



## Corrigendum

## Patterns of development in second-career teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning

Anke Tigchelaar<sup>a,\*</sup>, Jan D. Vermunt<sup>a</sup>, Niels Brouwer<sup>b</sup><sup>a</sup> Utrecht University, Centre for Education and Learning, PO Box 80127, 3508 TC Utrecht, The Netherlands<sup>b</sup> Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands

## A B S T R A C T

## Keywords:

Conceptions of learning and teaching  
Beliefs  
Alternative teacher certification  
Second-career teachers  
Phenomenography

This study was aimed at deepening our understanding of second-career teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning. Initial conceptions held by 207 candidates entering an alternative teacher education programme were explored using a semi-structured questionnaire covering background characteristics and four themes concerning teaching and learning. A limited number of distinct conceptions could be identified and related to respondents' background characteristics. After the first semester of the programme, three patterns of development were found in a subset of 69 participants: growth, consolidation and regression. Pedagogical implications for fostering growth in second-career teachers are discussed.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

Empirical research on alternative teacher certification is gradually growing, especially in the U.S.A, where a tradition of two and a half decades of alternative certification programmes (ACPs) exists. In the discourse, the following topics can be distinguished: recruitment and retention of participants, effectiveness of programmes, and teacher performance (cf. Birkeland & Peske, 2004; Dill, 1996; Zeichner & Schulte, 2001; Zumwalt, 1996). ACPs are seen as a solution to teacher shortages, because they offer a way to expand the pool of qualified teachers by attracting individuals who might otherwise not have become teachers. Available evidence suggests that the efficiency of ACPs is modest. Shen and Palmer (2005) showed that dropout rates among participants of ACPs tend to be high. A substantial number of second-career teachers leaves the profession within the first years of their new careers. Second-career teachers bring extensive and diverse experiences with them (e.g. Eifler & Potthoff, 1998; Feistritzer & Chester, 2000; Miller, McKenna, & McKenna, 1998; Zeichner & Schulte, 2001) as well as strongly developed beliefs about teaching and how they will become competent in it (e.g. Bullough & Knowles, 1991; Gomez, Walker, & Page, 2000; Powell, 1992).

Teachers' beliefs, i.e. their ideas or convictions about teaching and learning are shaped by previous experiences. These

experiences therefore function as filters in interpreting new experiences and may also influence behaviour (cf. Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992). So far, research on second-career teachers' beliefs has shed little light on the beliefs they hold before entering an ACP programme, the influence of earlier experiences on these beliefs and on how these beliefs develop during the first months of the transition to teaching. However, beliefs may have important influences on candidates' learning and teaching, whether beneficial, counterproductive or both. Exploring the beliefs with which second-career teachers enter ACPs may help us discover how these candidates can be better supported in learning to teach and staying in the profession. Therefore, this study aimed at gaining a deeper insight into second-career teachers' beliefs during their transition to teaching.

## 1.1. Second-career teachers' beliefs

In their review of the literature on alternative certification, Tigchelaar, Brouwer, and Vermunt (2010) found that the beliefs held by second-career teachers' on entry into ACPs vary along a dimension typifying their conceptions about the teacher role. On the one hand, second-career teachers hold student-centred beliefs characterised by an intention to support knowledge construction by learners (e.g. Chambers, 2002; Parker & Brindley, 2008; Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008). On the other hand, more teacher-centred beliefs occur, characterised by an intention to transmit knowledge directly to learners (e.g. Chambers, Hobson, & Tracey, 2010; Greenwood, 2003; Jenne, 1997). One may characterise

DOIs of original article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.03.008>, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.07.006>.

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +31 302533702.

E-mail address: [A.E.Tigchelaar@uu.nl](mailto:A.E.Tigchelaar@uu.nl) (A. Tigchelaar).

these conceptions as ranging from “advanced” to “traditional”. For instance, the respondents in the studies by Koballa, Glynn, Upson, and Coleman (2005), Powell (1994) and Bullough and Knowles (1990, 1991) firmly held traditional beliefs during their first years of teaching. The three participants in the study by Brindley and Parker (2010) had problems enacting their beliefs in classroom teaching. Some studies examining the influence of teacher education programmes on the development of beliefs indicate that traditional beliefs were transformed into more advanced beliefs (Bennet, 1991; Hart, 2002; Proweller & Mitchener, 2004). In other studies, consolidation (Jenne, 1997) or transformation of beliefs (cf. Williams, 2010) were reported. All of these studies focussed on second-career teachers’ beliefs about teaching once they were involved in an ACP. Less is known about their initial beliefs, i.e. the beliefs they held before entering an ACP.

