

Dynamic Construction of Teachers' Personality in the Classroom Context

Jie Chen, Qianmei Li*

Guilin University of Electronic Technology, Guilin, 541004, China

*Corresponding author

Abstract: In the classroom context, teachers' personality exerts a subtle and profound influence on students' identity construction. Therefore, exploring how teachers can proactively develop a positive personality is of great significance for enhancing the quality of education. This paper proposes three pathways for the dynamic construction of teachers' personality, namely the integration of professional skills with personal qualities, the balance between students' expectations and professional demands, the synergy between scale-based guidance and self-reflection, aiming at providing references for teachers to foster students' positive identity construction.

Keywords: Teachers' Personality; Dynamic Construction; Classroom Context

1. Introduction

The classroom, as the core arena of educational activity, is sustained by teacher-student interaction — the pivotal bond that maintains teaching effectiveness and student development. Among the many factors shaping this interaction, teachers' personality, by virtue of its implicit permeability, has become a central variable influencing students' identity construction. Although personality manifests in relatively stable psychological traits, behavioral tendencies, and value cores, it is continually shaped by various personal and environmental factors.

Grounded in this understanding, this paper undertakes a systematic inquiry into the dynamic construction of teachers' personality. First, it clarifies the basic concept of personality and its significance in classroom interaction. Then, it proposes three pathways for the dynamic construction of teachers' personality. The goal is to encourage teachers, through conscious personality development, shoulder their responsibility to positively influence students' identity construction in the classroom.

2. Definition of Personality

A person's personality is generally defined as "the total system of their (relatively) stable, individual characteristics," which "are relatively enduring over time and distinguish this person from others" (Schneewind (ed.), 1994, p. 33) [1]. These characteristics do not change throughout a person's life but remain relatively stable across various life stages and can be dynamically influenced by person-environment interactions.

3. Significance of Teachers' Personality in the Classroom Context

In the classroom, students must engage with their teachers. This interaction is far more than a question-and-answer exchange of knowledge. It is a process of emotional attunement. Teachers' personal attributes — enthusiasm and patience, fairness and inclusiveness, flexible and humorous communication — function as invisible forces that affect the interaction between teachers and students.

Teachers' personality is perceived by students through teacher-student interaction and thereby influences students' identity construction. An encouraging glance or a patient listening ear allows students to read teachers' scale of values. A perfunctory reply or a biased judgment signals distance and prejudice. Such readings seep imperceptibly into identity construction: when interaction is steeped in respect and recognition, students gain confidence and craft a positive self-image; when it is laced with negation and neglect, they may slide into self-doubt and struggle to construct a healthy sense of self.

In other words, a teacher cannot teach in a value-neutral way. Value-neutral teaching is nothing but the mechanization of a living educational process, a violation of the principle that education is at its core a spiritual dialogue between persons. When a teacher teaches, a personal relationship emerges between the teacher and the students. Each word, gesture, or pause carries the teacher's values and outlook on life, permeating the classroom and becoming a significant force in the students' growth.

According to Steinbüchel, "the relation between people excludes any neutral behavior" (Steinbüchel, 1938, cited in Gröschel (ed.) 1980, p. 43) [2]. This means that a teacher cannot and need not treat all students the same but "must set standards that he can justify to himself and to others, especially to his students. Whoever does not have such standards cannot be a teacher" (Hermut von Hentig, 1963, cited in Gröschel (ed.) 1980, p. 48) [2].

This set of standards is the concentrated expression of teachers' educational convictions and professional ethics. It demands an unwavering commitment to fairness, an attitude of justice and inclusion toward every student, while simultaneously respecting individual differences, adjusting instruction to aptitude, and providing tailored support for each student's development. Only by adhering to such standards can teachers exercise genuine guidance within the interactive space of the classroom, help students construct positive identities, and fulfil education's ultimate mission of cultivating whole persons.

4. Pathways for the Dynamic Construction of Teachers' Personality

4.1 *Integration of Professional Skills with Personal Qualities*

Anyone who wants to become a teacher must undergo pedagogical training. Teacher preparation is never a mere transfer of techniques. It is a profound construction of the whole person in which personal maturation and professional growth are inseparably woven together. During teacher training, prospective teachers must understand that they are required to actualize their personal potential and to explore the significance of their personal existence in the teaching profession. This search is not idle speculation but steady precipitation of value that occurs in each exchange with a class, each guidance of a student.

