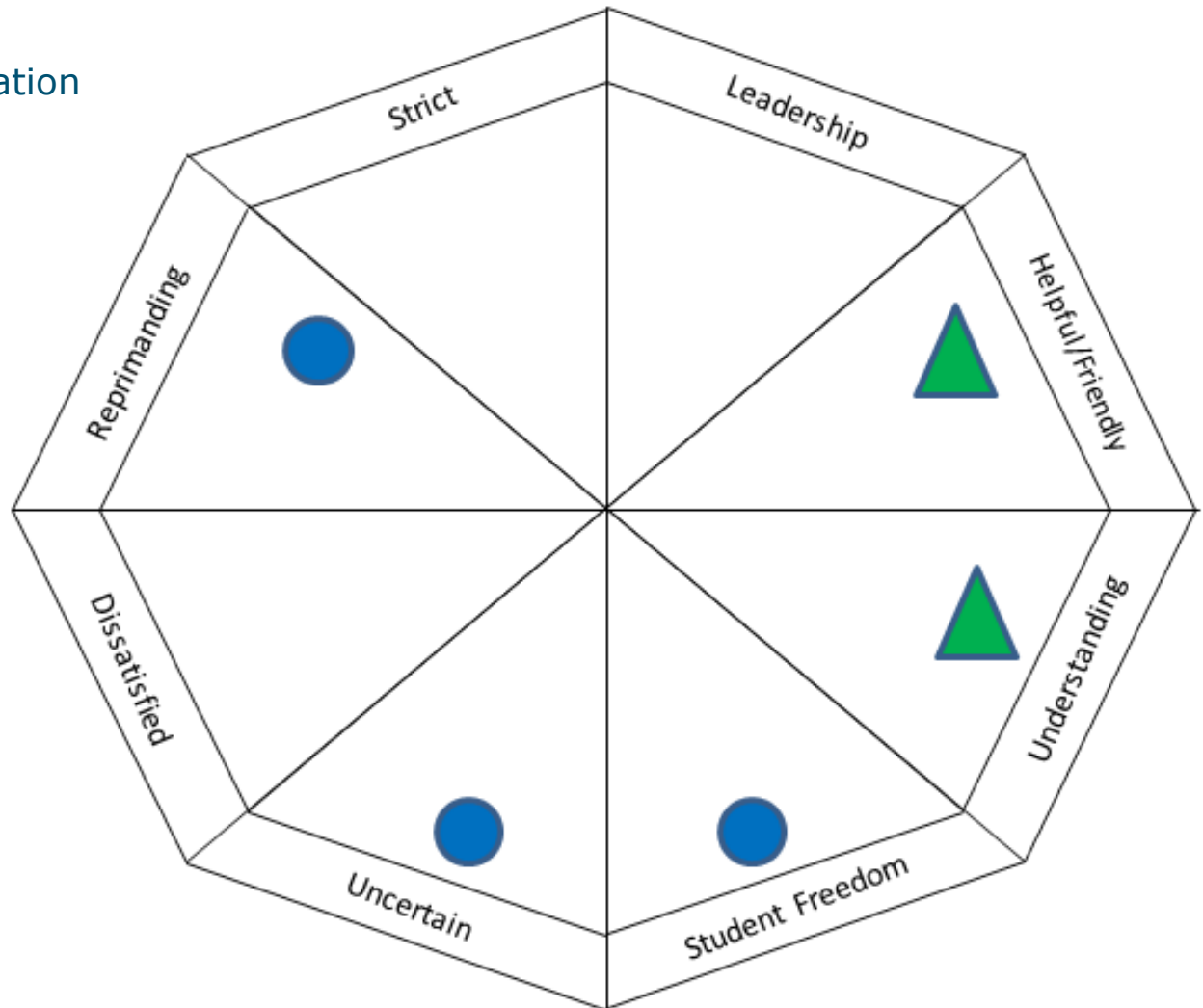
# Matching standards and appraisals (desirable) – group A (N=9)