The available research about second-career teachers’ beliefs reveals no insights in their ideas about learning to teach (cf. Tigchelaar et al., 2010). From a large-scale study of the learning opportunities offered to second-career teachers by seven ACPs, Humphrey and Wechsler (2007) could only conclude that the participants brought a great variety of previous experiences that influenced their perceptions of learning opportunities.

### 1.2. Conceptions about learning and teaching

Beliefs about learning and teaching have been studied more extensively among secondary school teachers and university professors. In these domains, the terms “belief” and “conception” are used interchangeably to describe ideas about teaching and learning (c.f. Kagan, 1992; Kember, 1997; Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2002). Following Kember (1997), we used the term “conceptions” in the definition by Pratt (1992) as “specific meanings attached to phenomena which mediate our response to situations involving these phenomena” (Pratt, 1992, p. 204). In pertinent meta-analyses, Moore (2002) and Van Rossum and Hamer (2010) argue the relevance of studying learning conceptions by pointing out that learning conceptions may influence approaches to and outcomes of learning. Similarly, teaching conceptions may influence approaches to teaching and students’ learning approaches and outcomes (Kember, 1997; Richardson, 1996; Van Rossum & Hamer, 2010).

In studies examining conceptions of learning and teaching (cf. Gow & Kember, 1993; Kember, 1997; Murray & MacDonald, 1997; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Wood, 2000), a fundamental dichotomy is theorised, which can be traced to an influential study conducted by Säljö (1979). This author identifies a fundamental difference between conceptions implying that knowledge is external (learning is transferring knowledge from an external source into the head of the learner) or constructed (the learner abstracts meaning from a discourse and relates this meaning to an outside reality). This dichotomy is now widely accepted in the literature on learning conceptions (Van Rossum & Hamer, 2010). Regarding teaching conceptions, Kember (1997), reviewing the literature on the teaching conceptions of university professors, similarly theorises a continuum ranging from traditional, content-oriented and teacher-centred conceptions (presenting subject matter as content to be memorised) to advanced, learning-oriented and student-centred conceptions (encouraging students to reflect about subject matter).

Phenomenographic studies form a primary contributor to the research domains referenced above. Within the phenomenographic approach, ways of experiencing phenomena such as learning and teaching are categorised into a limited number of conceptions “logically structured in a nested hierarchy of inclusiveness” (Åkerlind, 2008, p. 636). Second-career teachers are experts in professional domains other than teaching, who bring previous experiences in work and life with them. Studying second-

career teachers’ conceptions during their transition to teaching from this perspective can contribute to understanding their development in the profession.

### 1.3. Research purpose and questions

The purpose of the present study was to deepen our understanding of second-career teachers’ conceptions of teaching and learning during their transition to teaching. A “second-career teacher” was defined as a career changer with at least five years of work experience aiming at postgraduate alternative teacher certification. Entwistle, Skinner, Entwistle, and Orr (2000) have connected the domain of teachers’ beliefs and the domains of university teachers’ and students’ conceptions. Remarkably, the student sample in their study ( $N = 100$ ) consisted of a “substantial proportion of mature students” (Entwistle et al., 2000, p. 13). Most of these mature students suggested that earlier experiences – as a pupil, as a parent or in teaching practice – influenced their conceptions. Given the small number of studies on second-career teachers’ beliefs, the mixed findings about relations with earlier experiences and the lack of knowledge about second-career teachers’ beliefs about learning to teach, our first research question addresses the initial conceptions held by this specific group of teacher candidates:

- 1 What are second-career teacher candidates’ initial conceptions about teaching and learning?

Our second research question addresses possible relationships between second-career teachers’ initial conceptions of teaching and learning with background characteristics such as gender, age and career experiences:

- 2 What are the relationships between second-career teacher candidates’ background characteristics and their initial conceptions about teaching and learning?

Because little is known about the development of second-career teachers’ conceptions, notably during their transition to teaching, we focussed our third research question on the development of second-career teachers’ conceptions during the first semester of an ACP:

- 3 How do second-career teachers’ conceptions about teaching and learning develop during the first semester of an alternative certification programme?

Following the phenomenographic approach development of conceptions in this study was interpreted as “an expansion of awareness on a continuum ranging from traditional to progressive conceptions” (cf. Åkerlind, 2008). The term “traditional” is used in the sense of “content-oriented/teacher-centred” and “advanced” in the sense of “learning-oriented/student-centred” (cf. Van Rossum & Hamer, 2010).

## 2. Method

In the following sections, we describe the participants and the context of this study and the procedures used for data collection and analysis.

### 2.1. Participants

To answer the first and second research questions, data were collected among 207 candidates considering a career change into

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/373994>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/373994>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)