This means future teachers should become aware of their entire personality, including both positive and negative aspects. They should not only fully recognize the positive dimensions of their personality, mobilizing their power to warm students' hearts as well as shape their behaviors, but also openly acknowledge the negative aspects of their personality, correcting them through deliberate reflection and practice so as to neutralize any harmful influence on students. Only by facing themselves in this way can they mature into qualified teachers whose healthy personality functions as the core educational instrument for guiding students toward full and wholesome growth.

At the same time, prospective teachers must keep in mind that education always takes place within relationship. They must develop a relationship with their students based on a relational understanding of individuals in the classroom. Such a bond is not one-directional management and compliance, but reciprocal respect and response: recognizing each student's distinctive needs, interests and difficulties while presenting their own genuine selves in the interaction, so that the teacher-student relationship becomes nourishment for the growth of both.

Furthermore, they should always keep in mind that encounters with students are part of their profession. Every encounter — answering a question in class, a corridor greeting, an after-class conversation — constitutes the very core of the profession and together create the temperature of education. Thus, they should be familiar with processes "that constitute personality and thereby emphasize the individuality that makes up the unique nature of the educator" (Gröschel (ed.) 1980, p. 46) [2]. Through ongoing familiarity and sustained effort, they gradually build the foundation of their teacher personality.

The aim of teacher training is to equip prospective teachers with the specific competencies needed for their profession: patience when questions multiply, fairness in handling classroom affairs, clarity in explaining content, etc. But this by no means implies that teachers should surrender their own personalities and mould themselves into standardized "teaching machines". On the contrary, these professional skills should be regarded as tools of the trade that must be fused deeply with personal qualities. To this end, prospective teachers should receive feedback on their teaching behavior. This feedback helps not only in the technical training for teaching but also in the overall human and

educational development. Sacher has made the following suggestions:

-It is extremely important to be personally and vividly touched by the pedagogical attitude of others — such as lecturers at universities of education and teachers in primary or secondary schools during observation and practicum.

-It is also essential to develop pedagogical competence and attitude through hands-on experimentation and deliberate practice, through consistent assumption of pedagogical responsibility, and through personal discussions and consultations with fellow educators who share pedagogical responsibility.

-It is equally vital to look closely and immerse oneself in the attitudes, work, and legacy of the influential educators of the past. (cf. Gröschel (ed.), 1980, p. 47) [2]

These suggestions are of immense worth for the development of teachers' personality. First, such targeted mentoring is no empty theoretical homily. It is precise feedback anchored in concrete teaching situations, enabling student-teachers to see flaws in their educational stance or communicative style and to adjust rapidly. Second, only within authentic instructional practice do they feel the full weight of pedagogical responsibility, while dialogue with peers and veteran educators offers both experiential reference and emotional support, helping them to keep their educational convictions alive amid uncertainty. Finally, by studying the deeds and reflections of great educators of the past, they absorb spiritual nourishment, clarify the essence and original purpose of education, and forge their own pedagogical vision within that living tradition, thus laying a solid intellectual foundation for their professional lives.

4.2 Balance between Students' expectations and Professional Demands

During teacher training, prospective teachers must commit to a coherent and systematically articulated code of professional ethics — principles that function not merely as minimum entry requirements but as the central compass for fulfilling education's mission of cultivating whole persons. With regard to external appearance, they should appear clean, dress in a way that is not too modern, and maintain a neat hairstyle, collectively projecting the steady and reliable professional temperament expected of the teaching community. In terms of inner cultivation, fundamental attitudes expected of teachers include integrity, moral uprightness, etc. These attributes constitute the bedrock on which teachers earn students' respect and trust. In the classroom, teachers should display specific pedagogical virtues — patience as the prerequisite for addressing students' questions, humour as a catalyst that enlivens a monotonous atmosphere, and fairness as the cornerstone for maintaining equal teacher-student relations.

