Chapter 1
Applying the Funds of Identity Approach to Teacher Education:
Theory and Practice

Brian Hibbs

iD https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0894-1555

Dalton State College, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter reviews the concept of funds of identity and its fundamental role in advancing pre-service teachers' awareness and understanding of their students' cultural and linguistic identities as well as their own. The chapter begins with an overview of the concept of identity and subsequently moves into an examination of the history of the funds of knowledge approach and traces its extension into the funds of identity approach along with the similarities and differences between both procedures. The chapter then summarizes previous literature on funds of identity and highlights the main findings of these studies. Finally, the chapter examines various activities that can be used with both students and student-teachers alike to document, identify, and recognize essential aspects of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

INTRODUCTION

Caza et al. (2018) conceptualize the concept of identity as "individuals' subjective interpretations of who they are, based on their socio-demographic characteristics, roles, personal attributes, and group memberships" (p. 889). Gerali &

Neill (2022) contends that identity can be understood as a constellation of "social constructs of various attributes of individuals to include but not limited to ability, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, sexual orientation, and gender…" (p. 266). These definitions highlight the intersectional nature of identity (the idea that multiple aspects of one's individuality connect and converge in significant ways) along with the idea that perceptions concerning one's identity are neither objective nor impartial but instead are personal and are largely dependent on one's view of oneself. Additionally, Lesley (2021) describes identity as the process by which "an individual comes to understand their existence, experience, and proclivities for participating in social configurations, cultures, and discourse communities" (p. 231). This observation emphasizes the notion that, while certain facets of one's identity are innate to oneself, others are established through interactional experiences with others and the world. Additionally, Saubich and Esteban-Guitart (2011) contend that "identity can be understood as a cultural and social process, a product of family and community socialization" (p. 84). In other words, identity is not necessarily internal in nature but instead is developed through interactions with members of particular communities and the resources they use to mediate the world. Esteban-Guitart (2014) reifies this position by maintain that, despite the prevailing stance that it is developed internally, identity is, in his view, "a culturally mediated product which is distributed among other people" (p. 752) which is created and established through experiences with both human and non-human resources that exist outside of oneself: "we cannot reduce human identity to individual properties or traits. Instead, it is always mediated and distributed among people, artifacts, activities, and contexts" (p. 752). Esteban-Guitart (2014) further clarifies this notion by asserting that "there is no frontier between the world and the identity of individuals" (p. 755) and that, consequently, the world in which we live is "identitized" (p. 752) in that it contains a myriad of resources which people can effectively utilize in the process of establishing and maintaining their individual personality and character.

More specifically, Hoffmann-Kipp (2008) understands teacher identity as "the intersection of personal, pedagogical, and political participation and reflection within a larger sociopolitical context" (p. 153), meaning that educators' individuality is constituted of their beliefs and experiences as community members, teachers, and societal citizens respectively. Ayar (2023) contends that teacher identity consists of the "professional and personal values, beliefs, and self-commitments to teaching as a profession as well as discovering oneself as a teacher" (p. 327), suggesting that educators' character is developed through the preliminary connections and resultant fusion of their individual and vocational selves. These scholars assert that, as with the definitions of identity cited above, teacher identity is also multifaceted and intersectional in nature and frequently meshes various features of educators' intrascholastic and extrascholastic being. As with the concept of identity, Akkerman &

40 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/applying-the-funds-of-identity-approach-to-teacher-education/353447

Related Content

edTPA Local Evaluation: Engaging Our Partners, Improving Our Practice

John Louis Seelkeand Kelly Mills (2016). *Evaluating Teacher Education Programs through Performance-Based Assessments (pp. 93-108).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/edtpa-local-evaluation/146031

Let It Go: A Journey toward Elementary Student-Driven Media Production Aligned with the CCSS

Yonty Friesem, Brien J. Jenningsand Carol Prest (2017). *Advancing Next-Generation Teacher Education through Digital Tools and Applications (pp. 245-261).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/let-it-go/171234

REACH for Health: Service-Learning Through Physical Education

Risto Marttinen, Ray N. Fredrick IIIand Anthony J. Villanueva (2018). *Handbook of Research on Service-Learning Initiatives in Teacher Education Programs (pp. 126-142).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/reach-for-health/200025

Developing Self- and Cultural-Awareness Through Introductory Education Courses: The "Me" Semester

Heather Coffey, Susan B. Harden, Erik Jon Byker, Amy J. Goodand Larry B. Fisher (2018). *Innovative Practices in Teacher Preparation and Graduate-Level Teacher Education Programs (pp. 67-86).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/developing-self--and-cultural-awareness-through-introductory-education-courses/193354

Coaching Components That Create Success

Jennifer White (2022). *Collaborative Approaches to Recruiting, Preparing, and Retaining Teachers for the Field (pp. 43-66).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/coaching-components-that-create-success/294809