How do student teachers experience the development of teacher identity during a three-year professional education degree?

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Abstract

For beginning teachers the development of a professional identity is significant because it influences decision making and impacts on longer term retention in the profession. This longitudinal research project explored the issue of professional identity development by early years' student teachers during their three-year undergraduate degree programme. Whilst it is widely recognised those professionals working with the youngest children in formal education should be highly skilled and educated there is a paucity of research in relation to student teachers training to teach 3 – 5 year olds. It is useful to consider development of teacher identity within the current performative and highly accountable culture of English education.

The study tracked the development of a teacher identity for seven undergraduate students using semi structured interviews in each year of study. These took place pre and post practicum and allowed the students an opportunity for reflection on their on-going experiences as a student teacher. The data was analysed using a hybridised thematic approach.

Analysis showed that students may experience three forms of identity development: transformation; consolidation; and rejection. Five dimensions reaching across these different forms of identity development were identified as: relationships; agency; boundary crossing; expectations of others; and professional standards. Four areas of particular concern for these students included: affective relational elements; multiple identities; contextually situated negotiation; and external membership requirements.

The findings have implications for practice in teacher education programmes including the need to consider developing a pedagogy of becoming a teacher, to support identity development, as an integral aspect of initial teacher education programmes. Recommendations are made for the development of such a pedagogical approach which surfaces: values; beliefs; role models; and student ideas around the teacher they wish to become.

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Publications derived from work on the Doctoral Programme

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Seward, D. and Renwick, A. (2013a),'"Choosing some teacher cardigans": Teacher identity in year one of an undergraduate early years teacher education programme', *Tean Journal* 5(3), pp. 17-26.

Seward, D. and Renwick, A. (2013b) *Replacing the Cardigan: Teacher Identity in Year Two Undergraduate Initial Teacher Education Students.* [Power-point presentation BERA] University of Cumbria. 5 September.

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List of abbreviations

CoP/s	Community of Practice/Communities of Practice
DfE	Department for Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council, England
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
KS1	Key Stage 1
NC	National Curriculum
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
RA	Research Assistant

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Learning to teach is a complex process comprising issues and problems to be overcome by individuals in different contextual settings (Timostsuk and Ugaste 2010). As both Britzman (1991) and Wenger (1998) highlight developing an identity within a specific role is a process of becoming, as Britzman (1991: 8) summarises;

> Learning to teach is not a mere matter of applying decontextualized skills or of mirroring predetermined images; it is a time when one's past, present and future are set in a dynamic tension. Learning to teach – like teaching itself – is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become.

In England in order to become a qualified teacher an individual has to attain the formal warrant to teach: Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The granting of QTS is measured against the Teachers' Standards (Department for Education, 2011); a list of skills and behaviours/attributes teachers should exhibit in their everyday practice. These standards represent the canonical practices used to define what it is to be a teacher and are used throughout a teacher's career to measure performance.

Currently there is increased debate around the location of initial teacher education with improving standards of teaching and pupil outcomes a key aim of government (DfE, 2011a). Therefore, it is appropriate to explore how student teachers can be enabled to develop a strong sense of self as a teacher. It is arguably this sense of self (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009; Timostsuk and Ugaste, 2010) which will influence what is learned during an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme as well as shaping the type of

teacher individuals will become. In the longer term this sense of self will impact on the teacher's commitment to teaching and sustain them in the ever changing teaching profession (Hammerness et al., 2005). As teacher education increasingly moves towards 'in school' delivery and a more 'apprenticeship' style of learning underpinned by an assumption that a socio-cultural model will produce a high quality workforce, the need for reflection and carefully planned experiences are increasingly important (Boud et al., 1985; Korthagen 2010).

1.1 Context

This research took place during a time of rapid change in English education (2011-2014). A revised National Curriculum (5 - 16 years) was introduced (2013) and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (0 – 5 years) underwent a review (Tickell, 2011) with the subsequent introduction of a new EYFS Framework in 2012. This slimmed down the early learning goals, identified three prime areas for learning and introduced a progress check for children aged two. Additionally, following the EPPE report (Sylva et al., 2004) and on-going research (Taggart et al., 2015) there was recognition of the importance of high quality early years provision for children and the long term impact this had on pupil outcomes. These national agendas were prevalent for the students involved as they had chosen to focus on working with the youngest children in formal English education, a sector traditionally characterised by low pay, low qualifications and largely undervalued by primary and secondary colleagues.

These curricular changes were undertaken alongside an expansion of the 'academy' and 'free school' programme. The development of these forms of school in England is part of an ongoing reduction in the role of local education authorities and marketization of the school system (Ball, 2013). Additionally, the previous Professional Standards for Teachers in England (2007) were rewritten in 2011 and identified eight standards for QTS which focused on expected teacher behaviour rather than intellectual capacity or research focused professionalism. This 'performative professionalism' (Beauchamp et al., 2015) framed teaching as a more technical undertaking where a teacher acquires prescribed knowledge and skills.

The development of the Ofsted inspection regime to include early years' settings and the increased performativity agenda in English education added to the national context the students involved became aware of as the programme progressed. These national developments formed the wider educational policy context the students experienced during their ITE programme.

This longitudinal practitioner research (2011-2014) was situated within an undergraduate programme which leads participants to a BA (Hons) degree in Early Years Education with QTS. The research explored the experiences of seven students throughout their three year programme charting the development of their teacher identity. The students choosing this route become qualified to teach children aged 3-7 years and study two different pedagogical and curricular approaches to young children's learning utilised as

part of educational provision within the English education system. This includes; the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (Department for Education, 2017) for three to five year olds, which adopts a play based approach to all areas of learning; and the more formal requirements of the Key Stage One (KS1) National Curriculum (NC) (Department for Education, 2013) where children aged five to seven years old engage with a range of curriculum subjects and strongly focus on English and Mathematics.

As part of the degree programme students undergo a formal, assessed practicum in each year and can experience joining up to six different school settings as the programme also includes non-assessed school experiences. In year one the assessed practicum totals eight weeks; three weeks in semester one and five weeks in semester two where students work in pairs in a classroom with small groups of children. In year two, practicum is five weeks long and students take some responsibility for whole class teaching. In year three students engage in an eight week practicum where they take over the majority of a classroom teacher's responsibility. The practicum experiences are in a variety of school settings and supported by trained school based mentors. Additionally, there is external support from a university partnership tutor (UPT), responsible for ensuring some parity of experience and grading for students against the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011b).

The degree programme these students embarked on was newly validated; they were the first cohort recruited to it. However, the team involved had worked on an earlier version of an Early Years degree and, as teacher

educators, had a range of school based experience. The research developed from a strong team commitment to student learning, programme development and some issues staff had 'noticed' in terms of concerns around student learning (Mason, 2002). This included how students under estimated what it was to be a teacher. Previously there had been a significant number of students who, during the course of their studies, opted for a non-QTS route in which they made the decision they did not wish to gain the warrant to teach. In the previous three years this was between 11 – 25% of the enrolled cohort. As 'reflective practitioners' (Schon, 2005) staff were keen to improve practice (Heikkinen et al., 2016) and solve this apparent problem (Thompson-Klein, 2007).

These poor retention issues coupled with problematic student feedback on the previous iteration of the programme led the team to engage with some small scale, yearlong practitioner research (2011-12) exploring some of the issues which seemed to hinder and impact on student engagement and learning. Alongside a colleague my role within the research team was to explore the issue of identity, as it was apparent from reading this was crucial for learning to take place and we felt it was an important aspect which was underexplored with students. The findings of this first year of research were reported at educational research conferences (Seward and Renwick, 2012, 2013b) and through publication (Seward and Renwick, 2013a). Feedback from colleagues indicated the issue of developing a teacher identity seemed to resonate with the tutors on other teacher education programmes. Therefore I decided to continue to track the group of students throughout their three years of study to

explore the development of their teacher identity. It should be acknowledged that I had a working relationship with them, not just as a module tutor, but also as their personal tutor responsible for pastoral needs during their period of study.

This thesis is based on the premise that the school contexts in which students undertake their different practicum can be considered to be 'communities of practice' (CoPs) (Wenger, 1998). Student teachers engaged in workplace learning act as 'boundary crossers' (ibid) making meaning of the experience gained, developing their practice alongside their identity as a future professional. In order for learning to take place they develop a teacher identity within the setting, through a process of; 'engagement, imagination and alignment' (ibid) as they attempt to establish themselves as future teachers. As Wenger (1998) notes, it is useful to consider these 'modes of belonging' or 'modes of identification' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015) in trying to make sense of identity formation as when we aim to belong to a community 'most of what we do involves a combination of 'engagement, imagination and alignment' (Wenger, 1998: 183).

Within teacher education literature the development of a teacher identity is considered to be significant. Developing a strong sense of who we are as a teacher is seen as helping to: retain teachers within the profession (Hammerness et al., 2005; Day et al., 2005); influences decision making (Beijaard et al., 2004; Sim, 2006); increase commitment (Handley et al., 2006); support well-being and effectiveness (Day and Kington, 2008); and

strengthen resilience (Gu and Day, 2007). Teacher identity is viewed as a key motivational factor within education, providing, purpose, direction, a sense of belonging and feelings of being masterful and competent (Schachter and Rich, 2011) and it is a significant driver to be considered in the education of prospective teachers.

As ITE programmes are a significant stage in 'becoming' a teacher, it is important that teacher educators develop an understanding of the student experience of professional identity development so student teachers can be effectively supported in their development as a teacher (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). As Beauchamp and Thomas (ibid) note this improved understanding of teacher identity development should inform ITE programme design.

Whilst identity is a widely contested concept and difficult to define (Jenkins, 2008; Burke and Stets, 2009; Schachter and Rich, 2011), research indicates it affects individual autonomy, agency and interactions with others, as individuals strive for verification of their identity (Burke and Stets, 2009). For student teachers this acceptance by those in the profession as 'teachers', appears to be a crucial aspect in developing an identity as a teacher (Schachter and Rich, 2011; Seward and Renwick, 2013a). The literature from both teacher identity and social psychological theory consistently agree that identity formation is an on-going process and identity itself is fluid, flexible and liable to considerable change as individuals struggle to make sense of new

experiences and interactions (Jenkins, 2008; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Burke and Stets, 2009).

This study is significant as previous research into teacher identity formation has focused on the development of teacher identity for experienced teachers (Nias, 1984, 1989; Kelchtermans, 1996, 2009; Sachs, 2001; Flores and Day, 2006) and as students become Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) (Yandell and Turvey, 2007; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2011; Wilkins et al., 2012) rather than during their undergraduate ITE programme. This study differed in that it followed student teachers from the point of entering higher education throughout their undergraduate journey. The aim was to understand the process of their teacher identity development more fully and to identify suitable aspects of provision and practice which could be introduced or enhanced to further develop programme content.

1.2 Research questions

The particular questions addressed were:

1. How do student teachers experience the development of teacher identity during a three-year professional education degree?

2. How does student teacher identity change during the programme?

3. What impacts on student teacher identity development?

4. To what extent do student teachers develop their teacher identity during their initial teacher education programme?

At this point it is appropriate to explicitly acknowledge my own beliefs and perspectives regarding learning and identity development as this may, either consciously or unconsciously, have affected this thesis. I believe that learning is a social practice and knowledge is socially constructed with, and alongside, others. This permeates my own teaching and reflects the theory of Vygotsky (1978) which underpins much of good early years practice. I acknowledge this with students and am aware this may have drawn me to the 'Communities of Practice' (CoP) framework developed by Wenger (1998, 2000) and latterly, to the notion of 'landscapes of practice' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015) consisting of multiple CoPs and the boundaries in-between. This theorising appeared to reflect the journey students experienced during their degree programme as well as my personal experience of developing an identity as a teacher educator.

