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Experimenters, career changers, seekers, and progressors: Class teachers' career transitions to other occupational fields

Careers are less stable than they have been in the past. In Finland, the class teacher is a valued profession with stable career prospects. However, some teacher graduates end up working in fields other than teaching. In this study, we examine class teachers' career transitions to other occupational fields. The data consist of eleven semi-structured interviews with teachers who had made a career transition. The results illustrate the transitions through two dimensions: whether the interviewees had made a conscious decision to seek an alternative career or rather drifted into another field (conscious choice – drifting), and whether they could imagine themselves as teachers in the future or not (stable – uncertain). Based on this, the following types were formed: 1) experimenters, 2) career changers, 3) seekers, and 4) progressors. The study complements the understanding of career transitions, which has previously been quantitatively informed. Research on career transitions is important when developing educational programmes and in understanding different careers.