

Unveiling Professional Learning Landscapes

A Study of Teacher Professional Learning and School Workplaces

Simon Enthoven, PhD, UCLouvain, Belgium

Virginie März, professor

Vincent Dupriez, professor

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- TPL considered today as a **key lever for improving education systems**, to meet the old and the new challenges facing the school (Borko et al., 2010)
- This happens in a specific context of **globalisation** and **knowledge society** (Cornali & Tirocchi, 2012) where **the role, the place and time for learning** is redefined
 - **Decline of the education institution** (Dubet, 2002) and of the “**grammar of schooling**” (Tyack & Tobin, 1994)...
 - **Learning society** (Husén, 1974 ; Hutchins, 1968) and normative pressure for **lifelong learning** (EC, 2001; OECD, 2003)
 - Emergence of an **education expansion** (Vanden Broeck, 2021), that is a **transnational** education

Regarding TPL, **two paradigms** of professional development (Stein et al., 1999)

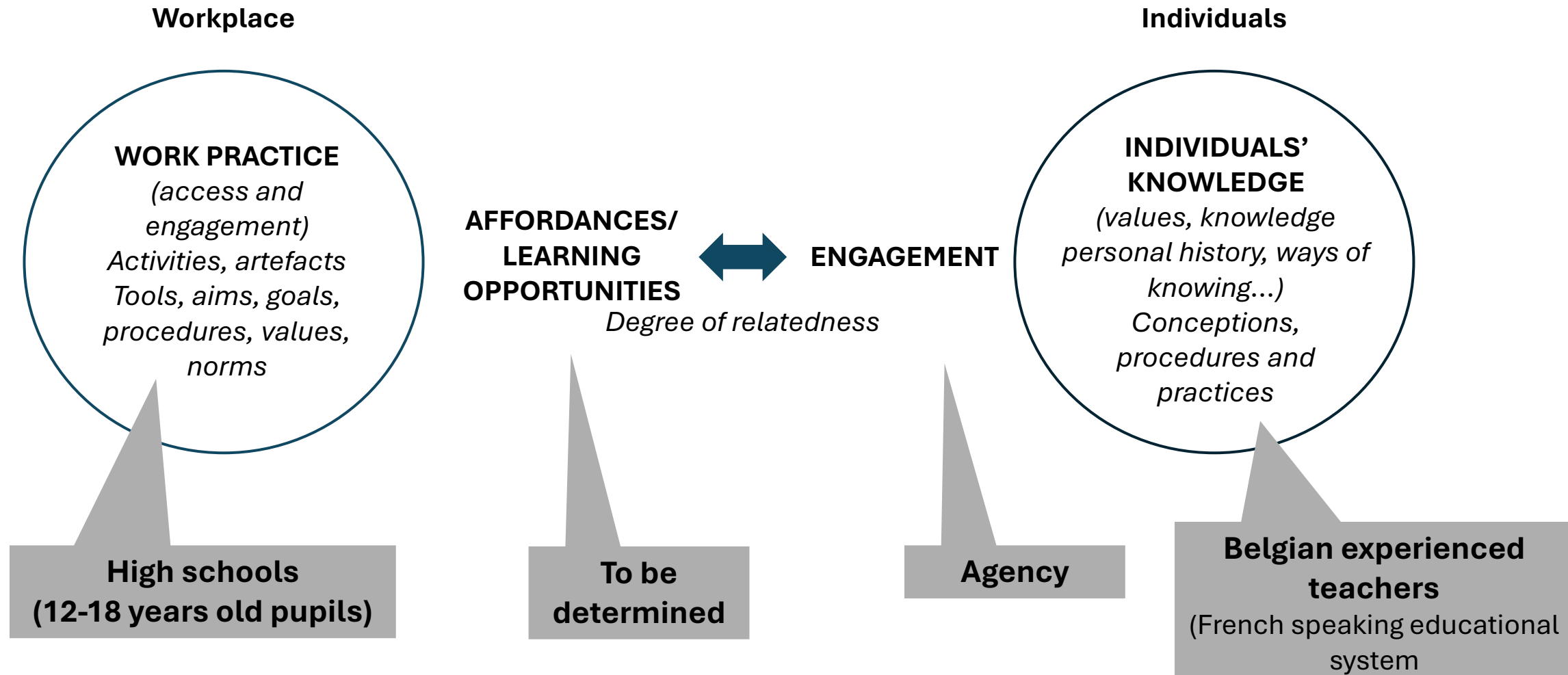
- **traditional** : one-off workshops, external institutes, individual learning (learning as **acquisition**)
- **new** : into the workplace (the school) long term, collective learning (as **participation** – Lave & Wenger, 1991)

- Research on **teacher workplace learning** and **informal learning** (Imants & van Veen, 2010 ; Lecat et al., 2020) looks for organizational conditions that foster schools as “supportive” (Flores, 2005) or “expansive” (Fuller & Unwin, 2006) learning environments
- In this context, in many education systems, **schools are positioned as central sites for TPL** : collaborative work (Lipscombe et al., 2020) and professional learning communities (Meeuwen et al., 2020)
 - Dual **normative perspective** on TPL : **schools as primary learning spaces** and **colleagues as preferred co-learners**
- **However,**
 - the **school-centered perspective** overlooks the **multispatialised workplace** (Chabault & Martineau, 2018) of teachers : at school, at home, on the train...
 - and **literature on TWPL appears fragmented**, focusing on specific processes (reflection, interaction) or contextual factors (leadership, culture).