Findings from this study indicate student teacher identity development is a complex interrelationship between a number of factors. These include internal aspects a student carries within them and the external context a student inhabits. Key dimensions which link the external world and the internal student self, include; agency, relationships, Teachers' Standards, expectations of others and boundary crossing. Where students can negotiate this maze of meaning making successfully their teacher identity can be transformed or consolidated. However, where there are problematic issues student teachers can reject developing a teacher identity. Therefore teacher identity is worthy of consideration in the design and facilitation of ITE programmes.

1.3 Overview

Chapter 2 evaluates the literature concerning identity and teacher identity development. Chapter 3 outlines methodological thinking, planning and decision making, and is followed by the presentation of findings in chapters 4, 5 and 6. A discussion chapter 7 then positions the findings in relation to the literature and evaluates the theoretical framework. This is followed by chapter 8 which summarises conclusions and key recommendations for ITE programmes.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter evaluates relevant literature regarding the development of identity in general and more specifically, student's professional teacher identity. The aim was to develop a theoretical framework to inform the research design, data collection and analysis (Troudi, 2010). Additionally, it contextualises this study and highlights gaps in current research evidence.

Undertaking a longitudinal study meant it was necessary to constantly review the emerging literature. There appeared to be a number of longitudinal studies being undertaken worldwide (Anspal et al., 2012; Dolan et al., 2014; Hong et al., 2017) which illustrated how the connection between teacher identity and retention, in an increasingly performative culture, has become a concern (Kelchtermans, 1996, 2009; Day et al., 2006a). Literature searches indicated teacher identity as a current issue for researchers and the fact there was less published research tracking students undergraduate journey to becoming a teacher in early years or primary education indicated a 'gap' existed in the current literature. This practitioner research aimed to contribute towards addressing this 'gap' and develop further understanding of this phenomenon.

2.1 Identity theory

The notion of identity is varied within the wider fields of sociology and psychology (Mead 1934; Goffman, 1959; Jenkins, 2008; Lawler, 2008). Sociological theories around the development of identity point to the significance of acting, taking on a role or identity, the subsequent perception of others and the significance of how others react as being important in the

development of an identity (Goffman, 1959; Jenkins, 2008). What others think and how they react is significant as it validates the identity we assert. This 'presentation of self' (Goffman, 1959) or, how we are seen to be, is significant for student teachers in that they need to be perceived as a teacher by; children, parents and staff from the beginning of any ITE programme in order to take on the canonical practices (Teachers' Standards) and have opportunities to develop the relevant attributes associated with being a teacher. Jenkins (2008) notes that identity is something individuals do to ascertain who they are and who others are. This social process of identification implies individuals may foreground different identities in different contexts and relates to students as student teachers during practicum and as traditional students when they are within the university. Additionally, it acknowledges they may have other identities such as being a parent or a member of the workforce. It is within these different groups that student teachers behave in certain ways with reference to their identity but which indicates that they 'belong' to these groups.

Jenkins goes on to argue these group identities are significant for individuals in that they allow individuals to sort themselves out from others both individually and collectively (2008). This group membership is important in developing identity as it enables individuals to behave in ways which show their identification within the specific group associated with those behaviours and practices. Rather like Wenger's Community of Practice (1998) framework, group identification plays a part in self-identification and identity development. Groups are significant in that they have specific ways of behaving, norms and

customs to be adhered to, routines, procedures and roles to adopt within hierarchies and organisational aims (Jenkins, 2008). This clearly relates to schools as organisations which student teachers seek to join and the wider significance of schools within the development of a student's teacher identity in the workplace. As Jenkins (2008: 18) explains; 'Identity is our understanding of who we are and who other people are, and, reciprocally, other people's understanding of themselves and others (which includes us)'. Like Goffman (1959), Jenkins points to the significance of presenting oneself in a particular way which makes us recognisable to others but this requires accurate interpretation by others leading to 'internalisation' where personal, internal self-definitions and the definitions of others come together in a process of interaction. For student teachers, if successful, it results in them being labelled as a teacher.

Gee (2000) also acknowledges the significance of being recognised for identity and defines identity as;

> The 'kind of person' one is recognised as 'being' at a given time and place, can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and, of course, can be ambiguous or unstable. Being recognised as a certain 'kind of person', in a given context is what I mean here by identity (Gee, 2000: 99).

He goes on to argue that individuals can have multiple identities linked to their performances in society. However, unlike Jenkins, who maintains that individuals constantly define and redefine themselves, Gee believes individuals maintain a 'core identity' which remains stable and uniform across all contexts. He recognises the significance of the response of others in terms of verifying one's identity and claim to a particular identity. This effectively

means that once one is given a label then one is responsible to the roles and responsibilities of that position. Like Wenger's ecological theory the participation, or sharing in groups, is significant in that individuals are then linked by common practices and a shared culture. Like Wenger (1998) he too recognises trajectory is important but places more emphasis on the significance of dialogue and discourse with others than Wenger perhaps explicitly acknowledges. Gee argues that it is through social interaction and dialogue with others that identity is recognised (2000).

Gee (ibid) also notes that in the post-modern world and fast pace of change some identities have become outdated as 'new capitalism' values fluidity, flexibility and multiple identities. Castells (1997) also notes the significance of this 'new capitalism', as it reflects a change in socio-economic conditions which place a greater emphasis on identity and identities in the modern world. Castells (1997: 7) goes on to highlight; 'It is easy to agree on the fact that, from a sociological perspective, all identities are constructed. The real issue is how, from what, by whom and for what', in the case of student teachers, developing their teacher identity, this study aimed to explore these issues in depth.

Giddens (1991) goes further, presenting a somewhat different version of identity development by regarding identity as an account of a person's life, emphasising the narrative element of identity development. He emphasises that in the post traditional world self-identity is concerned with reflexivity and maintaining a self-narrative, rather than it being about behaviour;

A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor — important though this is — in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going. The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in the day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self (Giddens, 1991: 54).

Giddens emphasises within the modern world individuals have numerous choices however, he notes these increased choices can be both liberating, in terms of self-fulfilment, and stressful, in that a wider variety of choices of identity lead to more time consuming analysis and risk management in terms of who we wish to be. We are forced to create an identity for ourselves in that we question; what to do, how to behave, who to be? This leads to us constantly revising personal narratives in an effort to maintain a sense of self in an uncertain, rapidly changing world.

As is evident from the theories outlined there is a social aspect to identity development. This may involve; taking on an ascribed role; maintaining a 'core identity' in light of challenges and change; or convincing others that the 'teacher' label is applicable through behaviour. Given this, the significance of the social aspect of identity development was an important consideration in this thesis. It was prevalent given students move between different CoPs (Wenger 1998) during the programme. It is within the school CoP they join that students have the opportunity to convince others they are a teacher through accepted behaviours and interaction. They can be perceived as, and given the label of, 'teacher' by members of the wider school community; this is the site of judgement for them as having a teacher identity.

An underlying assumption of this thesis was that students can be described as belonging to distinct CoPs (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998). This arguably impacts on their teacher identity development in the wider educational landscape of practice. The relevance of CoPs was apparent from experience and review of the literature. Arguably, initial data reinforced the relevance of CoPs as it became evident student teachers foreground the value of practicum for learning, alongside the significance of belonging and relationships, which appeared to be key themes in the development of teacher identity (Lamote and Engles, 2010; Correa et al., 2014).

Initial ideas relating to CoPs focused on learning, more specifically the notion that learning occurred in the workplace rather than the classroom and as such was 'situated learning' (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Lave and Wenger (ibid) identified the interaction between 'novice' and 'expert' as being critical in that it was how 'newcomers' developed working practices as well as relevant learning. They identified that much of this was informal, introducing the notion of 'legitimate peripheral participation' (LPP) as central where the 'newcomer' learned through engagement in workplace tasks. It can be argued that this germinal text offered little analysis of the possible conflict and tension which could arise between novice and 'old timer' expert. It is this potential tension, along with other emotional aspects which is highlighted by Day and Kington (2008) in their study of qualified teachers and their identity development. To an extent these emotional aspects are somewhat neglected by Wenger (1998) in his seminal text but which can impact on student's and experienced

teacher's teacher identity (Nias 1996; Kelchtermans, 1996, 2009; Zembylas, 2003).

The CoP framework focuses on socialisation, learning and the development of identity for the individual. Wenger (1998) outlined a CoP as having three related dimensions; 'mutual engagement', 'joint enterprise' and 'shared repertoire'. By 'mutual engagement' he referred to the interactions between individuals which lead to the creation of shared meaning on problems or issues. 'Joint enterprise' outlined the process people engaged in when working together towards a common goal and by 'shared repertoire' Wenger (ibid) referred to the jargon and resources members used to enable learning within the group. These three dimensions are present in the contexts students find themselves in during the university programme, as they apply to both the practicum and university contexts.

Wenger (1998) also introduced the idea of a 'trajectory' which allows for different types of participation within groups and acknowledges individuals may belong to different CoPs at the same time. This has potential to create tension between ways of being and acting in one CoP and different expectations situated within another CoP. He also acknowledged that LPP is not a simple linear process and recognised individuals may choose to marginalise themselves within the CoP. As Handley et al. (2006) note, this may be to avoid compromising their own sense of self and be due to a drive to maintain ones values and beliefs, so being honest to oneself or maintaining 'existential integrity' (ibid: 648).

It was these initial ideas (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) namely; that learning was a social process, belonging was important for identity development and that learning depended upon how individuals perceived of themselves within the workplace which resonated with aspects of student development I had 'noticed' (Mason, 2002) during my work on the programme, leading me to use the CoP framework as an aspect of the theoretical framework underpinning this study.

The 'modes of belonging' (Wenger, 1998), later labelled, 'modes of identification' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015) were relevant to the study given the research focus on teacher identity development and the importance Wenger attached to identity within his 1998 text. These three 'modes of identification'; 'engagement', 'imagination' and 'alignment' can function inside practices and across boundaries. For student teachers, engagement means doing things together, taking part in learning and experiencing classroom contexts, seeing responses they elicit from others to 'gain a lived sense of who we are' (Wenger 1998: 192). It can be about how they explore the school context and the opportunities afforded to them to undertake teacher type tasks. Engagement can be a way for student teachers to explore the boundary between university and school, in that they can be given opportunities to apply theoretical learning in the practical context. It assumes students are motivated to engage, however under-reports the role of agency or the personal achievement by individuals through the interplay of resources, environment and personal capacities within the original theory.

'Imagination' is situated within a community and acts as a space where students can imagine themselves as a future teacher, reflect on experiences and discuss and enact 'possible' selves (Hamman et al., 2013). It is about how they orient themselves within the world and provides a strong driver for students wanting to become a teacher (Yuan and Lee, 2016).

