Two metaphors for teacher identity: which one do we choose?

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“Beautiful contrast…
…Not how things should be”

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Outline

1. Metaphors and frames
2. Identity?
3. What does identity do?
4. Teacher Identity
   1. Identity as performance
   2. Identity as contingent and negotiated
5. Faculty Development?
The framing effect
On Two Metaphors for Learning and the Dangers of Choosing Just One

Anna Sfard
Acquisition / individualist

- Who am I?
- How do I understand myself?
- How do other people see me?
- How do I differentiate myself?
- To whom do I affiliate myself?
- Defined and measurable
- Self schema
- Multiple
Two metaphors
Identity?
Participation; Social Relational

• Who am I in this moment / context?
• How do I present myself to these people?
• Who am I permitted to be in this context?
• Fluid and relational
• Something I do rather than own
Formation

Internal project of the self
• Self authored
• Synthesis of temperament, role models, experiences....
• A single coherent self

Relational process
• Co-constructed though interaction with others
• Shaped by social, cultural and material affordances.
• Revealed in presentations of self particular to context
Two metaphors
Identity?
What does identity do?

• Explain ourselves
• Conduct ourselves
  • Scope and nature of work.
• What’s important
• Values and alignments.
• Social capital.
• Critical organising element
Communicating Identity

• Practice
  • Practice / Identity

• Language
  • Talking the talk
  • Positioning self; others
  • Claiming affiliation (“we”)

• Dress
  • Symbols
  • Insignia
Pause for breath...

• Internal project of the self
  • Each with its own particular attributes, values and practices

• Co-construction in relation to social context.
  • Something you do / perform in relation to others

• Identity is manifest in what you do; how you talk; how you dress
  • Identity = Practice

• Established identities are socio-historical and sociocultural constructs
  • Tend to be resistant to change.
Identity Conflict?
“All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts.”
Two metaphors
Identity as performance
Identity, identification and medical education: why should we care?
Lynn V Monrouxe

Identities are not fixed cognitive schemas; rather, identities are what we do.

Identities are asserted and claimed through continual interactions; we seek to be and be seen to be as we attempt to manage others’ impressions of ourselves and the identities we claim.
Becoming a Clinical Teacher: Identity Formation in Context

Peter Cantillon, MHPE, MSc, MRCGP, Tim Dornan, PhD, MHPE, MRCP, and Willem De Grave, PhD

Abstract

Purpose
Most clinical teachers have not been trained to teach, and faculty development for clinical teachers is undermined by poor attendance, inadequate knowledge transfer, and unsustainability. A crucial question for faculty developers to consider is how clinicians become teachers “on the job.” Such knowledge is important in the design of future workplace-based faculty development initiatives. The authors conducted a scoping review of research on the relationship between becoming a clinical teacher and the clinical environments in which those teachers work.

(2010), the authors searched 12 databases. They subjected the articles discovered to four phases of screening, using iteratively developed inclusion/exclusion criteria. They charted data from the final selection of articles and used thematic analysis to synthesize findings.

Results
Thirty-four research reports met the inclusion criteria. Most (n = 24) took an individualist stance toward identity, focusing on how teachers individually construct their teacher identity in tension with their clinician identities. Only 10 studies identity formation as a social relational phenomenon, negotiated within hierarchical social structures. Twenty-nine of the included studies made little or no use of explicit theoretical frameworks, which limited their rigor and transferability.

Conclusions
Clinicians reconciled their identities as teachers with their identities as clinicians by juggling the two, finding mutuality between them, or forging merged identities that minimized tensions between educational and clinical roles. They did so in hierarchical social settings where patient care and research were
Two metaphors
Teacher identity

Individualist 71%

Synthesis

Identity juggling
Identity mutuality
Identity integration

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Two metaphors
Teacher identity

Social-relational
29%

Synthesis

- Contingent
- Negotiated
- Organisationally informed
- Communicated
How do clinicians become teachers?

Two metaphors
Identity as negotiated
Legitimisation

1. Hierarchical
2. Looking the part
   Reproduce implicit curriculum (what counts; what matters)
3. Resistant to change

You could see some of the registrars were moulding themselves in the likeness and image of their master, because you had to. T12

You are not going to get feedback when you are a consultant because nobody is going to have the guts to tell you, ... the recipients are your subordinates....and in that context I think it’s hard for them to come up to you afterwards and say ....’You were a bit hard on that girl who didn’t know about hyperglycaemia T14
I should also say that I would have been perceived as a wonderful teacher there, because they told me. They’d be much more open about telling you things like that than they would in a place like this. They had the environment to encourage you and let you go ahead.

### Institutional effect
1. Alignment
2. Norms, goals, contracts
3. Potentially disruptive
Journey through a series of political landscapes

Two metaphors
Identity as negotiated
“You’re restricted in the sense that you have a huge clinical load and that’s what you’re paid for...in my contract there is a nominal allocation for clinical teaching activity, but it’s really hard to find the time for that” T9.
Last stop

• Self authored
  • Identities are multiple
    • Each with associated norms, values and practices
  • Identities are juggled (in response to context)
  • Identities are merged 😊

• Constructed in dialogue with social context
  • Identity as fluid and contingent
  • Identity as historically and culturally informed
  • Identity as formed and performed:
    • In relation to political landscapes
    • in relation to asymmetries of power
  • Identity as enabled or diminished by institutional contexts
Faculty development can and should be used strategically to foster stronger teacher identities.
Leverage micro-culture
Leverage context.

- Leave the classroom
- Observe working / teaching in situ
- Study policies and frameworks
- Recruit reflexive collaborators
  - "Make strange" in own setting
- Video-reflexive exercises
  - Circumvent the language deficit
  - Use storytelling
  - Stimulate awareness
  - Communication about being a teacher.

Two metaphors
Faculty Development?

FacDev

Cultural diviners

(Marginal) participant observers

Narrative facilitators

Video-reflexive leads
Leveraging macro-culture

1. **Negotiators and infiltrators**
   1. Changes in policies and frameworks
      1. Reputation
      2. Working / learning environment
   2. Recognised teacher profiles
   3. Criterion based advancement
   4. Teacher recognition and reward

2. **Get in early.**
Leverage longitudinal programmes

• Establish long term relationships with participants
• Encourage them to construct social networks of teachers
  • Learn about how successful communities of teaching practice work
  • Learn how to construct communities beyond parent discipline.
• Know how to be a catalyst for organisational change
  • Understand organisational structure and culture
  • Anticipate and understand social and interpersonal obstacles to change
To Conclude.....
Selected References