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Framing Teacher Identity in an Era of Accountability: Media and Teachers' Narratives in Chile¹

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Abstract: This article presents the main results of a research project that aims to analyze teachers' perceptions of media discourses and how those discourses influence their teacher identity. Based on focus groups with teachers from public, charter, and private schools in the

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Metropolitan Region of Chile, this study shows that teachers' identities are results of their experiences, the audit culture context, and media discourses. However, in order to combat negative media discourse representations, teachers need to re-frame the conversation by becoming aware of media discourses and creating counternarratives to reposition themselves in society.

Key words: teacher identity; media discourse; Chile; audit culture

Encuadrar la identidad docente en una era de rendición de cuentas: Las narrativas mediáticas sobre los profesores en Chile

Resumen: Este artículo presenta los principales resultados de un proyecto de investigación que tuvo como objetivo analizar las percepciones de los docentes sobre los discursos de los medios y cómo influyen en su identidad docente. Basado en grupos focales con docentes de escuelas públicas, subvencionadas y privadas de la Región Metropolitana de Chile, este estudio muestra cómo las identidades docentes son el resultado de sus experiencias en relación con la cultura de rendición de cuentas en educación y las narrativas de los medios de comunicación. Para combatir las representaciones negativas del discurso de los medios, los docentes deben replantear la conversación y crear contranarrativas para reposicionarse en la sociedad.

Palabras clave: identidad docente; discurso mediático; Chile; cultura de auditoría

Enquadrando a identidade do professor em uma era de responsabilidade: Mídia e narrativas de professores no Chile

Resumo: Este artigo apresenta os principais resultados de um projeto de pesquisa que visa analisar as percepções dos professores sobre os discursos da mídia e como esses discursos influenciam sua identidade docente. Com base em grupos focais com professores de escolas públicas, charter e privadas da Região Metropolitana do Chile, o estudo mostra como as identidades docentes são resultados de suas experiências, o contexto da cultura de auditoria e os discursos da mídia. No entanto, para combater as representações negativas do discurso da mídia, os professores precisam reenquadrar a conversa, tornando-se conscientes dos discursos da mídia e criando contranarrativas para se reposicionarem na sociedade.

Palavras-chave: identidade do professor; discurso da mídia; Chile; cultura de auditoria

Framing Teacher Identity in an Era of Accountability: Media and Teachers' Narratives in Chile

“Teachers’ salaries will be set based on both performance in classrooms and years of experience,” was the headline of an article published by the influential Chilean newspaper *El Mercurio* on April 14, 2015. This headline appeared while Congress was discussing the law of a new teaching career and synthesized one of the debates of this project: whether teachers should be paid for their professional experience or for the results obtained by their students on standardized tests.

This way of understanding teaching characterized nine months of public discussion about the new law. Teachers’ salaries, working conditions, performances, evaluations, quality, and university training were the discursive axes of the debate, but there were no significant reflections on their professional identity.

This ongoing concern in regard to teacher performance is marked by educational policies on a global scale. Teachers have been exposed to an exhaustive examination of their competences and

are on permanent surveillance since a feeling of mistrust towards their work has been installed in a context of intense accountability (Ball, 2013; Doolan & Blackmore, 2018; Mockler, 2018).

In the case of Chile, teachers recognized this adverse climate, so they demanded “greater social recognition and greater respect for their work from the public sphere” (Ávalos, 2013, p. 225). With the aim of partially reversing that sense of abuse, in 2015, the second government of President Michelle Bachelet promoted Law 20,903 in relation to the Teaching Professional Development System, known as a new teaching career.

One of the objectives of this law is to re-evaluate teaching to counteract the hostile discourses that professors perceive from the media and those in charge of educational policies (Ávalos, 2013). These discourses negatively impact their professional status and the social value of their work, which can affect their teacher professional identity.

Teachers' professional identity is made up of internal and external variables, where psychological and sociological conditions operate. This implies that teachers' construction of meanings about themselves is based on self-perceptions, emotions, beliefs, and attitudes (Ávalos, 2013). According to Mockler (2011), teacher identity is thus located at the intersection of three areas of influence: personal experience, the professional context, and the environment that surrounds teaching work.

This last aspect is comprised of the various actors who participate in the modeling of educational policies. In the context of decentralized, dynamic, and multi-dimensional educational governance (Ball & Junemann, 2012), teachers build their professional identity in an environment where neoliberal guidelines in education (competence, standardization, results), political-economic aspirations of countries (development-progress-competitiveness), socio-cultural demands (childcare, meaningful learning, lifelong evaluation), and ideological disputes about education (discourses on private/public education, role of collaboration, citizen training) coexist.