The interaction between teachers and students arises naturally in class. Students have their own ideal image of their teachers, blending expectations of professional competence with personal preferences regarding the teacher's traits. According to Ipfling (cf. Haidl (ed.), 1981, p. 30) [3], students desire a fair, patient, familiar, friendly, and supportive classroom atmosphere. They also expect teachers to deliver lessons that are diverse, well explained, and contribute to a lively school community. In terms of appearance, students prefer teachers who are young, slim, athletic, or dress fashionably. Teachers who resemble celebrities are also popular among students. Moreover, students want teachers to be assertive, not overly demanding, and to punish students rarely. Regarding academic performance, students prefer less homework, fewer tests, and more lenient grading.

Comparing students' ideal image of a teacher with the professional requirements of a teacher reveals significant differences. Students' expectations are rooted in their immediate learning experience and emotional needs, whereas professional demands focus on long-term educational goals and the transmission of social values. Although students' expectations are realistic and modest, it is impossible for a teacher to satisfy all sides, and thus students' expectations and professional demands are hard to reconcile. Faced with such a dilemma, teachers must find a compromise between expectations and reality — a challenge inherent in the profession and a necessary path for professional growth. In doing so, they must neither ignore their own individuality and become mere "teaching machines" reciting scripts, nor violate professional requirements by blindly indulging students' preferences. Instead, they must seek to accommodate the needs of all stakeholders by grounding themselves in actual classroom conditions and respecting educational laws.

To find such a balance, teachers must first clarify their own fundamental conditions — the starting point of any teaching endeavour — which include their personal traits, knowledge about students (e.g.,

students' capabilities), the overall character of the class, mastery of professional pedagogical literacy, and the concrete school environment with its educational philosophy, resource allocation and administrative systems. Only on the basis of these comprehensive and in-depth perceptions can they accurately grasp the limitations of classroom teaching realities, avoid idealized teaching divorced from reality, and translate scientific educational concepts into concrete classroom practice.

Moreover, the way teachers really teach is not shaped by methods printed in textbooks but by experience accumulated over years of practice. Given identical conditions and the same group of students, teachers whose experience differs employ different strategies and often achieve markedly different results. Experienced teachers know how to pinpoint students' precise learning difficulties, how to construct systematic scaffolds that facilitate students' learning process, how to modulate the pace of instruction on the fly, and how to defuse unexpected disruptions without derailing the lesson. It is this expertise that allows them to strike a balance between students' demands for lighter workloads and the curricular objectives that must still be met, and to reconcile respect for individual differences with the maintenance of a coherent classroom order. Through repeated cycles of practice and reflection, teachers continuously hone their teaching skills and cultivate educational wisdom, sculpting their own personality within the delicate art of balancing between students' expectations and professional demands. They listen to students' voices and respond to their developmental needs, while also anchoring themselves in the original aspiration of education and adhering to professional standards. Ultimately, they grow into outstanding educators who are both genuinely liked by their students and firmly committed to the principles of good teaching.

4.3 Synergy Between Scale-based Guidance and Self-Reflection

When young teachers begin their careers, they usually have limited experience — for example, in finding a balance between professional expectations and classroom realities. The ideals are fed by school benchmarks for teaching quality, industry-wide standards for professional competence, and the novice's own mental portrait of the "ideal educator". The realities are cluttered with unpredictable variables — divergent student personalities, sudden classroom disruptions, a spectrum of learning needs — that can collide head-on with the best-laid lesson plan. Unable to find an equilibrium, these teachers often struggle to build stable, deep relationships with their students, never truly enter the students' inner worlds, and ultimately diminish both instructional effectiveness and educative quality.

Tausch&Tausch identified four dimensions relevant to this issue: "esteem-warmth-consideration; deep, non-judgmental understanding of the partner's inner world; authenticity-honesty; and supportive, non-directive follow-up actions" (Tausch&Tausch, 1976, cited in Haidl (ed.) 1981, p. 26) [3]. The four dimensions form an organic whole rather than isolated items: respect underpins equitable dialogue; care and consideration shorten psychological distance; deep, non-judgemental understanding asks teachers to suspend bias and empathize with students' situation; authenticity and supportive follow-up convince students that they are valued and accepted. Taken together, the dimensions provide teachers with examples and scales for verbal expression and specific pedagogical actions, helping them bridge the gap between professional expectations and practical implementation.