'Alignment' refers to a mutual process of co-ordinating perspectives, interpretations and actions to achieve goals, this relates to how the programme may reflect students deeply held beliefs about young children's learning. It is about refining competence within the CoP as the school context is where students are judged against the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011). From Wenger's (1998) perspective learning and identity are inextricably linked as well as being socially situated. He outlines how learning is 'not just the acquisition of memories, habits and skills, but the formation of an identity' (Wenger, 1998: 96).

CoPs are an evolving theory (Li et al., 2009) and have been developed to address different agendas from HE practices to business knowledge management (Wenger et al., 2002; Andrew et al., 2008). CoP developed from the notion of learning communities, where individuals were connected by a common interest and defined their identity by the roles they occupied alongside any relationship they had with group activities. Social learning theorists suggest these communities allow for the sharing of knowledge with individuals learning from watching and copying others (Roberts, 2006). The

community should provide a safe place to learn. However, these learning communities also require a high degree of trust (Roberts, 2006; Li et al., 2009) in order to work and for collaboration and sharing of ideas; a notion which appears to be underdeveloped in the initial CoP framework proposed by Wenger in 1998.

Recently Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) argue that within the notion of 'becoming' as a practitioner, 'knowledgeability' is crucial, as this allows for external verification making one 'recognizable' as an expert in the field. Therefore, learning to become a teacher is about developing a meaningful identity of competence and knowledgeability in the complex landscape of relevant practices. To be identified as a teacher one must be both competent as a teacher and in the wider knowledge situated within the wider educational landscape. Knowledgeability involves values, beliefs and experience coming together in engagement in practice, making decisions and applying them to unanticipated or complex situations. It involves being identified by others such as children, parents and colleagues as 'a teacher'.

This notion of external verification is reflected in the literature regarding teacher identity (Lamote and Engles, 2010; Wilkins et al., 2012), illustrating it is a key aspect for student teachers developing a teacher identity. Students can be defined as being on a trajectory through the programme which means they carry their identity with them across the different contexts and this contributes towards 'engagement', 'imagination' and 'alignment'. As such Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) would argue they can identify

simultaneously with multiple locations and boundaries. However, it is noted that 'knowledgeability' is complex and dynamic and can involve negotiation, contribution, knowing where sources of knowledge are situated and the application of knowledge to different situations.

This means student teachers need to engage with 'imagination' (Wenger, 1998; Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015) where they construct an image of themselves as early years' teachers within the wider landscape where they orient themselves. This means identity is essential for a sense of self and interpretation or participation in the social world based within the CoP. This is potentially challenging given the fact early years education in England has developed in a more haphazard manner than formal primary education. Though it is now recognised as a specific phase with specific curricular guidance, it is frequently perceived as preparation for primary education, rather than a distinct phase in itself, which incorporates distinct practices and pedagogy. This understanding is essential if student teachers are to develop identities as early years' teachers. The programme specifically aims to position students as early years' teachers who are capable of utilising good early years practice within the wider landscape.

In 2015 Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner introduced the notion of 'accountability' which can be linked to alignment in that student teachers need to align their behaviours and actions to the external professional Teachers' Standards (2011b) to which they are accountable. Additionally, they are accountable to; the school community, programme regulations and

requirements and the Teachers' Standards. This is what Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015: 25) would term 'expressibility' because 'To be fully realized, knowledgeability in a landscape requires that accountability to one location be expressible in another'. This is a complex undertaking for students, more so if conflicts exist at boundaries in the landscape. For example, students may not be allowed to apply theoretical learning in the CoP which demands they utilise the existing shared repertoire. Wider teacher education literature highlights this complexity indicating developing a teacher identity is a complicated activity.

Through the programme student teachers experience working in different school CoPs. It is here their teacher identity is questioned and developed. This identity development brings together past, present and future and, for student teachers, it draws on their twelve year apprenticeship as a pupil (Lortie, 1975). It can be argued their position as prospective qualified teachers with a teacher identity is unique within the workplace learning literature, as they have experienced the educational landscape but from the perspective of a pupil and as Lortie (1975) notes, it may be that this experience overrules any experiences they have during teacher education.

Priestley et al. (2015) would support this assertion as they highlight how student teacher beliefs are 'immune' to the efforts of teacher educators to change these. Additionally, as Roberts (2006) explains, these 'predispositions' to act or behave in specific ways may make them resistant to changing their ideas. The personal history and prior experience of students is highlighted

within the teacher identity literature (Sachs, 2005) as a significant factor and, one which is acknowledged within CoP literature (Wenger, 1998), though Wenger appears to place less emphasis on it than teacher identity literature (Flores and Day, 2006; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2011).

The notion of trajectory is emphasised by Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015), as it is this trajectory through the landscape that shapes us and it may be that for student teachers there are aspects of their on-going educational experience which are more powerful as learning experiences than others. These journeys through the landscape can involve the interplay of both competence and experience as students align ways of being and realign these in order to 'fit in' with the particular CoP they engage in. Fenton-O'Creevy et al., (2015b) note this alignment and realignment can lead to learning. This alignment and realignment would be influenced by 'predispositions', experience, emotion, values and beliefs as identified within the teacher identity literature (Kelchtermans,1996; Sachs, 2005; Flores and Day, 2006; Roberts, 2006).

The notion that boundaries provide opportunities for powerful learning is developed by Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015). The possibility for conflict is noted, as is the transferability of practice from one CoP to another. For the students in this study this would be applicable as they seek to develop practice across the educational landscape but within different contexts. This transferability, or lack of it, may lead to conflict and unexpected learning. It is within this latest text that tension and conflict is more fully acknowledged as

an issue but also as a source of reflection and production of knowledge and new ways of being, as Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner note, 'Boundaries should be perceived as a place of learning' (2015: 19). However, the strong emotional impact conflict and tension can cause, remains an underdeveloped aspect of the CoP theory (Fuller, 2007). It is these problematic relationships and their impact on students which Johnston (2010) highlights as significant in their impact, not only on student identity, but on personal well-being and self-efficacy.

Fenton-O'Creevy et al. (2015a) describe how crossing boundaries of practice means having to negotiate to what extent a previous identity applies in a new setting; what aspects of identity are suitable and what practices can apply. It is during these boundary crossing encounters students must make choices about how to behave and whether they perceive of themselves as 'tourists' or 'sojourners' (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b). As a 'tourist' a student would be on the edge of CoP practice with only superficial engagement in the accepted practices embedded within the CoP. They may feel a lack of 'fit' with their identity and so this remains situated elsewhere with little impact on their teacher identity. This can be an uncomfortable feeling as well as being a problematic during practicum as this lack of 'alignment' can cause difficulties for the mentor in making judgements about a student's achievement of the Teachers' Standards. It may be that students operate an 'unengaged alignment' (Kubiak et al., 2015a) whereby they pay 'lip service' to local practices in order to be successful in passing the practicum. This reflects the notion of students 'acting' in a role (Goffman, 1959) in order to convince

others through performance of identity that they can be identified as a teacher.

Students as 'sojourners' (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b) offer higher levels of engagement with CoP practices and, as such, may well have implications for student teacher identity development. However, as practicum experiences are relatively short lived there may be more 'accommodation' to the local practices in order to operate effectively as a teacher in the setting rather than deep commitment and even though this engagement can be described as partial and provisional it does offer an opportunity for learning. Much depends on Wenger's (1998) notion of 'imagination' and how the student perceives the practicum experience. If they believe their three year programme provides a trajectory towards full participation in the educational landscape of practice then there is likely to be deeper engagement, commitment to learning and identity development. Alternatively, if they feel that the programme overall offers only the formal qualification for teaching and they have fixed views of what it means to be a teacher then participation may be superficial. This may well support Lortie's (1975) findings that teacher education programmes have little impact on teacher practices and what it means to be a teacher as ideas are already engrained in students.

Wenger (1998) has been criticised for a lack of focus on power relations (Fuller et al., 2005; Roberts, 2006) which, in the case of student practicum as reported here, are crucial. In terms of crossing the boundary between university and school practice the power relations are dominated by the

school setting and staff within this context as students are positioned as 'outsiders' (Yuan and Lee, 2016) or 'guests' (Johnston, 2016) frequently having to fulfil setting expectations. In practicum, issues of power may mean students are not offered the opportunity for negotiation or contribution and application of learning may be limited. For students to claim to be teachers they need to demonstrate they are knowledgeable in the field of education and also accountable to this field. As Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015: 24) note; 'This dynamic modulation of accountability is quite a dance of the self, especially where there are conflicts at boundaries in the landscape.'

As can be seen identity as a construct is a key aspect of Wenger's (1998) theoretical framework and will be combined with key aspects of teacher identity literature to form an analytical framework for the study. Literature specifically focusing on teacher identity development will be discussed in the following section.

2.2 Teacher Identity

A teacher's professional identity is rarely taken as problematic, according to Sachs (2005), as it is seen as comprising an externally defined set of standards (DfE, 2011) imposed upon the profession. It comprises a list of attributes, values and behaviours society would expect of the profession. This becomes an issue for student teachers as these externally prescribed standards are mediated by their own aspirations, beliefs and values about what it is to be a teacher. Sachs (2005) in her discussion identifies two forms of professional identity; an 'entrepreneurial' and an 'activist' teaching identity. For her, an entrepreneurial identity would be one where the teacher is a

compliant employee, demonstrating high quality teaching, measured by performance indicators. An activist identity, on the other hand, is one where the teacher is more agentic, tries new things out, questions and justifies practices, preferring to operate in a more collegial manner. Like other researchers in the field, Sachs (ibid) recognises the complexity of teacher identity and reaches a definition of teacher identity which will be used to underpin this thesis. Namely, a teacher professional identity is;

> a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of "how to be", "how to act" and "how to understand" their work and their place in society…it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience (Sachs, 2005: 21).

This recognises that identity formation is complex, fluid and an active process (Britzman, 1991; Gee, 2000; Trent, 2010) in which one constructs and reconstructs the self in light of feedback from others within the social setting. It points to a number of influencing factors which are evident in the literature; personal history, motivation, narratives, agency, emotions (Flores and Day, 2006; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Lamote and Engles, 2010; Yuan and Lee, 2016).

This on-going process involves personal re-establishment and negotiation (Sachs, 2001; Correa et al., 2014) as teachers adjust to school contexts, political and professional agendas and the frequently changing nature of education in the twenty-first century. Other interrelated factors which impact on this process of self-definition and identity development include; family and those significant others around us, culture (Beijaard, et al., 2004), wider societal perceptions, emotion (Nias, 1989), personal images of a 'future self' (Kelchtermans, 1993), professional canonical expectations, values, and

practices within school settings (Smagorinsky et al., 2004) and current experience in school contexts (Lamote and Engels, 2010).

Though there is no wider agreement regarding teacher professional identity (Beijaard et al., 2004; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Izadinia, 2013), there is agreement it is changing and unstable (Beijaard et al., 2004; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Furlong, 2013). There is also agreement it is an area of concern and interest in both retention, job satisfaction and performance related agendas (Nias, 1996; Kelchtermans, 2009).

It is only in the latter part of the twentieth century teacher identity has become a focus within teacher development and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) as on-going changes to the teaching profession have caused reflection for researchers and teachers alike, in terms of what these changes mean for a teacher's professional identity (Beijaard, et al., 2004; Day et al., 2006b). Additionally, both Hammerness et al. (2005) and Izadinia (2013) argue it is significant as it plays a key role in teacher decision making.