Therefore, to analyze the professional identity of teachers, it is necessary to study their perceptions of their identities along with how they believe that media discourses contribute to how their identity is demonstrated in society. This paper will explore these issues by first looking at how the literature defines teacher identity and how media discourses influence said identity. The methodology of the paper will then be explained, followed by teachers' perceptions of characteristics that make up an ideal teacher and a real one. Next, teachers' ideas about how media discourses shape their profession will be given as well as their interpretation of a specific editorial. The consequences of these media discourses will be examined, and the paper will end with final discussion points that link media discourses to how teachers form their professional identities.

Teacher Identity in an Age of Accountability

Teacher identity has been mainly informed by literature in the area of research in education, history, psychology, and sociology since it is necessary to understand the interaction between teacher identity, context, and teachers' agency (Buchanan, 2015; Bukor, 2015, Ortega et al., 2020; Rojas & Berger, 2017). Indeed, studying teacher identity implies exploring a dynamic space in which personal elements and a complex context, made up of institutions, actors, discourses, interact continuously (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Mockler, 2011). As Olsen (2008b) states:

Teacher identity is a useful conceptual framework because it understands teachers as individual subjects and at the same time as individuals inserted in contexts that foster their ways of seeing themselves in relation to others, to their workplace, and to professional challenges and cultural processes associated with teaching. (p. 5)

Varghese et al. (2005, cited in Trent, 2011) argue that a more complete approach to the concept of identity requires addressing it from two spaces of analysis: practical identity, which understands

teacher identity as a social aspect and that is manifested through actions and practices by teachers, and the identity constituted by discourse, which privileges the role of language as constitutive of identity.

Research on teacher identity is influenced by various literature which includes the educational area that studies teaching and training (Anspal et al., 2012; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000; Löfström et al., 2010; Muñoz & Arvayo, 2015; Rojas & Berger, 2017), the relationship between identity and teaching (Beijaard et al., 2000; Buchanan, 2015; Coldron & Smith, 1999; Olsen, 2008a; Sachs, 2001), and the relationship between public policy and teaching (Buchanan, 2015; Connell, 2013; Vaillant, 2004). A second area is informed by psychology and that explores teacher identity from the individual perspective and the constructions themselves (Bukor, 2015; Rojas & Berger, 2017). The relationship between teacher identity and the cultural, historical, and political context has been fundamentally addressed by history (Nuñez, 2004) and sociology (Cabrera, 2015; Tenti Fanfani, 2007).

Two central ideas emerge from this review of studies on teacher professional identity. First, that the professional identity of teachers, in Chile and around the world, is undergoing a process of construction (Nuñez, 2004; Nuñez Prieto, 2007; Prieto, 2004), de-construction (Anderson, 2007; Connell, 2009), or reconstruction (Gleeson & Knights, 2006; Hargreaves, 2000; Sachs, 2001; Tenti Fanfani, 2007). Second, that this process is mainly the result of an educational reform agenda that seeks to implement evaluation systems, standards, and accountability in relation to teacher performance. This agenda has dominated the conversation about education, particularly in those countries that have developed school systems under the logic of educational markets, such as Chile, England, Australia, and the United States.

This reform agenda proposes a new type of professional identity—a new ethos—with which teachers negotiate, with more or less agency, depending on the context and the professional history itself (Buchanan, 2015; Gleeson & Knights, 2006). Mockler (2011) proposes a framework to understand and conceptualize the professional identity of teachers in the context of an educational policy marked by what Buchanan calls a “paradigm of accountability” (Buchanan, 2015, p. 705) and Anderson a “culture of results” (2007). Even though Mockler (2011) recognizes the preponderance of what she identifies as an agenda that “instrumentalizes” the teaching profession, in her conceptual framework she seeks to represent the construction of identity as a more complex and dynamic process, where three spaces of influence converge and overlap: personal experience, professional context, and political environment. Mockler (2011) defines the political environment as “the discourses, attitudes and understandings that surround education and that influence teachers through the media and public policy decisions related to their work” (p. 521). This conceptual approach is particularly relevant for understanding how media discourse influences the construction of the identity of Chilean teachers.