Circle: appraisal in situation  
Triangle: standard



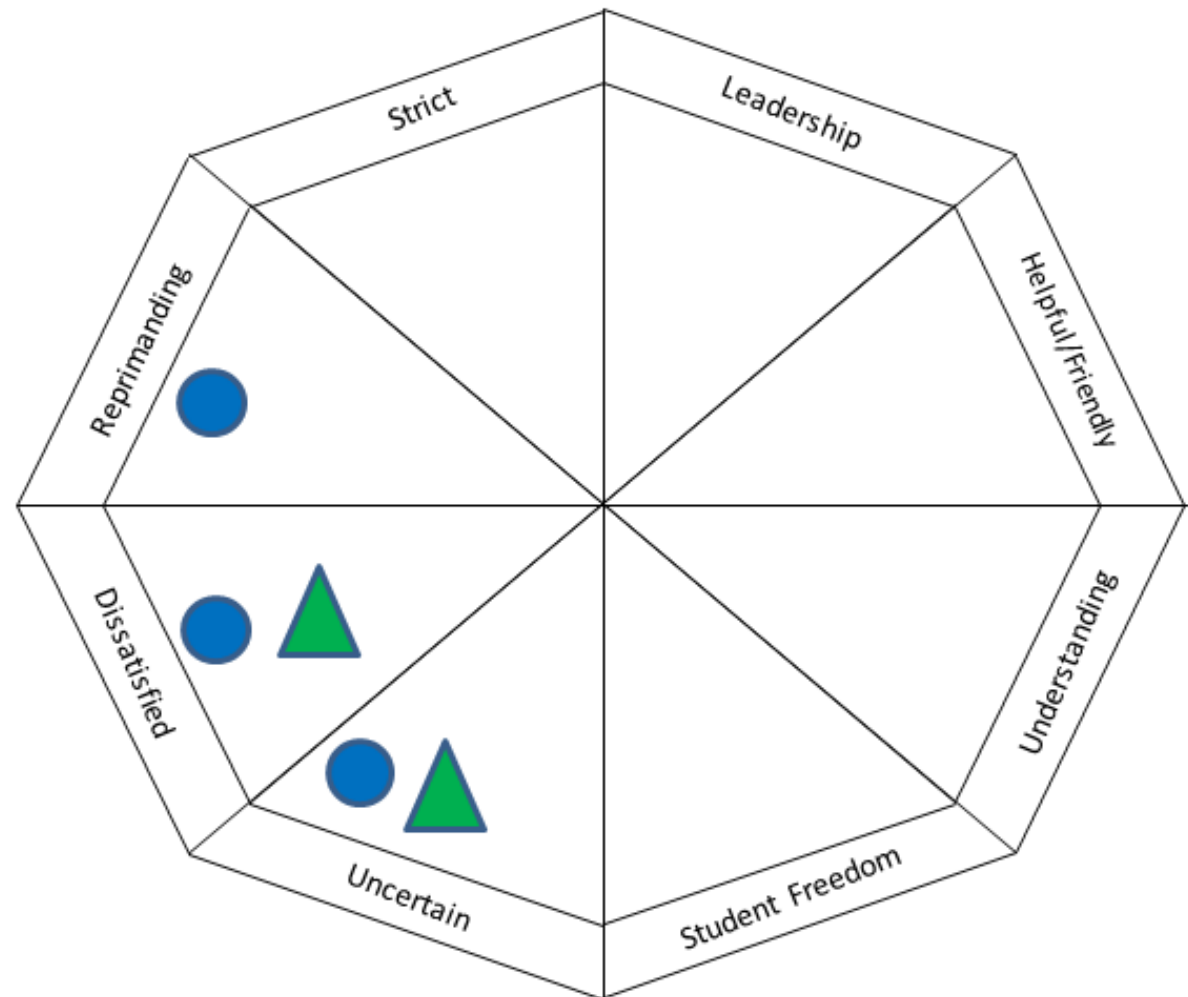
# Mismatching standards (desirable) and appraisals (undesirable) – group B (N=15)