This study is based on the premise that teacher identity is constructed in social contexts with and alongside, others (Sachs, 2005; Sim, 2006; Yandell and Turvey, 2007; Johnston, 2010). It is based on the belief that identity development is a social undertaking and relies on student teachers being active creators of their own identity (Lamote and Engles, 2010), within the contexts they engage with during their ITE journey. For the purpose of this study, these contexts are described as CoPs (Wenger, 1998); they comprise

the university based programme and include the school communities students are placed in during their annual practicum. This assumes both university based experiences and practicum experiences play a significant part of becoming a teacher and that membership of the early years' group, alongside school CoPs is significant for student teacher identity development. However, it is recognised that teacher identity can be developed by student teachers choosing to marginalise themselves from particular CoPs or in situations where they may be denied membership.

As the research questions focus on the student experience of developing their professional teacher identity the following sections will concentrate on teacher identity development and factors which impact on this during pre-service education and practice.

2.2.1 Teacher Identity Development as Social Participation

This section discusses literature which relates to teacher professional identity development as social participation as it is within these social systems of schools and relationships with others student teachers develop their professional identity (Handley et al., 2006; Sexton, 2008; Lamote and Engles, 2010). It is in these social contexts students learn professional characteristics and adopt these as their own personal ways of working (Anspal et al., 2012).

Izadinia (2013), in her review of twenty-nine empirical studies, identified the contribution of the school context to student teachers developing a teacher identity. This social interaction with others in the school context is significant

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as it can cause a shift in identity (Lamote and Engles, 2010) as students develop new insights and an understanding of the requirements and practices within schools and the wider landscape of practice. As Correa et al., (2014) highlight, professional identity is bound within both the school and university context as student teachers seek to apply learning from one context to the other.

The practice of teaching requires students to make constant judgements as they confront; school culture, tacit knowledge and classroom dilemmas, leading them to develop a fragile, critical understanding of the complex nature of education. However, this experience may not be straightforward; the student may experience conflict as their beliefs and views are brought into question, they may experience tension or misalignment of goals and expectations (Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Sexton, 2008; Trent, 2010; Johnston, 2010, 2016; Yuan and Lee, 2016). Students with a strong sense of agency can still develop from this negative, discouraging experience (Johnston, 2010).

2.2.2 Engagement is necessary to develop teacher identity

A key aspect of identity development as social participation is 'engagement' (Wenger, 1998). As Wenger (1998, 2000) and Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) note engagement within the social context is crucial for developing identity as it involves direct experience with the community. In this study, students were offered opportunities for engagement at different levels; within university as an identifiable student group within the faculty they

engage with the programme content both individually and in smaller groups; and on practicum where they engage in schools, undertaking the role of the teacher. Only by engaging in practicum, can students decide whether becoming a teacher is right for them; it is a significant site for learning and identity development (Schepens et al., 2009; Correa et al., 2014; Johnston, 2016).

Through performing teacher tasks students learn how they wish 'to be' and 'to act' (Sachs, 2005). It is how students engage with each other, children and colleagues which influences how they behave as a teacher and who they are as a teacher. They learn what they can do and how the CoP responds to their actions. It is through these relationships in engagement that they receive validation of their developing teacher identity (Kelchtermans, 1996; Sachs, 2005).

However, student's engagement with these CoPs varies (Sexton, 2008). Differences in engagement mean students create a professional identity which is consistent with their personal, established ideas of what it is to be a teacher. When these personal ideas about teacher role and identity align with school culture, practice, programme goals and expectations Sexton (ibid) argues there are limited opportunities for development. However, where a student experiences dissonance or misalignment, they recognise professional development is needed but this misalignment may lead some to begin to question whether becoming a teacher is right for them.

In a similar vein Sternberg et al. (2014) point out that these pedagogical beliefs and the beliefs students have about what teaching involves filter ITE content so they pay attention to what resonates with their existing beliefs, discarding ideas which may challenge these. This is significant as these beliefs about their teacher identity guide classroom actions and decision making (Beijaard, et al., 2004) and how teachers define their work (Kelchtermans, 2009). Lack of alignment between student beliefs and classroom practices can force students to copy, or mimic, the teacher's practice in order to progress through the practicum. This imitation provides little opportunity for students to develop their own teaching style and test their identity beliefs (Smagorinsky et al., 2004).

In the performative culture prevalent in English education school CoPs may be reluctant to allow students to try out their ideas and practices, as it can be high risk, impacting on the performance outcomes of pupils, this leads to students adopting a, 'what works here' approach (Wilkins et al., 2012), rather than developing their own distinctive pedagogical approaches which mirror their beliefs (Kelchtermans, 2009). Lack of opportunity to test out their teacher identity, build ideas about the profession and its place in society can reduce the impact of practicum on identity development.

2.2.3 Boundaries and boundary crossing

Closely related to the notion of engagement is the idea of boundaries and 'boundary crossing' (Wenger, 1998). It is during the boundary crossing experience that engagement and negotiation takes place (Beauchamp and

Thomas, 2011). 'Boundaries can be defined as socio-cultural differences leading to discontinuity in action or interaction' (Akkerman and Bakker, 2011:132), they can be marked by specific assumptions, perspectives, beliefs, values and practices which have the potential to trigger learning. Student teachers frequently participate in boundary crossing as they move from the university setting to the practicum context and so may be described as 'boundary crossers'.

As members of multiple CoPs students may be able to introduce elements from one site to another however, as noted above, opportunities for this may be limited in some CoPs. This 'transportable knowledge', identified by Correa et al. (2015), means student teachers carry with them whatever they feel is valuable for them from one practice to another as they cross the intersecting boundaries between practices. This may involve transferring knowledge from university to school CoPs, trying out practices discussed in university in school CoPs or using previous practices from one school in another.

Johnston (2016) notes during practicum, students do not aim to become full members of a CoP and as such may be better described as 'visitors' or 'guests' given their participation is merely temporary. Like 'tourists', students, as 'visitors' or 'guests' simply move into the CoP for a short, limited period, where they gain some sense of the socio-cultural expectations and compare previous experiences, knowledge and understanding to that enacted within the most recent CoP. Where practices are similar and the student teacher is accepted and trusted there can be some transferability of knowledge,

development of a 'shared repertoire' and the potential for experimentation and more innovative practice (Woodgate-Jones, 2012; Correa et al., 2015; Johnston, 2016). This might mean that the student teacher may make a contribution to the CoP.

However, where the social expectations and rules differ there can be difficulties and tensions created for the student's learning and developing teacher identity (Johnston, 2010). This dissonance can be a source of 'productive friction' (Ward et al., 2011:15) but it is dependent on how the student teacher copes with the difficulty. A reflective approach can lead to learning and identity development whereas a less positive approach can lead to marginalisation.

During the boundary crossing from university to practicum students may experience emotional challenges (Zembylas, 2003; Kelchtermans, 2009; Yuan and Lee, 2016) as beliefs and values may well be brought into question. How they react, when their teacher identity is brought into focus, has the capacity to result in deep learning (Akkerman and Bakker, 2011). However, there is a need for reflection and resilience in order to regulate emotional responses alongside possible identity changes (Flores and Day, 2006). It can be at these points that students need the 'right kind of support' as noted by Fenton-O'Creevy et al. (2015b) to enable them to reconcile academic theory and work-based practice.

These boundary crossing encounters may not necessarily be the smooth experiences for students implied by Wenger's earlier work. They are highly emotional experiences (Johnston 2010; Yuan and Lee, 2016) as students continually take the role of 'newcomer' with the aim of 'fitting in' to the established practices, rules and tacit knowledge of the CoP they are placed in for practicum (Lamote and Engles, 2010). This highly emotional undertaking is reliant on students establishing good working relationships with school staff. These are both aspects which arguably are somewhat neglected by Wenger (1998) and Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) (Fuller et al., 2005) but highlighted within teacher identity development as significant aspects of student's identity development (Yuan and Lee, 2016).

2.2.4 Multiple identities

A core challenge of identity work is to try to maintain some 'continuous sense of self' (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b: 45). This is a challenging undertaking for student teachers given they have a number of other identities which exist alongside their developing teacher identity (Gee, 2000). These may include; parent, sibling, son, daughter, co-worker, volunteer, all of which require students to behave and act in particular ways, in particular settings. It may be that there are aspects of one identity which can be transferred to another however it may also be the case that these identities may be challenged by the development of a teacher identity. As Goffman (1959) notes whilst we may act in a particular manner recognisable in the particular CoP, 'back stage' we may be working to maintain a sense of self. Wenger (1998) describes this as a nexus of multi-membership, noting people may behave differently in each

CoP, as they construct different aspects of themselves and gain different perspectives. These different types of participation need personal coordination. This means developing a teacher identity alongside other identities student teachers carry with them is a complex undertaking.

2.2.5 Identity trajectories vary

Student teachers in this study move through a trajectory on the programme as well as a personal development trajectory. In each year of the programme they experience an assessed practicum, as well as non-assessed experiences this means they can experience working in up to six different school contexts. The assessed practicum experiences become longer as students' progress and expectations are raised in each practicum from working with small groups of pupils to working with, and being responsible for, a whole class for eighty percent of the week. These practicum experiences are in a range of different school settings from small rural schools to larger urban schools. They also involve working with a range of ages of children from 3-5 year olds in the EYFS to 5-7 years olds in KS1. This means each student's trajectory throughout the programme differs. These varied trajectories have the potential to impact on student teacher identity development (Lamote and Engles, 2010; Anspal et al., 2012; Yuan and Lee, 2016).

Anspal et al. (2012) five year longitudinal study identified a pattern of identity development student teachers progress through. This involves initially focussing on oneself, to a focus on teaching methods and skills, to finally

focusing on pupil learning. Their research highlights an idealistic, naïve aspect at the beginning of student teacher's trajectories where students are motivated and aspire to be change agents in the lives of children. This is largely maintained in the second and third year and it is as they enter the latter part of the programme their focus shifts to making links between subject knowledge, pedagogy and practical application in teaching. Increasingly worries and fears enter the trajectory of identity development as they begin to doubt their capacity to do the job.

Kelchtermans' (1993) research also appears to suggest there may be a pattern to becoming a teacher from idealism, to reality, to consolidation, however, there is acknowledgement individual variations are likely as students may not follow this pattern.

Lamote and Engles (2010) in their small scale longitudinal study within a secondary education programme in Belgium, used four indicators of teachers' professional identity;

1. Professional orientations, this relates to what teachers should know and how they should act
2. Task orientation, these are their personal theories relating to the care aspect of the teacher role and linked to their personal educational ideology
3. Teacher self-efficacy, this refers to student teachers' own capacity to bring about desired outcomes for children.

4. Commitment to teaching, refers to how psychologically connected they feel to the wider teaching profession

In contrast to Anspal et al. study (2012) initially, students in this study had a strong pupil focused vision appearing confident and committed to the profession. In the first year they developed a more pupil centred view of teaching whilst practicum experiences focused on behaviour management. Similar to Anspal et al. (ibid) study, students developed a more 'realistic' view of education and became more confident about their impact on learning as they progressed through the programme.

Their findings seemed to indicate particular short term trajectory shifts, as students move between university and practicum, rather than any kind of linear development of identity. Students move from task orientation to a more pupil focused orientation with a decrease in self-efficacy as they begin to realise the complexity of teaching, but this is an erratic process as student teachers define and redefine themselves as teachers. This is not necessarily the type of trajectory Wenger (1998) posits, but a more complex, fragmented experience for student teachers as they move through the programme. Given student teachers enter ITE with a range of experiences and from a range of backgrounds, it is likely their teacher identity development will be varied as they progress.