Education Reforms and the Media

The way in which the media in the United States disseminates and addresses the educational reform “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) constitutes a focus of study for various investigations on the role of the media in the discussion of public education policies (Anderson, 2007; Goldstein, 2011; Ulmer, 2016). Goldstein analyzes texts and images taken from the website of the *New York Times* and *Time Magazine* to answer the following questions: how both media structure the debate and the ideas surrounding this reform, and in particular, how teachers are represented. Goldstein uses critical discourse analysis and visual analysis to argue that both media structure a written and visual approach that, on the one hand, supports reform and presents it as the only solution to the weaknesses of public education; and that, on the other, attacks teachers’ unions and teachers individually.

The studies of Thomas (2002, 2005) in Australia show how the media can become a space for the construction and legitimization of voices and actors who debate on the ongoing setting of educational reforms. Thomas (2002) analyzes the discussion in the newspapers of an Australian state during a curricular reform for secondary education. In this analysis, there are two areas of influence by the press: first, at the discourse level, the validation of certain ideas (those that are in favor or against the proposed reform) as well as the construction and legitimization of certain “authorized” voices in the debate on educational policy, which leaves other actors’ voices unheard.

Thomas notes that in the debate studied, the voice of the teachers is not recognized as an “authority.” Both the media and public policy documents omit teachers’ voices even when the characteristics of a good teacher are discussed (Thomas, 2005). This absence of teachers’ voices in the debate on educational policy is also verified by Gunter (2008), Anderson (2007), and Sisto (2012).

A characteristic of the aforementioned studies is the criticism associated with teaching—teachers as part of a problem that wants or needs to be solved—and, linked to the above, that teachers are not generally authorized actors or legitimized by the media to address the challenges of educational policy. The media are a political actor in this debate, showing the process of the mediatization of education in different countries (Cabalin, 2014; 2015; Cabalin et al, 2023).

Cohen (2010) analyzes the 2006 and 2007 news coverage about education in *The Chicago Tribune*, a period characterized by the NCLB reform. Cohen discusses the syntax, style, and rhetoric of a series of published articles, where she identifies two “dominant social languages” (Cohen, 2010, p. 109) that characterize news about education whose protagonists are teachers. These are accountability and care, which coexist but are not equivalent. According to Cohen, this analysis allows her to show not only the prevalence of the social language of ‘Accountability’ in the news, but it also allows her to explore how the structure of the news ordered under these patterns can also influence the opinions and understanding of readers.

In Australia, Keogh and Garrick (2011) analyze the subjective (moral categories) and structural (public assessment) aspects that cross a text published in a newspaper announcing a reform for public education teachers. In the same context, Shine and O’Donoghue (2013) report the results of a case study that analyzes how Western Australian newspapers present teachers in the context of educational changes, specifically, the implementation of standardized tests at the school level. In their results, the researchers conclude that in this context, teachers were presented “as subversive, resistant to the implementation of accountability measures, opponents of evaluation, and willing to halt the implementation of these reforms,” yet some articles portrayed teachers as “overworked and under pressure, and therefore introducing exams can make their work more complex” (Shine & O’Donoghue, 2013, p. 394). Thus, to the dominant discourses of accountability and care identified by Cohen (2010) in the United States, a third categorization constructed by the media is added in the Australian and British contexts. This is news that talks about tired, underpaid, and overburdened workers. Blackmore and Thomson (2004) argue that the English and Australian press, in the context of educational reforms, present teachers as workers “who do well, but feel bad, work hard and rarely have fun, workers who do care for the children of others but not their own, due to lack of time” (Blackmore & Thomson, 2004, p. 312).

As shown above, teacher identity is created based on a variety of factors ranging from teachers’ experiences to contexts to media discourses. This article is specifically interested in how media discourses influence the teacher identity of Chilean teachers from public, charter, and private schools. The following section will explain the methodology used to explore this issue.

Methodology

This study is part of a research project, where the data was collected during six focus groups in effort to analyze the way in which teachers from private, charter, and public schools in the Metropolitan Region of Chile perceive media discourses. The focus groups were held with the purpose of studying the perception of teachers in regard to media discourses on teaching in general and specifically on the discussion and legislative approval of the teaching career law.

The use of focus groups allowed us to study how people interpret media texts (written or audiovisual; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2015); thus, they served to investigate the attitudes, judgments, and emotions of a group of people around a common theme (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2011), in this case teaching.

