

British students' professional persona development through teaching English in local schools in Hong Kong

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The Hong Kong Summer Camp

'My visit to Hong Kong was incredible and made me fall in love with that part of the world. For five weeks I was given the amazing opportunity to live and work in Hong Kong, working in mainstream and special schools to deliver lessons and activities as part of a social enterprise and cultural exchange summer camp. I was part of a team of SENI and Primary Education students, working together to provide activities but we worked individually to plan and deliver lessons to our students.'



Overseas mobility experiences (OMEs) for trainee teachers

A model for professional persona development

- Conscious self-reflection
- Critical self-evaluation
- Influence of culture



HONG KONG SUMMER CAMP



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04.07.18

EXPECTATIONS, HOPES AND REFLECTIONS

Hello all, Here are some comments on my expectations and hopes...

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ANIMALS AND BIRDS

Animals...



The induction programme

Building an interactive community

Active Blended Learning principles:

personalised learning, sense-making, knowledge construction, developing critical thinking skills and student centredness

Activity Theory:

Social communication and interaction, problem solving, activity, learning

Background literature

Study abroad Programs(SAP) are highly desirable experiential learning opportunities, providing **situational learning** for students that could not otherwise be achieved in the home university (Madden et al, 2018).

The sociological and psychological differences to the home country **enabled change** within the visiting students through critical reflection, and further assisted in generating conceptualisation of individuation (Cole, 2017).

Students were challenged to **assimilate the new experiential learning** offered by being in a different culture with the prior class-based learning conducted in their home culture (Madden et al, 2019)..

A **greater sense of self** occurred simultaneously with the emergence of the adult that coincided with study abroad experiences (Harper, 2018).

The role of **self-reflection** to focus the individual on the transformative aspects of OMEs (Hall, 2016).

Critical period of **teacher identify development** at pre-service stage (Trent, 2014).

Gap: teacher education and the value of OMEs in professional personal development

The research

21 second year undergraduate students teaching summer school English to local students in regular and special schools in Hong Kong for 5 weeks.

Data were gathered by focus group interviews in situ in allocated schools in Hong Kong. Questions were prepared in relation to the theoretical framework and constructed by the authors beforehand: e.g. “What differences do you notice to working in the UK?” “What cultural ways of teaching are there?” and “How are you approaching the differences?”

An iterative approach was applied to transcribed data and transcriptions were scrutinized for codes (Creswell, 2008). Initial coding was done independently by the researchers and resulting codes were compared and then applied. A thematic analysis was then applied for the exploration of themes.



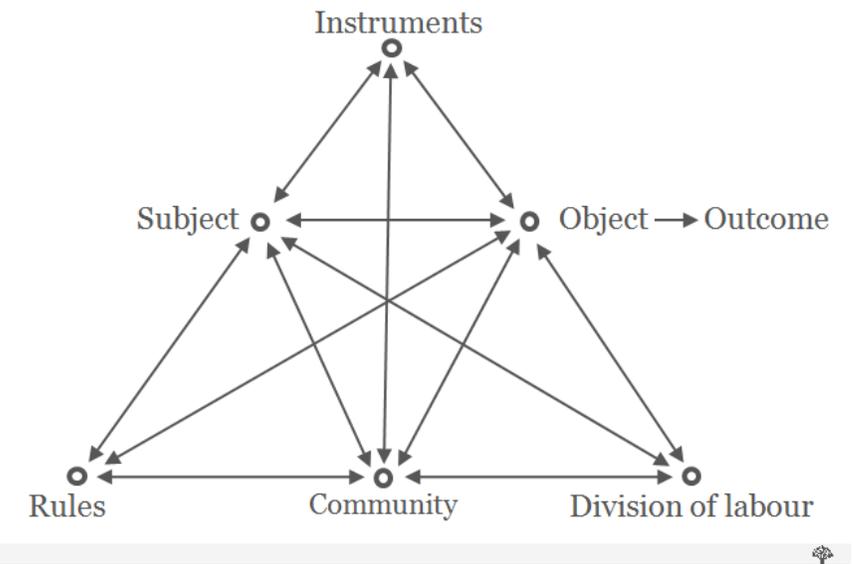
Two broad themes, four major themes and eight minor themes.