2.2.6 Canonical expectations

In England the UK government have clearly defined a teacher's professional role as a list of Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011b); within this a teacher's

professional identity becomes a set of externally applied attributes (Sachs 2005), to be met during, and beyond, training. This conceptualises a teacher's professional identity as being both stable and portable (Yandell and Turvey, 2007) and provides a narrow conception of the teacher role. Beijaard et al. (2004) argue that given the expectations of these, externally devised, standards there may be aspects of a student teacher's professional identity, which may not be unique; rather there may be some commonalities in how students define themselves as teachers. Kelchtermans (1993) refers to students having to work at 'balancing self-image with professional norms' within the larger social system teachers operate in (Smagorinsky et al., 2004).

This more accountable and performative educational agenda teachers' work is situated in, where teacher professionalism is socially constructed within a highly performative culture (Day et al., 2006a), demands teachers adopt a 'what works approach' (Wilkins et al., 2012). This contrasts with behaving as more autonomous professionals (Correa et al., 2015) who are responsive to local and individual needs of children and communities. Sachs (2001) would describe this as being an 'entrepreneurial teacher', namely one who accepts the standards driven agenda, is compliant and capable. They accept the premise that education is market driven and so their identity is competitive, individualistic and externally defined. It can be said this denies agency on the part of individual teachers who appear as accepting regulation and the emotionality of becoming and being a teacher as highlighted by Kelchtermans (1996, 2009); Day et al. (2006a); Johnston (2010, 2016) and Yuan and Lee (2015).

Sachs's (2001, 2005) preferred version of a teacher is of an 'activist teacher', who perceives their role as having emancipatory aims, rooted in equality and social justice. This teacher would be reflexive and engaged in CoPs, as their work would be collegial, addressing specific local issues. Their identity is formed and re-formed as they negotiate their way to an imagined future. This can make them both strategic and tactical in their approaches as they view the wider landscape of education.

As ITE is highly regulated and competitive this requires that student teachers adopt the former identity to ensure they meet programme and government requirements, however, as Sachs (ibid) notes ITE should ensure student teachers understand teaching is political and encourage them to question, explore and collaborate in order to develop an activist identity. This suggests student teachers have to develop a balance between fulfilling government and programme requirements, in terms of meeting external standards, alongside becoming capable of; collaboration, analysis and critique of practice.

2.2.7 Student teachers are agentic and construct their professional identity

This thesis posits teacher identity is a fluid, contextual process of becoming, involving a continuous process of negotiating and modifying roles, behaviour and knowledge (Yuan and Lee, 2015) therefore, it is essential students behave agentically. This not only involves the student and what they bring internally, such as dispositions and beliefs, but also the context they find themselves in. As Endedijk et al. (2012) discuss, students need to be agentic

learners both as role models for their pupils and in order to benefit from the opportunities offered in university and during practicum. Additionally, they highlight the contextual and collaborative nature of learning in the workplace making it crucial for student teachers to be active agents in their own learning. Edwards (2011) also focuses on the idea of agency and has developed the notion of 'relational agency', namely 'a capacity for working with others to strengthen purposeful responses to complex problems' (Edwards, 2011: 34). This involves recognising the expertise of others and their motives, working together on a task and being able to align responses to the different interpretations used. For students engaged in any school practicum it is important to recognise the expertise of school staff and respond in a positive manner. By being able to relate to other professionals in a positive manner students can often feel more comfortable and move towards membership of the CoP (Wenger, 1998).

However, there is potential for conflict between student beliefs and ideas and school practices. Students may be expected to comply with setting policy and practice (Wilkins et al., 2012) causing a discontinuity of practice (Johnston, 2016) and leaving them vulnerable to experiencing negative emotions (Yuan and Lee, 2016). This adversity in practice and struggling to fit in can result in a lowering of self-esteem (Johnston, 2010; Wilkins et al., 2012; Yuan and Lee, 2016) or, if the student has a strong sense of agency, it can result in some powerful learning (Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Sexton, 2008). Sexton (2008) found that because students engage differently in their ITE programmes they create a professional teacher identity which is congruent with their initial,

incoming goals. She notes that when these beliefs and experiences align there are limited opportunities for development as a teacher but when there is 'dissonance' or 'misalignment' the student teacher is forced to draw on personal experience to address this gap. For Sexton (ibid: 86);

> agency exists in how people mediate their position and resources and is always in flux as the student teacher enacts different components of her multifaceted identity.

This relies on the student teacher being able to integrate theory and practice (Schepens et al., 2009), demonstrating an agentic approach in terms of 'how to be' (Sachs, 2005) in order to develop practice, learning and identity.

Student teachers need to take control of their experiences both in university and during practicum in order to benefit from the opportunities offered this requires; agency, determination, resilience and a future oriented outlook. They need to draw on experiences as well as beliefs and values about what it means to be a teacher (Sachs, 2005).

2.2.8 Identity development: an emotional undertaking

Whilst the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011b) represent a technical rational approach to becoming a teacher it is evident, from the literature developing a teacher identity as a student is an emotional process (Johnston 2010, 2016; Yuan and Lee, 2016). The wider teacher identity literature (Zembylas, 2003; Kelchtermans, 1996, 2009; Correa et al., 2014) highlights 'becoming' a teacher is an emotion laden undertaking. Zembylas (2003) notes, viewing teacher identity as an emotional process means research into identity needs to acknowledge this affective element which involves both power and agency,

two aspects arguably underdeveloped in Wenger's CoP theory (Roberts, 2006; Correa et al., 2014). Zembylas (2003) argues that because emotions reside within the teacher and are constructed in; social relationships, cultures, families, value systems and school contexts they have implications for ITE and how student teachers can be supported in exploring their emotional experiences in practicum.

Similarly, Nias (1989, 1996) identifies the need to take into account teacher emotions because of the strong investment of self they make in their work, she notes;

> teachers' idealism leads them to invest their moral and professional 'selves' in the job. However, this very investment makes them vulnerable to criticism from others, which may in turn lead them to sacrifice their ideals (Nias, 1996: 302).

Though Nias's study was of qualified teachers the same can be said of student teachers who make a huge investment in their pre-service education not only from a moral, idealistic, emancipatory perspective, but also a financial one.

Student teachers enter ITE with values, beliefs and theories regarding learning, alongside images of themselves as teachers (Furlong, 2013), so when these are brought into question they can experience negative emotions. The increasingly performative nature of being a teacher makes 'becoming' a teacher a very public undertaking and can lead to unwarranted criticism and uncomfortable emotional experiences (Johnston, 2010, 2016). Sachs (2005) would argue that this is where ITE needs to enable student teachers to adopt

more of an 'activist' professional identity so they understand the wider political context of teaching.

A stronger student teacher identity could enable student teachers to remain more true to themselves, their beliefs and values (Ibarra, 1999) which leads to a more positive emotional experience than having to 'fake it', or 'mimic' teacher behaviours (Jackson, 1986 cited in Smagorinsky et al., 2004), which provides limited opportunities for student teachers to develop their own teaching style and identity. This feeling of 'belonging' is noted in the literature as a significant emotional element, in that it links to commitment to the profession and increased self-belief (Handley et al., 2006; Lamote and Engles, 2010; Johnston, 2016). As Johnston explains, in his 2016 study of post-graduate trainees, a negative practicum experience can impact on a student teacher's emotional well-being and capacity to learn. These problems can be caused by a clash of pedagogic beliefs, teachers may be reluctant in handing over control to student teachers and because of their temporary status student teachers are frequently forced to comply. Where problems exist in the relational aspects of practicum student teachers then fail to belong to the CoP and can feel marginalised and disempowered.

Further, as Kelchtermans (2009) explains, in his longitudinal study of experienced teachers, they have personal subjective education theories, which comprise of a 'personal system of knowledge and beliefs about education that teachers use when performing their job' (Kelchtermans, 2009:263). When these are brought into question it is an emotional

experience which leaves them vulnerable and powerless. He too, would advocate the importance of supporting student teachers in understanding their own teacher identity as part of any ITE programme, in order to enable them to cope with conflict in relation to their beliefs and values.

2.2.9 Imagining a future self

Current research regarding the development of professional identity for both student teachers and teachers suggests there are issues around a 'future' or 'possible self', which are worthy of exploration, as it is becoming increasingly evident this has a bearing on motivation, engagement and, therefore, development (Hamman et al., 2010; Hamman et al., 2013; Salli and Osam, 2017). This idea of a 'future self' (Hammerness et al., 2005) or the kind of teacher they wish to be (Lamote and Engles, 2010), clearly links to the notion becoming a teacher is an emotional endeavour, as it is how the student teacher perceives of themselves in the future, combining; aspirations, career trajectory, aims for education and moral purpose. Correa et al. (2014: 448) note how this imagined professional identity can be a powerful driver for innovation and change. They state;

> The desire to be a teacher and the kind of teacher one wants to be are essential components of a teaching identity, signalling teachers' motivations and later satisfaction with, belonging to and participating in certain educational contexts.

This places the notion of a 'future self' central to the work of becoming a teacher as well as developing as a qualified teacher.

Biesta et al. (2015), in their research exploring teacher agency and belief suggest there is a future aspect, or what they term, 'projective' dimension, which needs to be added to teacher agency which involves a view of the purpose of education and longer term goals for education. They argue this means teacher beliefs matter as they impact on agency; drawing together past, present and future, this means student teacher beliefs should be an aspect of the ITE provision as they link to agency, 'future self' and a vision for education.

The work of Hamman et al. (2010) and Hamman et al. (2013) also points to the importance of addressing the notion of a future self in both ITE and with new teachers. Their work in applying Markus and Nurius' (1986) 'possible selves theory' to developing a professional teacher identity, highlighted the link between the notion of a future self, motivation and self-regulation in the present, on the part of student teachers. This has implications for ITE in that beliefs about a future self can 'filter' out aspects of learning and practice which lacks congruence with their images of a future self. As both Hamman et al. (2010) and Miller and Shifflet (2016) note it is important for ITE to enable student teachers to explore both past, present and future selves, so beliefs can be surfaced and used as a lens to examine content of ITE programmes.

Beginning an ITE programme and wishing one wants to become a teacher, is a future oriented activity, in that students embark on a journey towards eventual 'becoming' which takes time and effort and means student teachers have an idea, at the beginning of ITE, of the type of teacher they wish to be

(Anspal et el., 2012; Furlong, 2013). By joining an ITE programme they are committing to this vision of themselves in the future. The students involved in this study were committed to becoming early years' teachers which, in England, includes working with the youngest children in formal education (3-7 years). This is a distinct age phase, and one which places the student in opposition to some views expressed within primary education (5-11 years). They become aware of this early in the programme, as they are introduced to two very different curricula; a play based foundation stage curriculum (DfE, 2017); and a subject based primary National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). The fact they perceive of themselves as early years teachers means they need to develop quite a different skill set to primary colleagues, alongside different pedagogical practices.

The notion of a future self brings together both past, present and future and therefore, requires addressing with student teachers, especially as research shows not only do they imagine a positive future self but also, 'feared selves' (Salli and Osam, 2017) which they may strive to avoid becoming. By examining past, present and future selves, teacher educators can enable student teachers to confront personal beliefs and values regarding what it is to be a teacher and surface possible 'predispositions' to act (Roberts, 2006) by presenting alternatives.

Roberts (2006), in her critique of Wenger's theory, notes these 'predispositions' to act, are an omission within the CoP framework. However, they are particularly relevant for student teachers, who have undergone a

twelve year apprenticeship of education as a pupil in school (Lortie, 1975) which means they enter ITE with ideas of what it means to be a teacher in terms of Sachs's (2005) notions of 'how to be, how to act and how to understand', as well as, how they define themselves as teachers to both themselves and others (Lasky, 2005).

Furlong (2013) also advocates an interrogation of the 'lay theories' student teachers enter ITE with in order to challenge, and possibly, change them. Furlong (ibid) believes these opportunities for critical reflection and inquiry in ITE are a key role for teacher educators. Beauchamp and Thomas (2010) would also advocate the significance of reflection in ITE programmes, but go beyond mere retrospective reflection, which is common in ITE, to 'anticipatory reflection' for student teachers to envision future selves and identities. They go further and advocate developing a 'pedagogy of identity' (Jenlink, 2006) which would provide space for student teachers to consider, and reflect on, present and future professional selves. This could help students to self-monitor progress and recognise the importance of professional identity development.

2.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework designed to underpin and drive this research was based on the literature discussed above and combined identity theory and teacher identity theory. It started from the premise that individuals construct understanding of the world, and their place within it, through social participation; in this case, students undertaking practicum in school settings. It

is through active engagement in these CoPs students interpret and construct a professional teacher identity, which is recognisable to others, both within and outside the profession. However, this is not a simple linear undertaking, but a more erratic, evolving journey which involves complex relationships, emotions, addressing canonical expectations, and images students have of their future teacher self.

The desire to understand this experience led to the research questions outlined in the introduction. Therefore the framework created and applied examined identity development through;

1. social participation in CoPs, focussing on; contextually centred dimensions; engagement, relationships, trajectories, boundaries and boundary crossing, within the performative culture of the Teachers' Standards,

2. affective dimensions; agency, emotion, imagination.

Subsequent findings may contribute to the development of CoP theory, particularly the 'gaps' in this theory regarding the more 'affective' aspects of identity development; relationships and emotion.

The study was designed as a longitudinal study to gauge changes to identity during the programme as the framework included a focus on relationships, the social process of identity development, emotions and a belief teacher identity development was a continuous undertaking for the students involved. Defining identity development as a social process, led to a constructivist research

approach and choice of semi-structured interviews as a suitable data collection method, to gain insight into the social process experienced.

The identity theory framework provided a structure for initial coding during data analysis, as part of a hybridised approach (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006) which, not only coded data through deductive reasoning in relation to themes arising from the theoretical framework, but also allowed for the generation of themes through inductive reasoning and an open approach to coding, so the student voice could be captured in its entirety.

2.4 Summary

The literature reviewed reveals a student's teacher professional identity development as a complex undertaking, which develops over time and is impacted upon by a range of varied factors. It is situated within social participation in CoPs where relationships, boundary crossing and trajectories are important aspects to consider. Whilst the evolving CoP theory (Wenger, 1998, 2000; Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015) provides a framework for understanding student teachers' professional identity development with ideas of 'engagement', 'imagination', 'alignment', 'knowledgeability', 'expressibility' and 'accountability', it has been complimented by teacher identity research, regarding emotions, agency, engaging with a future self, and canonical expectations which need to be considered in order to understand this journey of identity development more fully.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research approach taken and examines ontological and epistemological premises, methodology and the method adopted. Additionally, ethical issues and the explanation of the data analysis process will be discussed, alongside a reflexive element as part of the practitioner research approach adopted. For the purposes of this study it should be noted all students are referred to by pseudonyms.

3.1 Nature and scope of the research

This in-depth longitudinal small-scale qualitative study aimed to explore how seven student teachers experienced the development of their teacher identity during a three-year professional education degree. This included surfacing experiences which impacted on their teacher identity development. During the programme these student teachers frequently crossed boundaries (Wenger, 1998) between university and the world of work. This involved them in managing and trying to resolve a range of external pressures; academic standards, professional body requirements and credibility in a busy, complex and high accountability workplace (Menter et al., 2012). This provided a rich context for the exploration of teacher identity.

Whilst the context may be unique in terms of time (2011-2014) and place (Northern University), it can be said to be typical of other similar undergraduate programmes, therefore findings will be useful for the staff team involved in programme development and may be transferable to other similar undergraduate programmes (Delmar, 2010; Nowell et al., 2017).

As a small-scale practitioner research project my personal values regarding education and the purpose of research as being a moral, emancipatory and transformative process (Alasuutari, 2010), in which those being educated have an active, rather than passive role to play focused the research (Savin-Barden and Howell Major, 2013). Prior experience indicated there appeared to be issues around student understanding of the complexity and expectations of the wider teacher role. I felt it was important to explore and address these in a purposeful manner to enhance the student experience as well as the programme (Thompson-Klein, 2007). I firmly believe, as a teacher educator, I have a responsibility to 'make a difference' to student teachers and subsequently, the life chances of children.

It should be noted from the outset that, as a researcher, I have a personal allegiance to qualitative methodology (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000; Thompson-Klein, 2007; Alasuutari, 2010,) which not only impacted on the methods used but influenced the overall conception and design of the project (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). This personal orientation also impacted on the process of data analysis and reporting, as the study aimed to understand the experience students had on the programme I was keen for student meanings (Denzin and Ryan, 2007) and 'voices' to be heard (Heikkinen et al., 2016). I wished to capture the student teacher identity journey as well as experiences which made a difference in the meaning they attached to teacher identity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013; Erikson, 2013). The intention was that more specific knowledge of the issues would provide direction in decision making

regarding programme provision and development (Flyvbjerg, 2001). It was hoped this deeper understanding would impact on the student experience using the student 'voice' as an integral aspect of course development. Additionally, it appeared longitudinal research evidence exploring student teacher identity development during their undergraduate teacher education seemed rare. Therefore, an illustrative study of this manner would enhance wider understanding of the development of teacher identity from the point of first engagement in a life-long, professional developmental process (Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2015).

As the nature of practitioner research is one which is flexible and respondent to need, the subsequent research approach developed from the initial stage into a planned series of interviews to capture the on-going student journey. These interviews took place twice per year; before and after student practicum experience. Though the research project employed a range of qualitative data collection methods it was decided to focus this thesis on data collected through semi-structured interviews, generated by seven students involved, throughout the three years of the programme as this provided 'rich data' and 'thick descriptions' (Shaw, 2005; Braun and Clarke, 2013) representing the student 'voice' (Denzin and Ryan, 2007).

3.2 Philosophical approach

My own ontological and epistemological beliefs guided decision making during the research process. It was these beliefs and assumptions about the nature of the world and knowledge construction which underpinned all

methodological decision making (Agger, 2007; Delmar, 2010). Alignment between epistemology and ontology was paramount as it aided decision making, supported the rigour of the process, including ethical decision making and the credibility of findings (Denzin and Ryan, 2007; Jackson, 2013).

The aim of this research was to understand the student experience in relation to developing a teacher identity, therefore it was apparent a qualitative approach was appropriate as this allowed for the consideration of; the perspectives of those involved; the meaning they attached to becoming a teacher and was contextually situated. In relation to this, an overarching belief in constructivism (Crotty, 1998; Savin-Barden and Howell Major, 2013) directed this qualitative study. Such beliefs meant a small scale practitioner research methodology seemed to be an appropriate approach to adopt, especially as the aim was to understand the development of teacher identity, the student experience and identify aspects which could be used to develop the programme further.

The philosophical premise which underpinned this approach was that individuals construct their own understanding and meaning based on interactions both with the surroundings they find themselves in and other people involved; tutors, school based mentors, children, parents and peers. 'Knowledge' of teacher identity is a product of how individual students come to understand it – there is no single underlying reality but multiple realities. This reality is actively constructed by students through; relationships, context and personal biography. It is these relational aspects (Gergen and Gergen, 2007)

of identity construction which seem to direct how students perceive of themselves within the teacher role and therefore impact on how they view themselves as teachers, constructing a coherent teacher identity which subsequently guides their actions.

Epistemology was a significant aspect of the research approach, as it guided definitions of how we gain educational knowledge, what this is, as well as 'the grounds upon which we believe something to be true' (Oliver, 2010: 35). It is about what we, as individuals, consider to be legitimate knowledge. As this research project was concerned with seeking new knowledge and understanding regarding student teacher identity development and the findings generated were the creation of both myself, as the researcher, the RA, as interviewer and the students, my constructivist epistemological stance was central in the choice of methodology and the overall purpose and goals for the project (Snape and Spencer, 2003). My role in devising the interview questions and interpreting the dialogue generated impacted on the data created and presented (Golafshani, 2003; Fontana and Frey, 2005).

Practitioner research can be a 'transformative' activity (Sachs, 2003), requiring reflection and can impact directly on practice and institutional development. It allows for the development of understanding on the part of the practitioner involved and therefore, directly upon their practice, benefitting students working with the practitioner. Deeper understanding through this research has already impacted on the programme with the introduction of a non-assessed practicum in year two of the programme and has involved me

in making changes to on-going practices as a teacher educator. Clearly, exploring student teachers' experiences of identity development is not a value free activity because as a researcher I bring my own identity alongside personal, social, cultural and political beliefs to bear on the data created (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000; Munro et al., 2004) therefore this is acknowledged as part of the research process.

The constructivist approach adopted was evident throughout the data collection and data analysis as semi-structured interviews were identified as a suitable method for data collection as this allowed the individual students to discuss their experiences of identity development. Due to my relationship with the students I decided to use a research assistant (RA) to conduct the interviews so I could maintain some distance, ease pressure on students and not directly prompt and influence the data captured and views expressed by interviewees.

Within this approach it was acknowledged that not only do students come with a range of personal biographies but, as the researcher involved, I also had my own biography, as had the RA, all of which impacted on the data generated through the interview process. Additionally, during the analysis my personal history and beliefs have impacted on the findings. This has meant reflection was necessary throughout the research process in order to reflect my ontological and epistemological position as well as to assess suitability of methods and methodology adopted (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000; Delmar, 2010).

As a qualitative practitioner research project the research assumed an unstable, changing reality which was socially constructed by participants within the specific context therefore, it was the opinions and views of participants which created and formed the narrative exposed through the methodology chosen. My own interest and 'qualitative sensibility' (Braun and Clarke, 2013:9) as the researcher in the subject of study (teacher identity development), the contextual constraints and the socially constructed nature of the reality for students, shaped the overall enquiry and have subsequently influenced the data analysis. This meant it was of paramount importance to surface beliefs as part of the process (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000; Denzin and Ryan, 2007; Jackson, 2013,). Additionally, as Alasuutari (2010) notes there is a moral and ethical responsibility within qualitative research to report findings in a suitable way which does not misrepresent the ideas voiced by participants and to aim for emancipatory actions which can transform and improve the lived experiences of those involved (Shaw, 2005; Heikkinen et al., 2016).