The focus groups were held in November of 2018. During November 2018, the initial steps to ask for permission to have focus groups at the schools were taken, and in December 2018 and January 2019, they were carried out. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the schools and participants in the study.

Table 1

Focus Groups

Focus Group	Date of Focus Group	Type of School	Name of School (codified)	Gender	Years as Teacher	Number of Participants
1	5/12/2018	Public	LN	Women	3 to 38 years	7
2	6/12/2018	Public	LN	Men	1 to 25 years	7
3	12/12/2018	Charter	SJ	Men	1 to 14 years	8
4	13/12/2018	Charter	SJ	Women	3 to 17 years	9
5	20/1/2018	Private	MS	Men	6 to 27 years	8
6	7/1/2019	Private	MS	Women	1 to 28 years	6

As can be seen in the table, the focus groups met the minimum number of participants established (6). Each group was separated by school type (public, charter, and private) and by gender to analyze different perceptions of the teachers regarding their labor conditions and gender. The focus groups were conducted in the Metropolitan region for practical reasons (access and resources).

Focus Group Design and Analysis

The topics to be investigated were carried out considering the objective of analyzing the perception of these media discourses by teachers from public, charter, and private schools in the Metropolitan Region of Chile.

At the theoretical and empirical literature level, different sources were used; however, the investigations found in the book, *Heroes or Villains? The Teaching Profession in Chile*, by Beatrice Ávalos (2013) were particularly helpful, because these studies show a comprehensive research project about teacher identity. In addition, we chose the editorial "The Other 'Profit' in Education," published by *La Tercera* on July 5, 2015. We thought this editorial would provoke reactions from teachers since it

argues that charter and private schools evaluate their teachers and administration better than public schools do.

Finally, the focus group design sought to generate interest and confidence in the group being studied. For this reason, a narrative was constructed that went from general topics to specific ones, allowing teachers to feel confident when giving their opinions. In addition, we also sought that teachers realize their perceptions of media discourses about their profession and could connect them with their teaching identity. Thus, the design of the focus groups addressed six main themes with subtopics that varied according to the topic. This analysis will focus on three: teacher identity, assessment and perception of media discourses about teachers, and reaction to the editorial.

Based on an inductive analysis carried out by two researchers, categories were created for each of the topics covered in each focus group. In each category, the phrases said by the teachers who reported each category were recorded. At the same time, observations were included when deemed necessary. To identify to whom the phrase of a certain category corresponded, a nomenclature was used where gender, the subject taught, years of experience, and the name of the school were identified. For example, in the case of a male teacher, who teaches history, with 25 years of experience, at the private high school, the nomenclature was: MT, HIS, 25, MS.

In a second stage, the categories obtained in the first evaluation were critically reviewed, modifying or eliminating categories that managed to explain the topics covered. Finally, a synthesis of the results was made where they were described and interpreted critically. Based on the methodology described above, the following results were obtained.

Results

The results presented in this section reflect the perceptions that teachers have in relation to their identities—those that are ideal and those that reflect their realities—as well as how they believe that media discourses (in general and through the interpretation of an editorial) contribute to creating teacher identity in society and the consequences of those discourses.

Teacher Identity—The Ideal Teacher

When speaking about the ideal teacher, it is important to remember that expectations, experiences, contexts, and media discourses can help create this image (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Mockler, 2011, 2018). In the case of this study, the majority of teachers from public, charter and private schools feel that the role of the ideal teacher is that of a comprehensive instructor—a person who teaches students not just academic knowledge but also values associated with being a good citizen.

A teacher's main job is the formation of the citizen, the subject as a cohabitant in society, and therefore the citizen has to have a series of common values so that solidarity, respect, tolerance, and human rights become popular and appear [in society]. (MT, TEC, 12, LN)

The formation of good citizens is key for these teachers since they believe that an ideal teacher teaches beyond classroom content by instilling civic consciousness in their students.

Aside from this identity, teachers mention that the ideal role of a teacher is one who acts as a guide because the traditional role of the authoritative teacher has changed. A female English teacher from a public school expresses this when she says:

Before it [being a teacher] was a role of a hierarchical leader, you know the teacher was right and that was it. And today it is more oriented towards the role as a guide who tries to push the children towards knowledge rather than handing it over to

them, so I feel it has advanced. Nowadays, it's like leading the children to discover... (FT, ENG, 8, LN)

Top-down teaching has changed for teachers from all types of schools, and there is an effort to create a classroom where a horizontal pedagogy is used in order to change the power dynamics in the classroom. Students are seen as possessors of knowledge, and these teachers believe an ideal teacher will guide students to discover more knowledge independently rather than teach it to them directly.

