Title: Formation and Transformation of Pre-service Chinese Language Teachers’ Professional Identity: From a Dynamic Systems Perspective

Abstract: Teacher identity is a branch of study in teacher education that focuses on teachers’ cognition and conception of being a teacher. Exploring the meaning of teacher identity is regarded as an important analytic tool to understand teachers’ professional development (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2011; Varghese et al., 2005). Despite the significance of study teacher identity, there is very limited research on exploring the process of Chinese language teachers’ identity construction.

Although it is difficult to define teacher identity (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009), there is a consistence that teacher identity is a rich and dynamic concept. It is not fixed; it is dynamically evolving and multifaceted (Gee, 2001). In order to better understand the unstable and shifting nature of teacher identity, Dynamic System Theory (DST) (De Bot, 2008) and chaos/complexity theory (Ch/C) (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) was used as the theoretical framework of this research.

Within the framework of teacher identity and DST & Ch/C theory, this study conducted a longitudinal investigation into teacher identity by using a qualitative research. This study described the process of formation and transformation of pre-service Chinese language teachers’ professional identity, explored the factors that influence teacher’s identity change, and discussed how the shift of identity affects their motivation of becoming a teacher.

It is found that pre-service teachers' professional identity construction is a non-linear process. It is unpredictable and environmental involved. The result of this research draws some implications on teacher education program.

References:


