



# Logics and Politics of Professionalism

The case of university English language teachers in Vietnam

Mai Trang Vu



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Department of Language Studies

Umeå University, SE-901 87 Umeå

[www.sprak.umu.se](http://www.sprak.umu.se)

"There is often no single professional orthodoxy" (Freidson, 2001, p.144). How the meaning of professionalism is established and argued for by the different actors in this study suggests that it is not easy to conceptualise the notion in a binary system of "from-above" professionalism versus "from-within" professionalism; and "organisational" professionalism versus "occupational" professionalism. In other words, the complexities of the logics of professionalism – with an "s", affect whether a professionalisation project can be perceived as being positive or negative – Is it professionalisation or is it deprofessionalisation?

Viewing professionalism as a "social contract", therefore, will highlight even more the interplay between different actors. Emphasising mutual responsibilities and conditions for development for the involved parties, especially the individuality of persons, social contract helps level to an extent the power hierarchy. This, in fact, implies an empowerment to those in a disadvantageous position.

*(Cover photo: "Under the free skies", Umeå Spring 2015)*



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

ISBN: 978-91-7601-631-2