Being a caregiver to students is another identity that teachers feel is important for an ideal teacher. Some teachers claim that the parent/child relationship has changed, which has made this role important:

Our kids are more alone than they were before, maybe parents worked the same as now, but today's technology has separated parents and children more, and the kids are increasingly abandoned, and sometimes we take on that role of the aunt, the mother and that is important because that is why we are supporting them. We take on a role that does not correspond to us but that we like. I don't see it as a job [because] that's how my profession is. (FT, ENG, 36, LN)

Taking on the role of a caregiver is something an ideal teacher must do in order to meet the needs of students nowadays. Societal changes, be it those in the home or those outside of it, have made it important to these teachers so that they believe that an ideal teacher must fill this role to effectively do his or her job.

The ideal teacher can be seen as teacher who is a comprehensive instructor, a guide, or a caregiver. Understanding the perceptions that these teachers have in regard to the ideal teacher is critical to understanding their thoughts on the realities that they live on a daily basis. The next section will examine how teachers view their real roles in schools which at times converges while other times diverges from what we have seen above.

Teacher Identity—The Real Teacher

While thoughts of the ideal teacher are wrapped up in various influential factors, identities involved with what they believe the real teacher is tend to be more negative, leaving behind ideal expectations and focusing mainly on their experiences in schools.

The main identity that teachers feel represents them is that of a technician. Teachers believe that their autonomy has been taken away and that they are mainly in schools to follow regulations and grade papers. A male math teacher at a public school claims:

When teaching, I still feel like a restless teacher and recently I had 24 courses, even though I am older, I feel that I still have concerns. We work here in a group with the teachers, and I try to do things. I feel like doing things since I have found a work team that wants the same thing... [but] in conversations with the board I have told them that the only thing they do is dissuade me because the only thing I end up doing is grade homework every day. (MT, MAT, 25, LN)

This teacher explains how there is a collective desire on the behalf of teachers to do innovative work in schools; however, the administration does not allow for this. As a result, teachers are forced to teach the same old thing and their main job is correcting student work, which does not allow them to be as creative in the classroom as they would like to be. This points to the “de-professionalization” of this career as teachers are asked to “do” and not “create.”

In addition to a technician, teachers also believe they have earned the identity of a public enemy. They feel that their efforts are not appreciated and that the education crisis is often placed on their shoulders.

I think that... the public servant as a respected and valued professional in social terms goes into crisis when faced with an educational model, which often blames the teacher for the fact that the educational assignment does not reach the classroom because of the teacher, so teachers become like a public enemy or the internal enemy of the public policies of the administration teams of the ministry. (MT, HIST&GEO, 9, LN)

While there are many factors that contribute to the education crisis, teachers are blamed for most of the problem. Since they represent the face of the school for many people, they are the easiest to blame, which has affected their status in society.

Identifying as a technician or a public enemy contrast greatly with what we saw as teachers' visions of an ideal teacher; however, there were two identities that concur with what we saw above – the guide and the caregiver. A female generalist teacher from a charter school claims that since students are all different and their results vary, it is her job to “become a guide” and play different roles according to the needs of the students (FT, GEN, 15, SJ). In regard to teachers' role as caregivers, male and female points of views differed in the way in which they identified with said role. For male teachers, they feel they are “glorified babysitters” (MT, PE, 3, SJ) and that they are expected to “resolve the lives” of students, which requires them to be familiar with different student contexts and realities (MT, TEC, 17, LN). Female teachers, on the other hand, take on a maternal role, where they feel responsible to “create emotional ties” with students and be available if students need to speak about personal problems (FT, TEC, 1, MS).

Teachers' ideas of what a real teacher is vary according to their experiences, bringing a more negative light on these identities when comparing them to those of the ideal teacher. The identities described for the ideal teacher and the real teacher are based on the expectations, experiences, and realities of teachers; nonetheless, many of these identities are also reflections on how students, parents, or administrators see them, demonstrating an outside influence on their teacher identities. The next section will delve deeper into this outside influence by specifically looking at how the media present teachers, according to the teachers' perspectives, so we can better reflect on how the media and the teacher identity are intertwined.