Three models of transformational processes



The Transformative Process
(Mesirow, 2000)

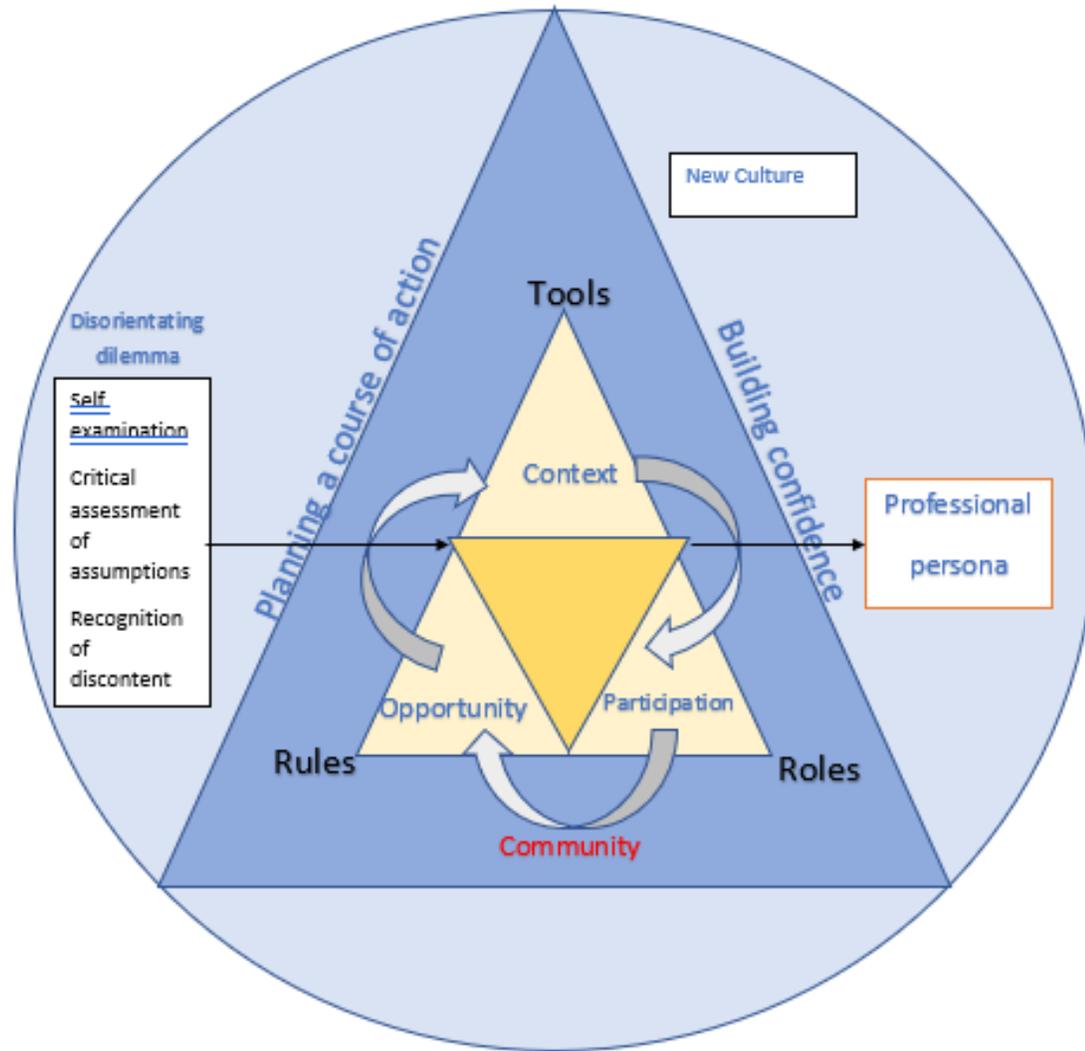
The influence of culture
and environment
(Macblain, 2014)



Activity Theory
(Engestrom, 1987)

