



ITALIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

*Editor-in-Chief: Silvio Scanagatta | ISSN 2035-4983*

## **Teacher Education, Lifelong Learning in Times of Professionalism**

*Khalaf Mohamed Abdellatif\**

### **Author information**

\* Department of Higher Education and Lifelong Learning, Cairo University, Giza, Egypt. Department of Educational Studies, Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, Japan. Email: [khalaf.mohamed@cu.edu.eg](mailto:khalaf.mohamed@cu.edu.eg)

### **Article first published online**

February 2019

### **HOW TO CITE**

Abdellatif, K.M. (2019). Teacher Education, Lifelong Learning in Times of Professionalism. *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 11(1), 351-354. doi: 10.14658/pupj-ijse-2019-1-18

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[Review of the book: *Teacher Education in Lifelong Learning, Developing Professionalism as a Democratic Endeavour*, by A. Iredale, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, ISBN 9783319658186].

Learning is an intriguing phenomenon, which has received a great scientific interest over the times, is arguably represented in the educational discourses as a lifelong process and a result of personal development imperatives. Likewise, the evolution of the notion of learning sustainability is the result of social change and knowledge economy. Accordingly, the research on teachers' professional development has been extensively presented in the relevant literature, focusing on various aspects of development. In this book, Alison Iredale – who is Course Director at the Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University, UK - highlights professionalism within educational contexts, provides comprehensive perspectives on lifelong learning for teacher education, and offers insights into the career of trainee teachers, focusing on their practices – as a democratic endeavour to promote professionalism. The book comprises five independent chapters along with a concluding chapter, which summarizes the discussion and provides some visionary recommendations as well.

Iredale clarifies that she has drawn her book from her Ph.D. and relevant previous work. Accordingly, in the introductory chapter, she sets out the book's framework through providing some comprehensive discussions on professional biography, the policy landscape, and the context of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Additionally, she provides her own autobiographical context (as a teacher); however, the stories that she provides are likely case studies and representations. Hence, she discusses some reflections on

\* Department of Higher Education and Lifelong Learning, Cairo University, Giza, Egypt. Department of Educational Studies, Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, Japan. Email: khalaf.mohamed@cu.edu.eg

educational practices: I. Terms like curriculum, pedagogy, formative, summative, evaluation and reflection have been relatively unknown for her trainee teachers, II. She has appreciated the trainee teachers' teaching situations, as it had restrictions, and III. She has noticed a limitation in the understanding of the educational theory that resulted in fewer discussions on educational practices (will be highlighted later in this review). This sort of reflections represents Iredale's approach through her book. A study, where 30 teachers were interviewed individually to investigate their views regarding lifelong learning, has revealed that both financial problems and educational policies significantly affect the teachers' lifelong learning process, and yet teacher educating institutions should design their curriculum to create spaces, for the pre-service teachers, for learning along with developing positive attitudes towards learning (Hursen, 2014).

Forasmuch, the author provides an overview of the policy landscape to conceptualise the status of economic uncertainty (especially in the UK), and its impact on the teaching workforce. Hence, she provides insights on neo-liberalism, post-Fordism [Which is "the decentralisation, flexibility and the widespread use of technology in organisations" (p. 26)], and managerialism. Nonetheless, Lynch (2014) argues that managerialism is "the organisational form of neo-liberalism", and he clarifies that the values of any public service organisations to weaken through managerialist practices, at the point of achieving a hegemonic control within the organisation. Ditto, Iredale's perspective on managerialism matches with Lynch's views. The reader might notice that the author provides some empirically-based arguments and reflexive-methodology discourses through the book's chapters, which adds merit to the book's rigorous scholarship, and strengthens its well-supported structure. In this regard, she clarifies that "this reflexive approach promotes a discussion of the nature of Work-based Learning (WBL), drawing upon the works of John Dewey, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu" (p. ix).

In the second chapter, Iredale discusses the impact of some governmental policy implications on the development of teacher professionalism. Furthermore, she offers the historical overview of ITE, as well as the wider aspects of participation in WBL. Commercialised, credentialised, and commodified practices hinder the active participation in higher education (Saltmarsh, 2014), thus the participation is one of the key-elements to maintain professionalism. Therefore, Burke et al., (2016) claim that *pedagogic participation* ensures the social justice and diminishes differences in educational contexts, whilst Iredale discusses trainee teachers' participation in ITE through reviewing lifelong learning and widening participation discourse. Moreover, she discusses *coaching* and *mentoring* for trainee teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector (LLS) and explains: "I see this as central to understanding the nature of participation in WBL" (p. 49). However, the research on the

role of the mentor in developing inclusive practices in LLS has less representation in the educational literature and does not get its proper significance. Whereas, the next chapter follows the same theme, in addition to the brave attempt to reconcile the theoretical perspectives of experiential learning theory ('Dewey's *pragmatism*') and the socio-cultural nature of the ITE ('Bourdieu's *habitus*'). Iredale makes clear that she has immersed herself in both Bourdiesian and Deweyan theories, however, she admits that it "is risky, but in attempting to reduce the gap between the knower and the knowledge [...] displays my willingness to develop a repertoire of theoretical stances. [...] Throughout my intellectual development as a teacher educator" (p. 98).

Consequently, the fourth chapter provides a critical argument on the teacher as a practitioner in the light of the previous chapter where the linkage between participation and experiential learning was revealed (the interconnection of experiential learning and habitus frameworks). In the fifth chapter, Iredale investigates the impacts of participation in ITE in the LLS on the developing professional practice of trainee teachers, through providing nine selected vignettes from her thesis. Surprisingly, she concludes "my immersion in both [...] theories during the course [...] yielded a discrepancy in the capacity of my students to derive meaning from theory, and my ability to construct the resources necessary to bridge the lacuna between their habitus and the doxa" (p. 163). Furthermore, she clarifies that "their lived experiences [...] reveal the particular tensions between propositional and tacit knowledge, and the corresponding metaphors of acquisition and participation" (p. 163). Consequently, she discusses teacher confidence, teacher excellence, and routinised practices, this section is one of the book's strengths, as it provides Iredale reflections on teacher's experience (experience as relational, embodied and transformational) and evidence-based practices.

The final chapter provides some conclusion based on the discussions, Iredale concludes that "the pursuit of excellence is a reflexive endeavour" (p. 185), she offers implications for teacher educators and policymakers. Professional development is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice; therefore, analysis of needs, problems, change processes, feelings of efficacy, beliefs are all factors that contribute to teacher professional development (Avalos, 2011). However, Iredale argues that safe practices restrict and constrains teachers; therefore, trainee teachers develop their practices solely.

Perhaps this book would seem more cohesive if it has been developed in the future editions so as to contain a chapter that discusses current policies and challenges of potential impact –as a result of neoliberalism and new managerialism (i.e. austerity). However, the author has succeeded in making their way to provide a remarkable contribution to research into teacher education and professionalism. Overall, this book is of benefit to be highly

recommended as a critical reference for trainee teachers, scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners.

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