

Designing the Plane While Flying It: A Study of Teacher Training for Further Education in Ireland.

Creating and enhancing human capital through expanding participation in further and higher education has been identified as central to achieving Ireland's recovery and economic renewal (Dept of the Taoiseach, 2010, 2011; Department of Education and Skills, 2011). Teachers working within adult and further education now face an increased demand to hold a professional qualification that ensures they have the interdisciplinary knowledge, skills, qualities and dispositions appropriate for work with adults in further education. (Teaching Council Act; Section 38, 2011). Therefore, the teacher education qualification (TEQ) programmes have to create a learning space that enables the development of new and different skills and perspectives. In particular, the participants must come to see that to explore and exploit their existing and future knowledge and skills, it may be necessary to reconsider their professional identity and self states.

This paper reports on the first phase of longitudinal research project undertaken at Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) focused on the teaching-learning environment of two of the first graduate and postgraduate TEQ programmes for Further Education in Ireland. More precisely, the study takes a close look at participants' intentions, expectations and experiences; following their evolving progress over the first year of their TEQ programme. The focus of the research is to explore how to create transformative learning spaces that enhance and support the emergence of a professional identity for Irish educators within adult and adult basic education.

Literatures that inform this study include HEA, TCI and government policy and discussion papers and monographs; Entwistle (2009, 2008), Donald (2002), Land (2004, 2005, King (2005, 2009), Graham (2011), Higgins (1987), Ibarra & Petriglieri (2010) and Markus & Nurius (1986).

The WIT School of Lifelong Learning and Education is the context for this case study. Methods used included reflective statements, collaborative workshop, interviews, and document analysis.

The research results identify aspects of the learning space that impact on the students' ability to overcome the 'troublesome knowledge' of disciplinary barriers; of engaging in insider inquiry; and of continuous reflection on evolving multiple self-states as teachers and researchers.

Further steps are identified for developing the TEQ programmes and also suggestions for initiatives within and between faculties in other partner institutions. The need for more research into creating professional transformative learning spaces in general is identified.

Key words: transformative learning, teaching-learning environments (TLEs), researcher self-states, insider inquiry, troublesome knowledge, ways of thinking and practicing (WTPs), professional identity.