Circle: appraisal in situation  
Triangle: standard

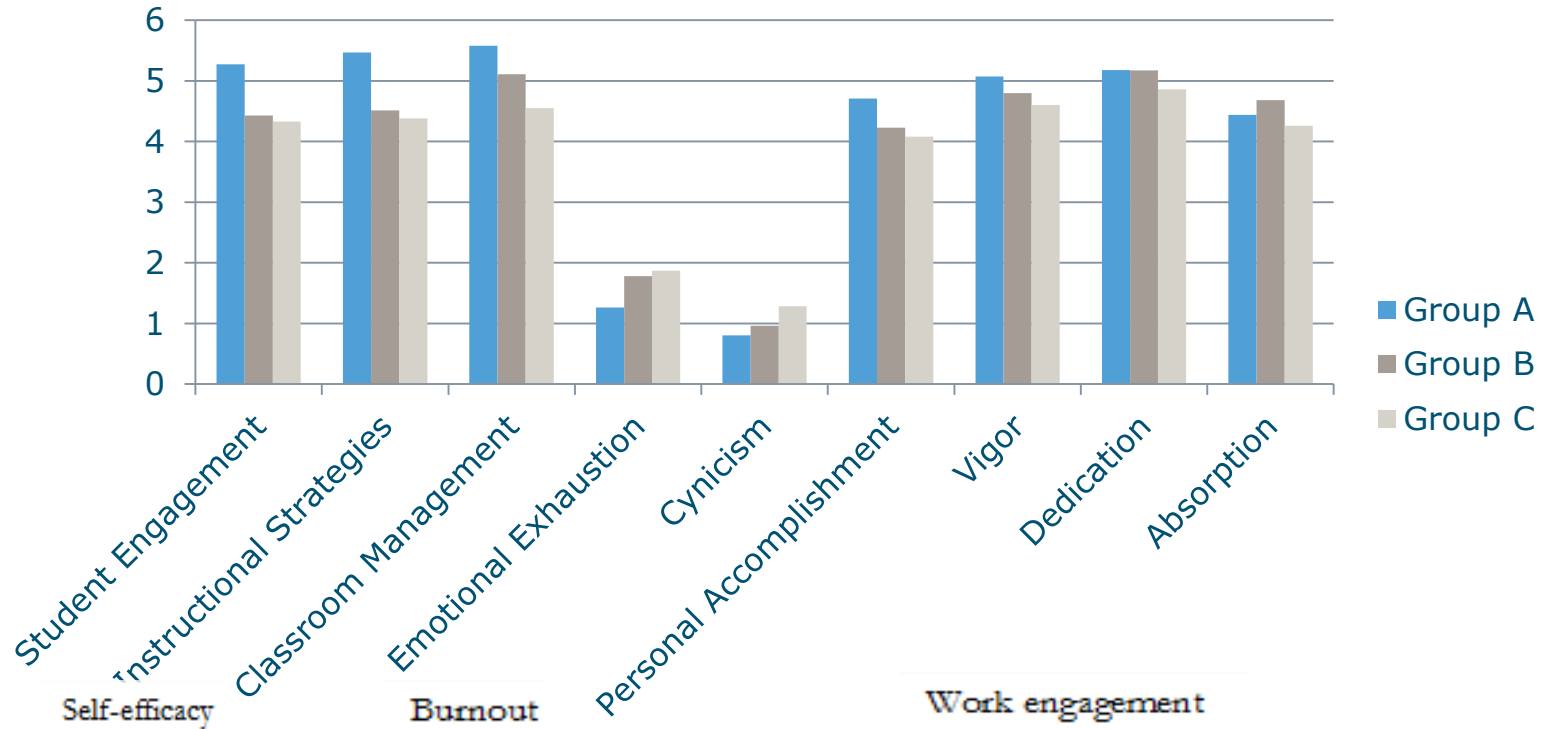


# Undesirable (mis)matching standards and appraisals – group C (N=5)

Circle: appraisal in situation  
Triangle: standard



# Interpersonal identity roles and teacher well-being



Group A: desirable matchers (standards & appraisals)

Group B: desirable standards, undesirable appraisals (mismatchers)

Group C: undersirable (mis)matchers (standards & appraisals)

# Changes over time (2011 – 2013)

	<b>Number of participants</b>
Healthy mismatches 2011/2013	15/6
Healthy matchers 2011 / 2013	9/16
Unhealthy (mis)matchers 2011/2013	5/2
Change from healthy mismatcher to healthy matcher	8
Other changes	3
No change	13/24 (mostly healthy matchers)

# The interpersonal identity role - conclusions

- Not all teachers experience balance between their identity standards and appraisals
- A considerable group of teachers moves from an undesirable identity role situation to a desirable one
- Number of positive and stressful appraisals decreases, number of 'neutral' appraisals increases
- Distinguishing between general images and responses in situations can be helpful for beginning teachers as well as for trainers/teacher educators/coaches