With an **integrative** and **comprehensive** approach, I aimed to identify and understand

- *how teachers learn in terms of processes, times and places*
- *what role the school plays in TPL*

(Workplace) Learning as « coparticipation » (Billett, 2009)



3 qualitative studies

STUDY 1

Systematic literature review (meta-ethnography)

Entry point

Scientific literature

Méta-ethnography (Noblit & Hare, 1988) to obtain a ‘line-of-argument’
→ *53 articles analysed*

STUDY 2

Phenomenological study

Entry point

Teachers (*actors*)

Interviews with 37 experienced teachers

STUDY 3

Contrasted case studies

Entry point

Schools (*context*)

Observations, document analysis, interviews and focus groups

Enthoven, S., März, V., & Dupriez, V. (2023). Context matters: A meta-ethnographic study on teachers’ workplace learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 132, 104224.

Enthoven, S., Dupriez, V., & März, V. (2024). Où et comment les enseignants continuent-ils à apprendre leur métier ? Postures et trajectoires au sein d’un paysage d’apprentissage professionnel. *Revue française de pédagogie*.

Enthoven, S., V. Dupriez & V. März (accepted). Développement professionnel enseignant et le schème de l’« établissement formateur » : étude de cas contrastés en Belgique francophone. *Formation et Profession*.

What picture of TPL after these three studies?

From a **community of practice** (Wenger, 1998) or school-centered **professional learning community**

... to a **landscape of practice** (Wenger et al., 2015) or '**professional learning landscape**'

- a **constellation** of opportunities, resources, and interconnected communities
- in which the teacher follows a **unique path**
- a school: a **crossroads** for multiple individual trajectories
- **inter-organisational learning** (Engeström et al., 2007), **boundary crossing** (Akkerman et al., 2011) : teachers as 'borders crossers'



How do teachers learn in terms of processes, times and places ?

LEARNING TEACHERS SCHOOLS

1. Three learning affordances...

- *from the teaching experience*
- *from and/or with others*
- *from non-interpersonal sources*

2. ... to be found in the

- professional life,
- private life,
- community life,
- hobbies and social media...

from LIFELONG LEARNING to **LIFEPLACE LEARNING** (Harris et al., 2010)
or **OFF-THE-RECORD TRAINING** (Maulini et al., 2021)



What is the place of the school in TPL ?

LEARNING TEACHERS SCHOOLS

1. Teachers travel and navigate using **AUTOPILOT** (Egloff, 2023)
2. The only **common reference point** (to all teachers): the CLASSROOM
3. Four learning **‘TRAJECTORIES’**

INDIVIDUAL trajectories

REACTIVE trajectory

I have given a lot to my school, but now I only engage in projects that come my way so that I can preserve quality time with my family.

PROACTIVE trajectory

I love pedagogy. I regularly sign up for training courses during my holidays. I sometimes show my discoveries to my colleagues, who give me spontaneous feedback, but that's as far as it goes.

COLLECTIVE trajectories

School INTERACTIVE trajectory

I love my colleagues, and we share all our lessons. When I taught myself how to use the interactive whiteboard, I led training sessions at school during lunch breaks for my colleagues.

Out-of-School INTERACTIVE trajectory

I shared my last "escape game" with colleagues of my Messenger group, friends or former student teachers with whom I share my vision of teaching. I'm the only history teacher at my school, which is very poor.

What is the place of the school in TPL ?

LEARNING
TEACHERS
SCHOOLS

Despite the identical institutional and legislative context,
contrasting APE narratives (space-place)
(Lefebvre, 1991; McGregor, 2004)



A 'teaching'
place



A 'professional learning'
place

But, in both schools, an IRRESISTIBLE APPEAL TO EXTERNAL SOURCES :
the *professional learning landscape*

- A “good” teacher will seek inspiration from outside sources (innovate, keep up to date)
- *We're not going to 'reinvent the wheel'.*
- *“It gives meaning to your profession to see in your private life, during your holidays, that there are potential resources, photos and monuments that echo your lessons.”*



Discussion

In this **professional learning landscape...**

- **How does the learner orient himself ?**
 - While, in a community of practice, learning goes from peripheral to central participation (Lave & Wenger, 1994), **how do navigate/learn in a landscape ?**
 - **Who holds the legitimacy of knowledge?**
 - knowledge or experience (Koffeman & Snoek, 2018)? : online education influencers
 - non-deficit approach of novice teachers (März & Van Nieuwenhoven, 2021)
- **What role play schools ?**
 - boundaries of schools are fundamentally porous, open systems (Scott, 1981)
 - paradoxical dynamic :
 - centrifugal forces:*
 - multispatialisation and virtualisation of work
 - multiplicity and reliance on external resources (ICT)
 - centripetal forces:*
 - ICT (ease of communication between colleagues)
 - the common reference point: the classroom (located in the school)



Implications

- In terms of research : TPL as a complex phenomenon that has also to be approached holistically rather than piecemeal
- TPL policies: ‘articulated’ policies that view the school as a crossroads where individual trajectories intersect (considering the alignment of individual and collective/organisational needs)
- Initial training: equipping (future) teachers to navigate the landscape ?
- Critically speaking :
 - Where do teachers do collective inquiry, do they take a step back (outside of the classroom experience)?
 - How can we value teachers' knowledge and avoid the race for perpetual innovation?

Thank you!