3.3 Methodology and Research design

In terms of identifying methodology it could be argued this was a case study approach as it followed one group of students through their three year ITE programme in one university in England (Thomas, 2011) and was interesting to me as the practitioner aiming to explore and improve the student experience (Platt, 2007). However, it is better identified as a small scale study and 'detailed examination of' (Tight, 2010) seven individual cases of student

teacher identity development through practitioner research. Those more committed to a positivist approach may argue such a small study is less rigorous than a larger scale, quantitative approach. However, as the aim was to explore the complex issue of teacher identity development in depth, a small-scale, in-depth study appeared appropriate as this could illustrate and explore individual experiences and beliefs.

As Flyvbjerg (2001) explains such small scale studies can highlight aspects of phronesis, or action orientated local knowledge, which can contribute towards decision making. Alongside this and highlighted in the discussion of what makes good practitioner research (Heikkinen et al., 2016) is the linked notion of 'praxis' which refers to practical wisdom or practical intelligence which was what I, as an 'insider' researcher, was seeking. As a piece of practitioner research, the study aimed to capture the holistic experience of this group of students to ascertain whether there were aspects which could be transferred to other cohorts on the programme. Therefore the study reported provides illumination of the phenomena and an indicative example of student teacher identity development which may relate to programme developments both in our university and others with similarly constructed courses.

Alongside this assumption that such a small scale study was worthy of exploration, were the range of personal assumptions which at the outset were not fully articulated or considered carefully (Kogler, 2007). These included my belief it is important to try to look through the eyes of the participants, giving them an authentic voice within the research (Heikkinen et al., 2016), as reality

can be complex with multiple interpretations (Cohen et al., 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). I wanted to try to ensure students could recognise their own experiences and stories in the final reporting. Additionally, I was aware that language can be interpreted in different ways and interpretation depends on your own perceptions, history, bias, and understanding of the situation. My position as both an 'insider', being familiar and embedded within the programme and yet an 'outsider' in terms of trying to understand the student experience of identity development (Braun and Clarke, 2013; Heikkinen et al., 2016) was noted. However, initial findings (Seward and Renwick, 2013a) indicated this journey was possibly more messy, fluid and complex than I anticipated. Therefore, the research explored the 'messiness of real life' (Braun and Clarke, 2013:20) whilst giving 'voice' to student stories of identity development.

3.4 Data collection methods

This longitudinal qualitative research project (2011-14) began as part of a one year teaching team wider action research project to investigate student transition issues. Within that wider project my contribution, working with a colleague, was to lead a study of the students' developing teacher identity because of the link suggested by previous research to student teacher retention and teacher decision making (Day et al., 2005; Sim, 2006). My colleague contributed to the early stages of data analysis within this initial study. A paper from this initial study indicated the need to make embedded teacher identity of student teachers more explicit because they otherwise tended to focus too much on superficial aspects of appearing to be a 'teacher'

(Seward and Renwick, 2013a). Building on this initial study I designed my doctoral research because this kind of longitudinal project, particularly with early years' student teachers, was a gap in the existing research evidence base.

In designing the longitudinal study I chose to continue data collection through semi-structured interviews for the three years as these had generated rich data providing insight into the students' developing teacher identities. It was important to me, as a practitioner researcher, that the data collection methods created an opportunity for students to benefit from engagement in the research study. The semi-structured interviews gave students an opportunity for reflection (Wolgemuth et al., 2015) as well as space to explore personal thoughts and feelings in a relatively secure environment (Clark, 2010). In the longitudinal study semi-structured interviews with the student teachers were completed before and after the assessed practicum in each of the three years of their undergraduate programme. This element of the design was influenced by Wenger's ideas on pre and post 'boundary crossing' (Wenger, 1998). The pre practicum interview generated data on students' consideration particularly of university provision. The post practicum interview generated data particularly on students' perspectives of work-based learning in relation to the university provision and to their developing teacher identity.

The schedules for data collection are outlined below. There were some 'gaps', illustrated in table 3.4.1 and by X below, where some of the seven

students involved were unavailable. Ticks indicate the interview took place during the timeframe identified in the top row.

	Year 1: 2011-12 Semester 1 (before the first assessed school based experience) RA	2011-12 Semester 2 (after the second assessed school based experience – end of the first year of study) RA	Year 2: 2012-13 Semester 2 (before second assessed school based experience, but following a non-assessed school based experience) RA	2012-13 Semester 2 (after second assessed school based experience, approximately seven weeks later) RA	Year 3: 2013-14 Semester 2 (before final assessed school based experience) RA	2013-14 Semester 2 (after final assessed school based experience and end of the programme)
Andrew	√	√	√	√	√	X
Beth	√	X	√	√	√	√ Skype
Carrie	√	√	√	√	√	√ Skype
Della	√	√	√	√	√	√ face to face
Ellie	√	X	√	√	√	√ RA
Fran	√	√	√	X	√	√ phone
Gina	√	√	√	√	√	√ face to face

Table 3.4.1 Interview schedule   (RA = research assistant led interviews)

This provided thirty-eight interviews in total for analysis. The majority of these interviews were undertaken by the research assistant to mitigate the power relationship I had with these students. The use of a research assistant had

both advantages and disadvantages in terms of data generation and ethics and this is discussed further in section 3.6. This approach also helped preserve the anonymity of the students involved as I did not hear their voices but only had access to the final transcripts. However, there was an issue with the recording device in the final series of interviews which meant I had to undertake these which may have impacted more directly on data generated. The means of undertaking these final interviews is indicated in the table above.

The advantages of interviews, which are common methods in practitioner research projects, were that they allowed insight into the student opinions, emotions and experiences to be gained so providing relevant data regarding the research questions; their experience of developing a teacher identity and what impacted on this view of themselves as teachers throughout each year of the programme. These semi-structured interviews were designed to give the RA a series of prompt questions to ask whilst allowing for further exploration and clarification of ideas (Bryman, 2004). The questions asked and timetable for completion are outlined below.

Academic year and timing	Questions asked
Year 1: 2011-12 Semester 1 (before the first assessed practicum)	What do you think about the course so far? How does the course compare with your previous experience of studying? *Prompt:* Differences? Similarities? What things are you finding interesting? Challenging?

	Which activities in the sessions you have attended have you found particularly helpful to you as a learner? Can you tell me about your experience of the tutors here? *Prompts* – how well have they matched your expectations, how much support? How are you managing the reading and independent aspects of the course? To what extent do you feel like a beginner teacher? What aspects of the course have helped with this?
2011-12 Semester 2 (after the second assessed practicum – end of the first year)	To what extent do you feel like a beginner teacher now? *Prompt:* What aspects of the course have helped with that? What have you learned at university which has changed the way you think about teaching? How would you describe yourself as a teacher at the moment? Is there a metaphor which would describe you as a teacher?
Year 2: 2012-13 Semester 2 (before second assessed practicum, but following a non-assessed school based experience)	What experiences in Year 2 have impacted on your developing teacher identity? *Prompts*: How and in what way? In school/university? How would you describe yourself as a teacher? *Prompt:* any metaphors? Has your teacher identity changed in Year 2? *Prompt:* How? Do the QTS standards impact on your teacher identity? *Prompt:* In what way?
2012-13 Semester 2 (after second assessed practicum)	How would you describe yourself as a teacher following this placement? Has your teacher identity changed or developed? What has impacted on your teacher identity?

	Do the QTS standards impact on your teacher identity? *Prompt:* In what way?
Year 3: 2013-14 Semester 2 (before final assessed practicum)	What experiences this year have impacted on your teacher identity and the way you feel now about being a teacher? What is it about yourself as a teacher which is important to you? How would you describe yourself as a teacher at this point? What sort of teacher do you think you will be? Do you have any metaphors that describe how you feel about teaching or yourself as a teacher? Do you feel your teacher identity has changed? In what way? How? Have the QTS standards impacted on your teacher identity in any way?
2013-14 Semester 2 (after final assessed practicum, end of the programme)	Now you are at the end of the course what experiences have impacted on your developing teacher identity? *Prompts:* How and in what way? What was it in school which was significant for you? What aspects of your university education have been significant? How would you describe yourself as a teacher? *Prompt:* any metaphors you would use to describe yourself? Has your teacher identity changed during the course? *Prompt:* How has it changed? Why do you think that is? Do the QTS standards impact on your teacher identity? *Prompt:* In what way?

Table 3.4.2 Interview Questions

As can be seen above, the questions changed over time from a general team research focus on student's transition to HE to a focus on student teacher identity development as the project progressed and became more oriented to investigating teacher identity development.

These interviews enabled relevant, detailed information to be gained from each participant. Additionally, it was hoped that the timing of the interviews would be helpful for students enabling them to reflect on their experiences and consider more deeply their teacher identity and what it meant to be a teacher for them as individuals.

Interview data collected were transcribed by an assistant then checked by each student before being released to me for analysis. I am not aware of any changes made and did not have an opportunity to hear any of these interviews, apart from the final ones I carried out. This effectively meant, as the analyst, I was in a subordinate position trying to interpret what effectively was, a dialogue created by the individual student and RA.

It was clear from reading and analysing the interview transcripts that in addition to identified questions the RA included others to attempt to move the discussion forward this meant there were occasions where deeper knowledge of the programme and associated terminology on the part of the RA, would have led to more relevant, or probing, subsidiary questions which may have elicited more depth of potentially relevant information. I am also aware there was one occasion where a question was not asked using the wording

provided and so the response did not illicit information from that student which was provided by other interviewees.

Additionally, the interview process involved both the RA and interviewee engaging in verbal, socially dynamic exchanges which led to what could be described as a collaborative output; a mutually created story in which the RA's personal history, as a white, middle-aged woman, her bias and understanding played a part (Fontana and Frey, 2005). This is acknowledged alongside my own bias as an influence in the analysis.

Other disadvantages included the fact transcripts were complex and time consuming to analyse. Initially, I was supported by a colleague who worked on the data analysis with me for conference presentations (Seward and Renwick 2012, 2013b) and the creation of a journal article (Seward and Renwick 2013a) which added reliability to the initial analysis. However, I have had to re-examine the data as the thesis focus was different, utilised only interview data and it was important to be able to see the 'whole' picture of student teacher identity development over the period of the programme. Other issues included the notion interviews only represent the single student voices and other students in the group may well have articulated alternative views, ideas and opinions which were not heard. Students may also have misrepresented ideas or failed to be honest about the issues discussed in an interview. In an attempt to mitigate this; current findings were shared with the whole cohort via a closed 'Facebook' page for comments.

3.5 Data analysis

As this was a longitudinal project initial thematic data analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013) began as an iterative (Atkinson and Delamont, 2005; Perakyla, 2005), interpretive activity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013) and utilised Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) in the form of ATLAS.ti as a tool in supporting the analytic process (Smit, 2002). This software allowed for systematic data analysis, questioning, adding notes, retrieval of data and coding with a large amount of data (Smit, 2002; Friese, 2014). It was accepted that the initial analysis undertaken had to be revisited, reworked and developed as the data analysis process continued but the use of ATLAS.ti. made this a transparent process. The constant comparative method described by Thomas (2011) is similar to the process of 'noticing, collecting and thinking (NCT)' (Friese, 2014) which was used throughout as it was a more open form of analysis which allowed for the student identity development to emerge from the data.