# Study 3: Professional identity and educational change / innovation (Ketelaar et al., 2014)

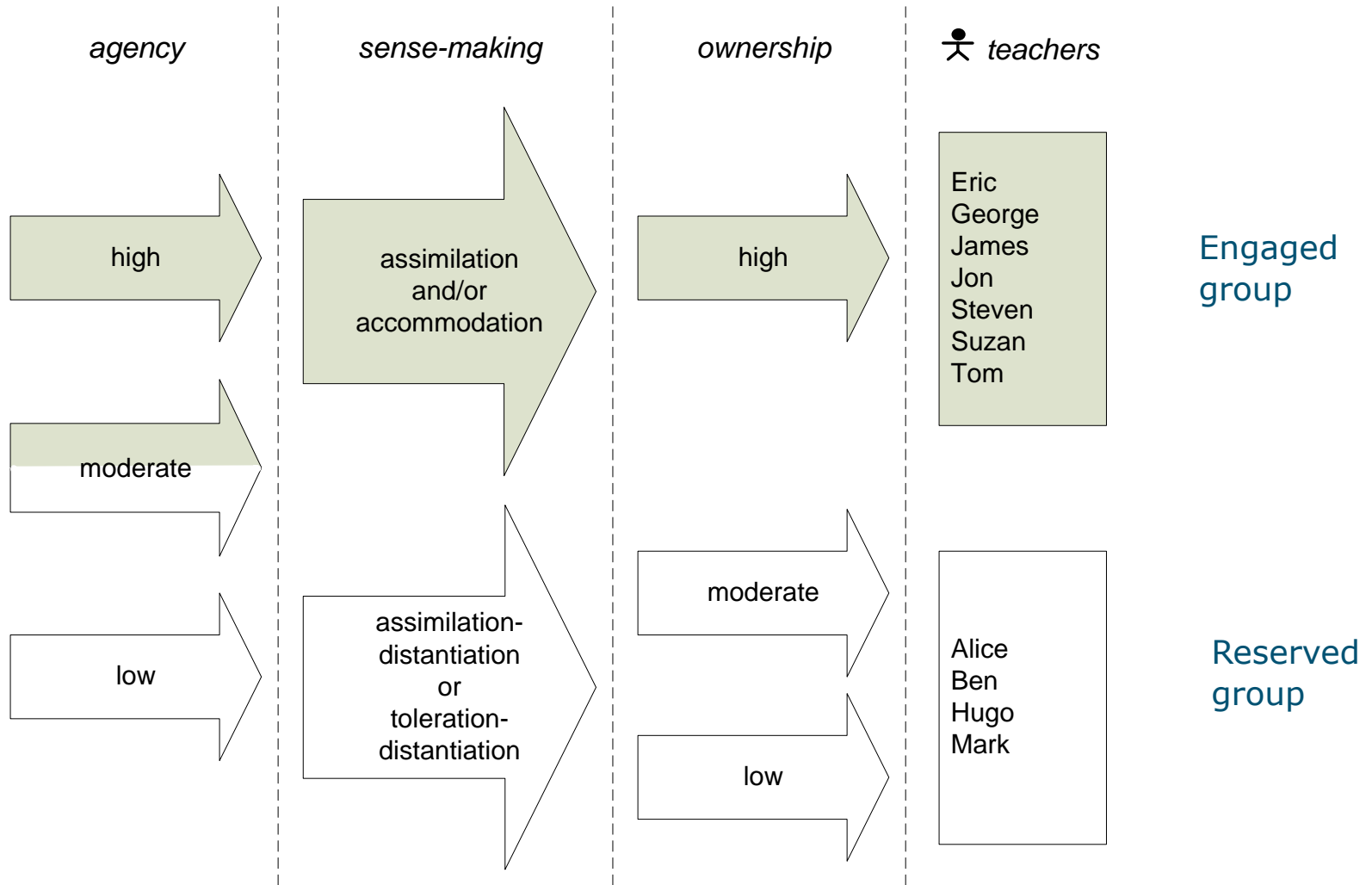
- Teachers in vocational education in the context of a change in pedagogy: taking more a coaching role
- 109 teachers complete an open-ended questionnaire
- Answers coded in categories and ordered (correspondence analysis)
- 11 teachers interviewed concerning coaching at their school and how this affected them in their roles as teacher
- Students in classes of the 11 teachers completed a questionnaire on teacher coaching behaviour

