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Developing teacher leadership and its impact in schools

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About the author

I am born on 12 February 1961 in Zaandam, the Netherlands. After finishing my secondary school at Pascal College, Zaandam in 1980, I studied Physics at the Free University Amsterdam, majoring in physics education. After graduation in 1988, I started at the Hogeschool Holland as teacher educator physics. In that role I got involved in several curriculum development projects for the science teacher education programs. In 1993 I was appointed as project coordinator for developing and implementing a new faculty wide design for the teacher education curriculum. My involvement in the design of teacher education curricula resulted in a role of policy advisor and in several project coordination roles within the university of applied sciences Hogeschool van Amsterdam and at a national level during 1996-2003.

Since 2003 I am appointed as '*lector*', a professorate at the university of applied sciences HvA. The lectorship is focused on the teacher as a change agent and on teacher leadership. With my research group research projects have been set up on a variety of topics, covering teacher inquiry, (initial and post-initial) professional development of teachers, assessment of teachers, self-steering teams, and the quality of teacher educators. Most research projects aim to contribute both to the knowledge base on teacher development and to the development and improvement of (teacher) education in university and schools. Therefore, the research projects are set up in close cooperation with teachers in schools and teacher educators within universities. Through our research projects we contributed to the development of Bachelor's, Honour's and Master's programs for teachers.

In my work I have been inspired by the opportunity to cooperate with many experts (who became close friends) in several national and international networks like the Dutch association of teacher educators VELON (as a member of the editorial board and a member of the board), the Association of Teacher Education in Europe ATEE (as chair of the Research and Development Center Curricula in Teacher Education and as a member of the Administrative Council of ATEE), European Commission's Thematic Working Group Teachers' Professional Development (as a representative for the Dutch Ministry of Education), and the professional body of teachers *Onderwijscoöperatie* (as an external expert).

This research project that is reported in this book has been embedded in my work as lector and reflects the themes that have been important in my work of the past few years.

The idea of using future scenarios to analyze developments in teacher education (Chapter 2), draws back to 1997 when I had my first experience in working with future scenarios during a training on change management. For me, working with future scenarios was exciting, creative and transformative. In 2000, I first used the methodology of scenario writing with ATEE's Research and Development Center on curricula in teacher education, which resulted in future scenarios for teacher education in Europe and a thematic issue of the European Journal of Teacher Education in 2003 (Snoek, 2003a). After that, we developed scenario writing as a method for reflection and learning for teachers and teachers educators (Snoek, 2005) and for students in higher education (Benammer et al., 2006). Since then I have used scenario writing in different contexts, including Masters' programs (see for example www.leraar2020.nl and <http://www.surf.nl/kennis-en-innovatie/kennisbank/ouder/rapport-toekomstscenarios-digitale-leer-en-werkomgeving-2020.html>)

Chapter 3 covers work done by Erica Moens and me in 2007 and 2008 in the context of the AcOA, the Amsterdam academic development school involving Montessori College Amsterdam, Montessori College Oost en Open Schoolgemeenschap Bijlmer who had just started setting up research activities in their schools in 2006. It has been the start of my involvement with academic development schools and teacher inquiry, which after AcOA involved the ASKO schools for Catholic primary education in Amsterdam and the Academic Development School Noord Holland West and resulted in several publications on teacher inquiry (Snoek & Van den Herik, 2012; Snoek, 2012).

My involvement in Master's programs that are the context for Chapters 4 and 5, dates back to 2003, when the Council of Universities for Applied Sciences (*HBO-raad*, now *Vereniging Hogescholen*) started a working group on MEd-programs in response to the Bologna declaration. For me, one of the main motivators was to create opportunities for teachers in primary and lower secondary education to develop their teacher professionalism. Up till that moment the only opportunity for teachers to enhance their expertise through Master courses or to advance in their career was to change sector (from primary to lower secondary or from lower secondary to higher secondary education) or to leave the teaching profession (by promotion as a school leader or educational advisor). A new Master's program focusing on teacher leadership could create formal opportunities to recognize excellent teachers, while keeping them in their teacher job and in their schools. Within the context of this working group we developed a general qualification framework for MEd programs and the outline of a new Masters' program focusing on developing teacher leaders, who were excellent teachers in their subject and sector, who could initiate innovations at school level and who could support colleagues in this: the MEd Learning and Innovation (Snoek & Teune, 2006).

When secondary schools, participating in the Netherlands Institute for Masters in Education NIME, challenged the established universities by launching a

tender procedure for a tailor-made Masters' program in 2008, I participated in the design of the Masters' program *Professioneel Meesterschap*, which was accredited by the NIME and started in Amsterdam in 2009. During the first run of this program, I was involved in fine tuning the program and worked closely with both the teaching staff of the program and the first cohort of students. Towards the end of the program, it became clear that for a large part of the participants, the impact of the program on their work and position in their school was unsatisfactory. It appeared that we had been too naive in expecting the schools who initiated the NIME programs to create the necessary internal conditions in the school for maximum impact of the Masters' program. To get a clearer understanding of the factors influencing the transfer of leadership competences to the workplace, a more elaborate understanding of the actual impact, problems and dynamics was needed. This was the motivation for the studies reported in Chapter 4 and 5.

List of publications

Scientific publications

- Snoek, M. & Volman, M. (2014). The impact of the organizational transfer climate on the use of teacher leadership competences developed in a post-initial Master's program. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 37(1), 91-100.
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