Perceptions of Media Discourses

Teachers express that the media do not present them in a favorable light in general. The idea they reiterate the most is that the media describe teachers as the subject to blame for the poor quality of education. This blame ranges from being responsible for all the ills of education to not wanting to be evaluated, being lazy, outdated, or interested in money. A male history and geography teacher from a public schools describes this situation:

The idea was created that teachers were to blame for the educational reforms not having an impact on the students and in this way we have been the main agents of the system that have to be controlled, have to be supervised, have to be watched, and hopefully quantitatively right now... to know how bad [a teacher] is to be able to replace him/her with one that is good. (MT, HIST&GEO, 9, LN)

According to this perspective, when a reform is not successful or a student fails, teachers are the ones who are held responsible, making them a public enemy, which was expressed as one of the

identities of a real teacher. Other issues are ignored, and teachers are exposed as the cause of the education crisis.

Part of this blame is created by the fact that the media omit external factors that also influence the education crisis. Large classroom numbers, lack of teachers, and students who need more attention in the classroom are issues that the media do not present in their reports (FT, BIO&CHEM, 13, SJ), nor do they focus on outside factors like drug addiction, family situations, or psychological issues that students may have (MT, ART, 10, LN). Other teachers mention that the media focus too much on high profile teachers who win foreign awards, and they do not pay attention to the everyday efforts that all teachers make on a daily basis (MT, PHYS, 6, MS). There is also a lack of attention given to the national curriculum and what it covers, which according to the teachers needs to be examined closely to fully understand what is happening in schools today (MT, HIST&GEO, 9, LN). Along with this, the idea of the invisible teacher appears since teachers rarely appear in the media to talk about their work (MP, MATH, 10, SJ).

In addition to omitting information, teachers also believe that the media lack respect for their profession. Many times affirmations are made without arguments and generalizations are made that hurt teachers' image. Advertising presents education as being in crisis and belittles teachers through its presentation of teaching as a career that is undervalued when entering university. This point is illustrated by a female public school English teacher:

I remember an advertisement... I don't know if it was last year... they were all having breakfast and the father asked the son who had just graduated from high school, "and what will you major in," and the son looks at him and says, "pedagogy," and it became silent, and it is as if it was the worst thing that could have happened to him. And then the son goes "I was just messing around, you know," so there is a very clear and great lack of respect. (FT, ENG, 36, LN)

This perception shows how the media often displays the teaching career as a joke or something to be avoided. The profession is not valued in society, and these teachers feel that the media add to this perception with how they display it on air.

Despite this rather negative portrayal, teachers feel that there is a double discourse in the media, where both the positive and negative sides of teachers are shown. However, these sides are extreme, glorifying grand acts of vocation and criminalizing demands for better teaching conditions. The media understand that teachers are important actors, but they question whether they should have better salaries. This double discourse is described by a female biology and chemistry teacher at a charter school:

I have seen on the news that there are two versions of the teacher: there is the teacher who complains about everything, and who is in the street, and who is on strike... and the other super-selfless teacher who goes to work even if he or she is not paid and is always there due to his or her vocation. (FT, BIO&CHEM, 13, SJ)

This duality pits vocation and teachers' needs against each other. According to this portrayal, a teacher, due to his or her vocation, should work without pay or in poor conditions because that is a teacher's job while a teacher who strikes for better conditions is not fulfilling this vocation role, and is therefore adversary. These two sides are used by the media to reflect teachers, creating a dual vision of them in society where vocation plays on the emotions of viewers, preventing teachers from fighting for their rights.

The perceptions in this section reflect the ideas that teachers have about media discourses in general. In the next section, we will analyze how these teachers interpreted an editorial to see how these discourses play out using a specific example of media text.

Interpretation of Editorial

The ideas that teachers highlight most from the editorial “The other profit in education” are the idealization of charter and private education and *La Tercera's* ideological and political motives for generating discourses.

In this article, the issue most commented on by teachers was the fact that they believe that charter and private education were idealized in the editorial. The idealization of private and charter education is related to an ideological interest where the private sector has wanted to take over the public in general. The idea that families move from public to private education is questioned when the majority is being educated in the public sector (MT, ART, 10, LN). The editorial refer to charter and private education as if they solved all education problems, but it overlooks the reality of how things really are in Chile in the public sector. A female history teacher from a private school describes this situation:

They are supposed to be journalists, and here it is assumed that they are talking about a reality that exists, where there are high standards in charter and private schools, and therefore, they are challenging teachers to be better. That is not true... You are talking about a lie, you are building a reality that has no basis whatsoever or [it is built] by someone who has not actually witnessed how reality in Chile works in evaluative terms... (FT, HIST, 12, MS)

This rose-colored image of charter and private schools are questioned by these teachers as well as journalists' knowledge of how teachers are evaluated, and they believe that it is linked to the ideological interest of the newspaper.