Proposed model

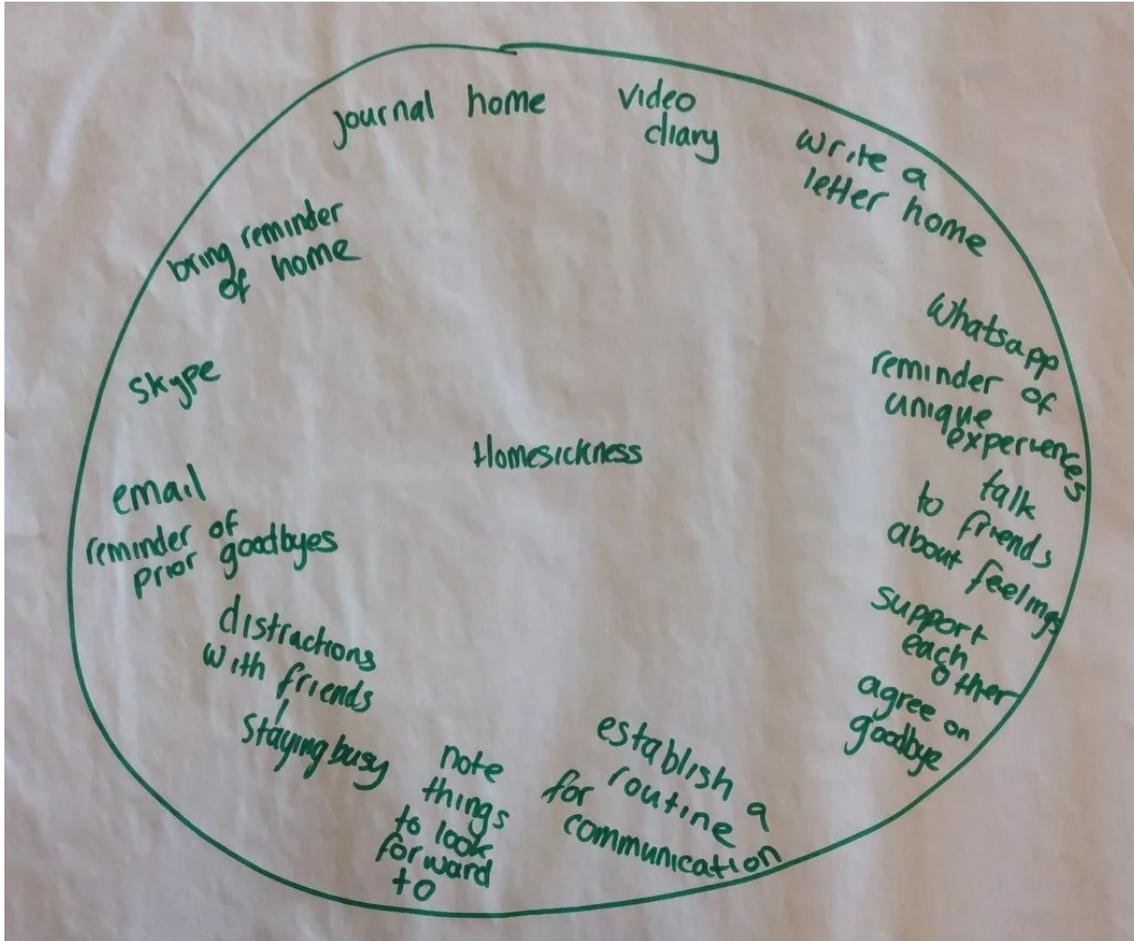
A conceptual model for professional persona development and OMEs



Adopting the role of an ESL teacher and activity leader, the students' individual professional persona emerges in a transformational way over time via:

- living and working in a different culture
- interacting with professional people who hold different values, and pedagogies
- experimenting with their professional persona role in a different culture
- feeling safe to adopt a variety of professional persona identities





Applying the model

The disorientating dilemma

Rules

Roles

Community

Tools

Opportunity

Participation

Quotes:

'As a camp director, I expect to support my group as much as I can and provide a great experience for all children, both primary and secondary...I hope to develop my communication skills both with children and adults as well as working with my team and develop my teamwork skills too, ensuring that we share activity and game ideas as well as support one another.'

'I also hope to develop more cultural understanding especially focusing on how education is different compared to England. I hope to gain an enriched experience and create memories I will never forget.'

'Here we are all in the same situation whereas on placement you're on your own. And you feel inferior. And you're going to someone else's class, your mentor's class.'

'Here it feels like our class and our team. And we're all at the same level so we help each other, and we support each other, because we're all in the same situation.'





Conclusions:

The critical reflection period at the end of the OME involves students' reflection on sociological and psychological differences of the dominant culture to the home country.

Most students who participate in the OME report gains in self-confidence and express new aspirations about their career.

We recognise the influence of Macblain's (2014) dynamism between the environment and cognitive growth.

The model informs the OME from planning pre-experiences to supporting students in the dominant culture. As a result, the OME is informed, practical and transformational.

Recommendations:

We suggest that OMEs as part of a teaching degree or a degree that involves working with children in another capacity, offers greater potential in the development of students' professional personal identity.

The model provides an explanation of how this transformative process takes place, and could be used as a framework for developing an induction programme and for staff supporting OMEs.





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