# Three identity related concepts

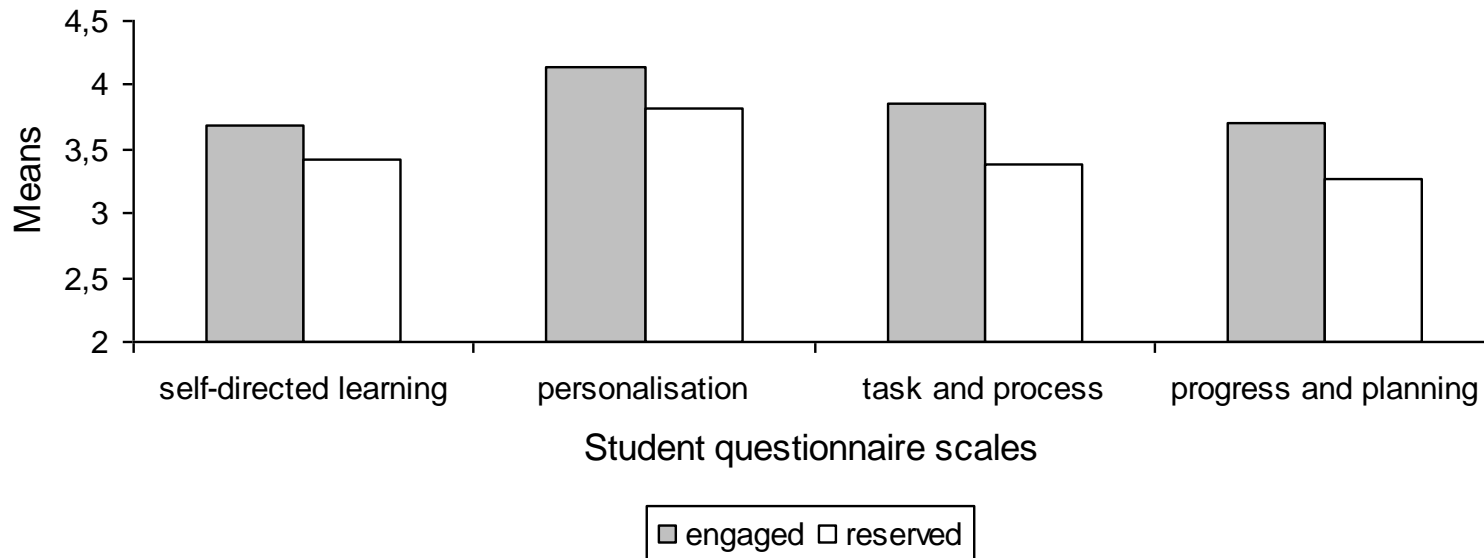
- **Agency** – feeling in control over own actions (setting goals, making choices, engaging in activities)
- **Meaning making** – interaction between teachers' own frame of reference/standards and those of the context/their school
  - *Assimilation*: adapting own frame to fit context
  - *Accommodation*: taking over frame from context
  - *Toleration*: accepting both context and own frame
  - *Distantiation*: disregarding context and preferring own frame
- **Ownership** – feeling ownership over innovation (communicating, feelings of necessity, spirit and support)



# Two groups of teachers



# Implementation in the class



# Identity and innovations - conclusions

- Teachers assign different meanings to an innovation, based on their own professional identity.
- Teachers show different amounts of agency and feel different amounts of ownership over an innovation.
- Identity, ownership and meaning making are related – they roughly divide teachers in two groups: engaged and reserved.
- Engaged teachers are perceived to implement an innovation more than reserved teachers.
- The professional-identity related concepts of meaning making, ownership and agency are useful in teacher education and in schools.

# Short break



# Part 2: the publishing process – meet the editor

- 1. How/where to start?
- 2. Identifying a journal/outlet/audience
- 3. The submission process
- 4. Reviews / common 'weaknesses' in submissions
- 5. How much to publish for a further career

# How/where to start?

- Decide on overall setup of your dissertation (monograph or set of articles?)
- Divide your dissertation in logical parts focussing on one major research question (with sub questions).
- If possible: present your concept article/manuscript first at a conference.
- Search for a possible journal or outlet.
- Submit your manuscript.

# The use of conferences

- Obtain feedback on your manuscript!
- Find related input/references/sources.
- Find a network – is going for a 'theme issue' an option?
- Find the editors! And let the editors find you. ('Test' if your work fits the aims of a potential journal.)
- Sometimes: find a potential co-author with expertise or experience.

# Identifying potential journals

- Look at the aims of the journal, but also size (smaller or larger manuscripts?).
- Look at the editorial board: esteemed names?
- Check impact factor, is the journal listed in SSCI, ISI or related indexes?
- Check with research school/graduate school: journal on list or requirements?
- Watch out for predatory journals or publishers! (Often ask money to get something published), see 'Beals' list: <https://beallslist.weebly.com/>
- Make a shortlist of journals and discuss with your supervisors/colleagues.



