

Student teacher identity development as transformative learning

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The research focuses on student teachers and their identity development. Prior research has identified teacher identity profiles (Poom-Valickis & Löfström, 2018). In this study, we identify Transformative Learning (Mezirov, 1991) processes within the profiles. The research questions were:

1. How do student teachers conceptualize their professional identity development?
2. How does learning emerge as transformation in student teacher identity development?

The data were collected 2020 in a course on teacher identity for student teachers using a narrative and reflective writing assignment. During the data collection, the study program had gone to distance mode. The participants were 31 students (24 female/7 male) in a Finnish teacher education program. We applied in the first phase of the analysis a data-oriented inductive strategy. In the second stage a deductive strategy mirroring the themes against the profile categories (Poom-Valickis & Löfström, 2018) was applied. Participation in the research was voluntary and based on informed consent.

Initial results show that the student teachers expressed different identity development paths and consequently could be described as having different teacher identity profiles, namely *Mission accomplished*, *Experiences realists*, *Identity seekers*, *Doubtful students* and *Self-efficacious teachers*. While for some students, teacher education had strengthened their professional self-efficacy in straight-forward ways, for others, the process was clearly deepened through the disruption of self-beliefs. We elaborate what the transformational learning processes unfold in the different profiles. We report on the role of distance learning in teacher identity development when pertinent to the transformative learning process.

Keywords: Student teacher, identity development, transformative learning, qualitative approach

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