For these teachers, *La Tercera's* ideological interest is a strong “defense of the private” while at the same time maintaining that the public is “deteriorating” and “conflictive” (MT, ARTVIS, 1, SJ). This contrast is tied to economic needs where education is seen as a consumer good; thus, evaluations are required to show quality, but these evaluations are mere excuses to be able to fire people easily (FM, LANGARTS, 14, LN). As a result, schools are seen as businesses, where owners and municipalities can profit, but those who work for them, teachers, *should* not. This latter point especially touched a nerve with teachers because they felt that the editorial framed their protests for better conditions as a way for teachers to profit from education, not as act of caring about education. In this regard, the editorial does not consider that teachers must have good working conditions to adequately carry out their work; rather, teachers should work regardless of school conditions, reiterating the discourse of vocation by reminding teachers that their job is a calling, not a way to make a living (FM, LANGARTS, 14, LN).

One teacher compared *La Tercera* to *El Mercurio* (FT, MATH, 38, LN) and claims that both newspapers seek to invalidate those who protest (MT, MUS, 9, LN). A male math and physics teacher from a charter school describes how the editorial does this:

It appeals their [readers'] most sensitive side. For example, it brings into the picture the students who are missing the year, who have had to withdraw from schools. This sensitizes the part that is listening to the news much more than if they only said, for example, that the students are supporting their teachers, which in many cases also happened. So there is an evident intention there to want to harm. (MT, MATH&PHY, 1, SJ)

According to this teacher, there is a media strategy where students are said to be harmed due to protests, but the reasons for protests and those who support them are conveniently not talked about.

This political ideology against teacher mobilizations results in a discourse that paints teachers who protest as dangerous. In the editorial, protesting teachers are mentioned as part of radicalized leftist groups who are acting on behalf of themselves and are pitted against teachers who not. This divide is explained by a male language arts teacher from a charter school when he says:

The article tries to mention these different sectors since its first intention is to divide. It invalidates the sector that is protesting and counters it against the other that is being evaluated... the correct teachers who are not protesting against the evaluation. Not like these lazy ones who are neglecting children and not teaching classes. (MT, LANGARTS, 4, SJ)

Teachers point out that this division constructs a fictitious reality, harming the image of teachers by using generalizations and ideas that are not completely true.

This section explored teachers' interpretation of an editorial, which was deemed to do more harm than good. This editorial, as well as media discourses in general, result in consequences that affect teachers on a micro and macro level. The next section will examine these consequences based on the perceptions of these teachers.

Consequences of Media Discourses

The consequences of media discourses affect teachers on a micro and macro level. When looking at the micro level, damaged relationships with families and more demands at school are the consequences most noted by teachers; however, the damaged relationships with families was the only consequence addressed by all types of schools.

For these teachers, parents often feel that they have a professional superiority over teachers, and teachers are criticized for their wages and few hours of work. This issue is critical since they are asked to incorporate the family into education, but the media discourses pits parents against teachers. A female language arts teacher from a public school describes this conflict:

[Parents] question even the way the contents are seen... with a superiority over the teacher. For example, there is a dad who is an engineer who is in front of the math teacher, they say, "what is this"... "what are you teaching," so it is complicated... and they say it knowing that I am a teacher. They don't care. I just keep quiet, and it is extremely uncomfortable. (FT, LANGARTS, 18, LN)

The teacher, in this case, understands the importance of parent involvement, yet she does not feel confident to reply to the parent even though she has the right to. This "depreciation" from parents has resulted in "high rates of depression" among teachers (MT, HIST, 25, MS), affecting them on a personal and psychological level.

In addition to the stress caused by parents who question their teaching, teachers from charter and private schools also state that their job has become more demanding. Teachers have to take on many roles that do not correspond to directly with their profession, which has been straining.

The teacher is the one who has to hug kids. The teacher is the one who has to know if he or she ate or did not eat... and also you have to teach, which is why you were hired, so you are still responsible... and it's like in the end the relatives end up giving you the child. (FT, HIST, 28, MS)

Teachers feel that more is being demanded of them and are even convinced that these demands are part of their job, which was seen by many who claimed that assuming the role of a caregiver was

part of the identity of an ideal and real teacher; however, upon reflection, they state that these demands do not correspond to them.