Yet it is not enough for teachers to possess professional tools and be guided by Tausch&Tausch's four dimensions in today's complex and rapidly changing educational environment. The essential role of teachers is not simply to transmit knowledge but to usher students into a life marked by responsibility, self-direction and ethical reflection. Students are highly susceptible to teachers' influence. What they perceive of teachers' personality seeps quietly into their own development. A teacher whose words and deeds cohere and who radiates enthusiasm can, without explicit preaching, teach students to uphold principles and love life. A teacher who is indifferent, perfunctory or irresponsible can erode trust in education and dim expectations of personal growth.

Today's social landscape is shifting at breakneck speed: living standards keep rising, technology gallops forward, and family structures grow ever more complex — two-parent households, single-parent families, reconstituted homes, left-behind children, and other plural forms coexist side by side, each with markedly different child-rearing philosophies and parenting styles. Against this backdrop, contemporary adolescents present an unprecedented mosaic of biographies: their thinking is more agile, their values more diverse, and their expectations of teachers far beyond "transmitting doctrine, imparting knowledge and solving doubts"; they crave emotional resonance and spiritual guidance as well. Consequently, the traditional ethical codes and instructional methods acquired during pre-service training are no longer sufficient to support the kind of all-round, in-depth educative work now required. Schurr therefore urges teachers to observe, reflect on, and educate themselves. In this way, teachers can

shape their own personalities and acquire essential personal attributes (cf. Haidl (ed.), 1981) [3].

Of course, teachers are not omnipotent. They cannot possibly fulfil every demand voiced by students, parents, school leaders or society at large. What they must preserve, however, is a habit of self-critical awareness that allows them to face their own limitations with an open mind. Classroom failures should be treated not as occasions for blame but as opportunities for support and growth. A misfired interaction may prompt reconsideration of communicative style. An unexpectedly poor result may trigger revision of instructional flow. Such positive reflection not only sharpens pedagogical competence but also exerts a lasting, beneficial influence on personality development, enabling teachers to walk steadily forward along the endless road of self-perfection.

In the process of self-education, teachers must also pace themselves and set appropriate limits, avoiding excessive self-imposed pressure that could lead to burnout. At the same time, they need to steer clear of two extreme tendencies: on the one hand, being overly rigid and harsh, mechanizing and dogmatizing educational processes, thereby stifling students' individual development with uniform standards; on the other hand, completely ignoring various legitimate demands, allowing classroom order and student growth to spiral out of control. Instead, through sustained practice and reflection, teachers should gain a clear understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, and adjust their behavior dynamically — adjustments that should not be self-centered or driven solely by personal teaching preferences, but should align with the reasonable expectations of the real context, taking into account students' developmental needs, the school's educational philosophy, and the broader requirements of social development.

As Ipfling proposed, "Teachers should keep in mind both the pursuit of self-perfection and the inherently fragmentary nature of this endeavor" (Haidl (ed.), 1981, p. 27) [3]. Consequently, whether they pursue self-enhancement under scale-based guidance or through self-reflection, teachers must both actively pursue the goal of becoming better and remain fully aware that this growth in personality is not a finished edifice delivered at a single stroke, but a mosaic assembled from countless scattered, stage-by-stage episodes of practice and reflection.

5. Conclusion

Teachers' personality in the classroom context is not fixed but rather continuously shaped and developed, and it can be dynamically constructed through three core pathways: First, the integration of professional skills with personal qualities serves as the fundamental prerequisite for building teachers' personality. Pre-service training should not only impart professional competencies but also guide prospective teachers in recognizing their personal character, integrating professional skills with their inherent personality traits. Second, the balance between students' expectations and professional demands is the crucial principle in shaping teachers' personality. Teachers must reconcile the inherent tension between students' diverse expectations and rigid professional standards through accumulated experience and contextual adaptation. Third, the synergy between scale-based guidance and self-reflection provides the driving force for improving teachers' personality. Frameworks such as Tausch&Tausch's four-dimensional model can orient practice, yet sustained self-observation, self-critique, and self-education remain the pivotal mechanisms that enable teachers to adapt to shifting educational contexts and achieve sustainable personality growth.

Limitations should be acknowledged: this study lacks empirical tests regarding the effectiveness of the proposed pathways. Future research could employ quantitative or qualitative designs to trace teachers' personality trajectories across career stages, exploring and examining the influence of various specific factors on personality construction, thereby further enriching the theoretical landscape of research on teachers' personality.

Acknowledgment

This work is supported by the "14th Five-Year Plan" Project of Guangxi Education Sciences (Grant No. 2023A101).

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