# The submission process

- 1. Manuscript submitted
- 2. Manuscript assigned to editor
- 3. Editor checks for fit with aims journal, and with editorial requirements (structure, referencing style, language, tables & figures, word count, etc.)
- 4. Editor assigns manuscript to 2 or more reviewers
- 5. Editor assigns to additional reviewers (if judgment is mixed)
- 6. Editor takes decision based on reviews, if needed also reviews him/herself
- 7. Judgement and reviews sent to author

# Some submission outcomes

- Publish as submitted (occurs almost never)
- Minor revisions needed (mainly small textual, adding info, etc.)
- Major revisions needed (change in focus, structure, line of reasoning, additional data or analyses requested, etc.)
- Rejected (not suitable, no fit with aims, not repairable)
- Transfer (advise to submit to another journal, often specifically named)

# Learning Environments Research – some facts & figures

- About 150 submissions per year – about 20-25 published
- Almost 50% of submissions are rejected before review! (No fit with aims journal, structure, publication requirements.)
- Of the remaining 50%: vast majority is judged with major revisions, only a hand full with minor revisions or fast accept.
- Typically 2 rounds of resubmitting needed (first major, then minor), sometimes 3 rounds.
- Overall time between first submission and acceptance: 6-12 months. (Add another 3-6 months for publication)

# How do editors decide to pick reviewers?

- Looking at topic/focus and methodology: any fit with seniors from the editorial board/reviewer list?
- Looking at reference list: many references to people that have published in the journal or that are on the board?
- Looking at country of origin: pick one close to the country of the submitting author, one more distant
- Note: often, a revision is sent to at least part of the same reviewers that also judged the initial submission!

# Rejection before review?

- If the manuscript does not focus on major concepts/variables mentioned in the aim of the journal.
- If there is no reference or positioning to other work in the domain or published in the journal.
- If the manuscript does not adhere to structure and style or size of the journal.
- If the manuscript is visibly full of language errors or other grammatical/textual errors.

# Typical weaknesses / how to enhance success?

- Added value of the study is not well described (not only practical, also theoretical!)
- No clear research problem and/or research questions.
- Theory discussed is not linked to method and/or results.
- Method misses relevant info and too short (sampling, analysis steps, procedures)
- Unstructured results (not structured according to questions, too lengthy)
- Discussion is repetition of results, rather than interpretation of findings in relation to theory, reflecting on limitations and avenues for further research, and implications based on findings.

# Typical weaknesses

- Lack of consistency and alignment between different parts of the manuscript.
- No clearly defined concepts.
- Unclear tables, too many tables, not needed tables, tables not explained in text.
- Unclear figures, figures not explained in text, figures present no new information compared to text or tables.
- Types of analyses and/or variables included in them not justified
- Qualitative research: steps in coding/merging not explained, no attention for reliability or validity measures.
- Too much focus on local references, focus is not 'international' enough.

# Some recommendations

- In a good article, not the theory and results are the largest part, but the method and discussion sections!
- A good article sells itself: the introduction invites further reading and clearly describes the problem addressed and added value of the study.
- In the discussion, all implications are sufficiently specific, and directly linkable to particular results/findings.
- In the discussion, focus lies on the original findings or larger trends, not on all the small subfindings.
- End your manuscript positively (don't end with the limitations!)
- Take good care of the little things: tables, figures, references, headings, language.



# How much to publish?

- Look at the requirements of your university for the dissertation. (In Europe: 3-4 articles make dissertation, 1 has to be published before defence, rest in submission)
- Requirements for admission to research school? (Typically: 6-8 publications per 4-5 years)
- Make sure you also have single-author publications if you go beyond 'post-doc' positions.
- Make sure to publish with local colleagues, but also international colleagues!
- Create a range in types of publications: academic, professional, conferences, also book chapters.
- Theme issues as interesting options!

# Final word

- Professors also encounter (many) rejections or missed grants!
- Be patient and keep on trying: success WILL come.
- Don't take reviews personally, they are meant to make your work better (even if clumsy or harshly formulated).
- After receiving reviews: take some time, don't react immediately, often your first reaction is emotional.
- When resubmitting: create an elaborate document/letter detailing all your answers and responses to reviews and add this as separate document: it will speed up the process and enhance your chances!
- Always thank the reviewers/editor, they put in a lot of work/effort in reading your work!

# Questions?