On the macro level, teachers state that the media display teacher mobilizations negatively. This is done when media discourses focus on the repetition of the strikes and highlight how teachers are not taking into account that students will be left without someone to take care of them, queuing the role of caregiver once again, dismissing that mobilizations are demanding higher quality education. Only female charter school teachers refers to this discourse, and a philosophy teacher particularly states:

I think when we are on strike they say, “damn it, they are on strike again, and who is going to take care of my kid.” They look at who is going to take care of their kid, but they do not look at whether their kid is going to have a quality education... they don't complain about that. We, the teachers, are complaining, and it is almost ridiculous because it seems that the teachers want the best for their children, but the parents do not... (FT, PHIL, 7, SJ)

The mobilizations create a problem for families and thus add to the image that teachers are “lazy.” Strikes are often presented by the media as an act against the children rather than being seen as an act to help them.

The consequences of media discourses have micro and macro effects on teachers, which makes their job more difficult. The perceptions presented in this section are based on how the teachers understand the consequences of media discourses. The next, and final section, will analyze how media discourses and these perceived consequences influence the teacher identity in Chile.

Conclusions

Through the focus groups described above, we are able to understand teachers' perceptions of media discourses in order to analyze how they affect teacher identity. The current audit culture of a neoliberal context colors their perceptions, in addition to their personal experiences and the environment that surrounds their teaching (Mockler, 2011). Media discourses are part of their environment and had a clear effect on how teachers describe teacher identity.

In general, teachers claimed that the media represented them in a negative light, which was also seen in how they describe several roles of a real teacher. The identities of a technician and a public enemy were presented by teachers in the focus group, which demonstrate that the media's lack of respect for them as professionals and the portrayal of them as dangerous actors who protest and are not interested students' needs have affected how teachers see themselves in reality.

However, these negative identities that characterize a real teacher are contrasted with positive identities that describe an ideal teacher. This duality is interesting to note since teachers mentioned a double discourse in media discourses. They have adopted this double discourse when they characterize an ideal teacher as a comprehensive instructor who ensures that students excel academically as well as become good citizens while they identify a real teacher as a technician who has lost autonomy and is only able to follow orders. Like media discourses, these teachers illustrate two extremes when describing teacher identity for the ideal and real teacher, where the ideal teacher meets all needs of students and the real teacher is merely following orders to comply with administrative reforms.

This lack of autonomy is not only seen in the classroom, but it is also felt in the media. Teachers expressed that their voices were not recognized in the media as valid, which concurs with what Thomas (2005) found in Australia. Due to the fact that teachers are not seen as authorities,

they are not given a voice in the media to express their thoughts and experiences to better inform society about what is really occurring on a daily basis in schools.

However, regardless of media discourses, the “tension between agency and structure” (Coldron & Smith, 1999, p. 712) can be seen in how teachers described the identities of the ideal and real teacher. There is an acknowledgement that the media play a role in how these identities are formed, but when teacher talk about the identities of the ideal, and especially the real teacher, their specific experiences are intertwined with outside discourses which result in the dynamic way in which they view teacher identity.

These findings allow us to see that teacher identity in Chile is in development and resides in an interplay among teachers’ experiences, their contexts, and media discourses. As a result, teachers need to “re-territorialize” (Ulmer, 2016) the conversation about their profession in the media. They can use alternative media sources to challenge the negative discourses presented in the media and engage in conversations with other teachers to help combat this. In addition, as suggested by Prieto (2004) and Nuñez (2004, 2007), teachers can engage in education research that will foster their professional autonomy and encourage critical thinking to help them face media discourses (Thomas, 2011). Being aware of how media discourses influence their identities is the first step that teachers must take in order to begin to change how they are positioned in society. In this way, a counterframe to the dominant media frame on the teaching will be possible.

In addition, this article also contributes to the education policy discussion, because it shows the interaction between the context of production of discourses about education with the context of practice (Bowe et al., 1992). In this sense, the results of this study coincide with Hargreaves’ (2000) idea of “post-professionalization” (p. 167), where teachers are taken from their roles as educators and micromanaged to comply with reforms that discourage them to innovate in the classroom. Most feel that their power as teachers has been taken from them, and they are now only expected to follow instructions from school administrators and policy education makers.

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