'Noticing' refers to 'bracketing off' one's own assumptions (Braun and Clarke, 2013) and finding intriguing things in the data, 'collecting' refers to combining similar data segments, whilst 'thinking' refers to the continuous process of consideration and questioning which occurs throughout the process. These aspects can occur sequentially, recursively or more holistically but within this project the recursive aspect has been most prevalent as I have moved backwards and forwards between the data collected at different stages of the project period. Additionally, the use of ATLAS.ti allowed for the use of 'memoing' throughout which enabled me to interpret, make decisions and

note my thinking whilst analysing data (Punch, 1998). These memos helped create a more holistic picture of the individual student identity journeys which, could then be used as a comparison across the dataset.

Initially, the thematic analysis generated fifty-one, descriptive and conceptual codes from surface observations I 'noticed' during analysis of the data and I used the constant comparative and memos to develop a consistent and coherent coding framework (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Additional conceptual codes were taken from the theoretical framework outlined in the literature review. This thematic data analysis process can be described as a 'hybridised approach' combining both inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning to code the data and develop themes (Fereday and Muir-Cochran, 2006). These codes were attached to segments of data (quotations) with some segments having multiple codes attached. Once all the transcripts had been initially coded I moved to the search for themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006; 2013). The continuing analysis identified developing patterns or themes. These emerging patterns or themes were recurring ideas which appeared to be significant for all students in terms of answering the research questions. As examination continued it became clear there were ten emerging themes where codes in the data appeared to cluster and relate to each other. The initial codes were combined into these ten themes but during this process as I reviewed the themes, it became evident there was a relationship between the ten themes which could be narrowed down further into four overarching key themes (ibid) which created a view of the experience from the student perspective (Perakyla, 2005). These four final key themes captured 'the most salient

patterns' in the dataset (Braun and Clarke, 2013:225) and appeared to represent how student teachers experienced teacher identity development.

Using ATLAS.ti it was possible to amalgamate the initial codes into the four themes and generate a network diagram (figure 3.5) which enabled specific dimensions linking the themes to be identified. Clearly as these dimensions effectively worked across the themes they were significant in identifying what impacted upon student teacher identity development. The themes which emerged and dimensions which identified what impacts on student identity development are reported in the following chapters, alongside examples of three individual student journeys on the programme. The network diagram, figure 3.5 below, illustrates how the initial codes linked to the four final themes and the linking dimensions generated. The diagrammatic display of the links between themes was helpful in clarifying and making explicit the process of analysis (Huberman and Mills, 1994). The thematic network diagram in Figure 3.5 shows how the initial codes relate to the four overarching themes.
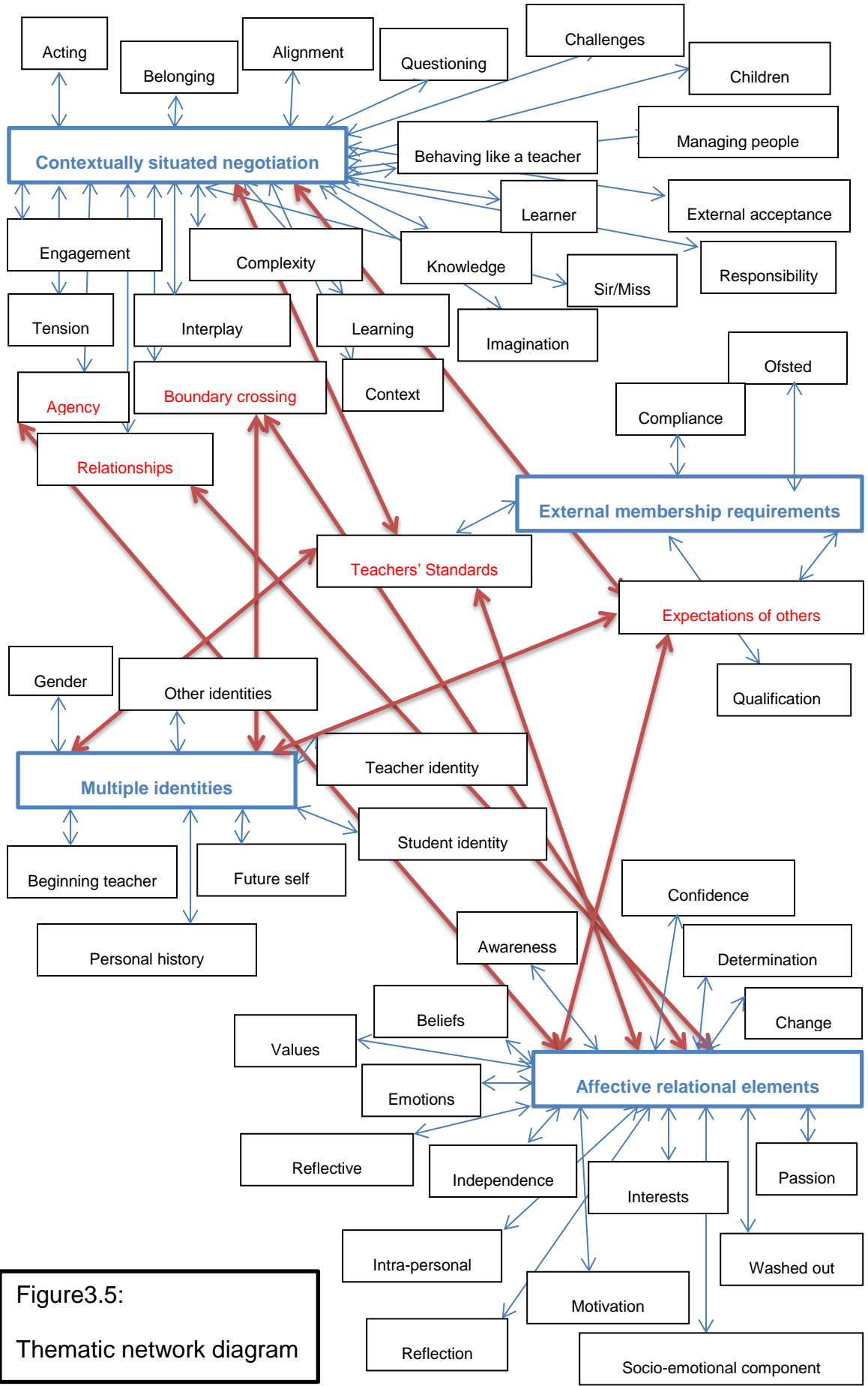
Figure3.5:

Thematic network diagram

In the thematic network diagram:

The blue boxes represent the final four themes

Text in black indicates the original codes applied

Text in red and the red lines show the linking dimensions across themes.

Whilst ATLAS.ti. can be a useful tool for data analysis I considered the possibility of seeing data in a segmented, reduced frame which could have detracted from the holistic nature of what the respondents were saying. The relative ease at which data could be efficiently coded could have encouraged rather superficial interpretations. To mitigate this, I used the constant comparison method (Thomas, 2013) and double checking advocated by Braun and Clarke (2013) alongside working with paper copies of transcripts and the direct, verbatim reporting of the student voice. This was further addressed through the reflexive and recursive process of data analysis employed, constantly moving between data to check and reflect on findings. This was important especially as the data appeared to reveal a mixed, chaotic and complex picture of student teacher identity development. Additionally, as Grbich (2013:280) argues, 'the rule-based approaches of computer programming have much in common with positivism.' Therefore, I was mindful of this and ensured I maintained an in-depth analysis to elicit the 'thick descriptions' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) I sought regarding the student experience of becoming a teacher. I found I needed to consider, not only common patterns in the data, but the variations which emerged and I ensured text was read in its entirety rather than reducing text to small segments which

matched emerging codes (Agar, 1991). The data analysis followed the steps outlined in table 3.5.1 below with thinking captured through memoing.

1.	All data saved into files in ATLAS.ti
2.	All data read in hard copy and in chronological order to gain a holistic picture.
3.	Initial coding started in ATLAS.ti using theoretical framework and any emerging codes. This was undertaken chronologically for each student data set. On-going memoing and thinking taking place.
4.	Interviews were re-read to check coding adding more as necessary, especially to early interview data as the codes developed. Memos were used to identify and write up individual student identity development during the programme as each student dataset was analysed. Reviewed later once data analysis was completed.
5.	Amalgamation of initial codes into emerging themes (10).
6.	Continuation of review and refinement of themes. (4).
7.	Tested themes out. Selected data to illustrate themes and provide definitions.
8.	Mapped themes into a network diagram in ATLAS.ti, identifying linking dimensions. Reviewed and checked these to ensure accurate representations of data.
9.	Analysed individual student identity trajectories and compared similarities and difference. Reported findings, draft, re-draft.
10.	Analysed linking dimensions. Reported findings, draft, re-draft.

Table 3.5.1 Steps in data analysis

3.6 Methodological concerns

As a reflexive practitioner researcher (Attia and Edge, 2017), I considered several ongoing dilemmas. These included my own position as a researcher, a tutor on the programme, the student's personal tutor and as a person immersed within the research setting, possessing 'situated knowledge' (Thomas, 2013). Indeed my own personal 'moral purpose' (Fullan, 1999) to improve and develop practice in order to provide a quality experience for students is what encouraged me to participate in practitioner research. My belief that teachers need a strong sense of self is acknowledged as part of my position as the researcher, additionally my personal reflexivity in which I carefully considered my actions, values and personal identity and how these impacted on the students involved (Bolton, 2010) was central to the research process.

During this longitudinal study and through on-going reflection I became aware there were a number of methodological concerns and issues which were not fully considered at the outset, these included:

- the power relationships for myself as the tutor involved in conducting the research alongside my pastoral and academic role for the students involved,
- the use of a research assistant,
- the representativeness of the students who volunteered in Year 1 to be interviewed throughout the programme,

- the surfacing of the assumptions underpinning the research focus and whether this impacted on the data collected,

- issues with the use and interpretation of language.

Each of these issues is explored further below.

Firstly, the question of undertaking insider research (Trowler, 2012) with a group of students for whom I, as a researcher, had an academic and pastoral role. The issues associated with this aspect were whether it was ethical to explore this issue in depth with students who had a vested interest in progressing through the programme. The dilemma was whether they would answer any interview questions honestly, especially those which related to the programme provision as I would be viewed as having a particularly embedded role in this and whether negative comments made would be detrimental to their progress. Insider benefits are balanced by the challenges it presents and I took steps to mitigate the problems by continually discussing the project with the participants, the programme leader and colleagues, so they remained fully informed throughout. I also applied for annual ethical permission and gave participants the opportunity to opt out or withdraw data at any time. The timing of the interviews was designed to be useful for the student teachers and did not interfere with their programme of study (Robson, 1993: 297-300).

As a reflexive researcher who recognised the potential for personal influence (Fook and Askeland, 2006) and possible conflict with my personal tutor role all the detailed interview data, except the final interview, was captured by an experienced research assistant employed to undertake the interviews. She

was supported by an independent transcriber employed to transcribe the interviews. These external personnel remained consistent throughout the programme which meant they were familiar with the research. The relationship I had with the RA was a hierarchical one in that she was solely employed to undertake the interviews and had no other involvement in the project. However, the interactions she engaged in with the students were influenced by her background as an experienced researcher. She had a position of power as the questioner, in comparison to the less qualified, novice interviewees, struggling with the academic discourse and process of being interviewed. I did not anticipate that the students would react to the RA as if it was me conducting the interviews. I expected them to be reasonably comfortable with the process and probably still see me to some extent as the audience of their comments. It was evident that most students did respond fully and shared ideas and experiences in depth whilst one was more challenging in her responses needing more additional prompting, so it is possible there was some withholding of information on the part of this student (Qvotrup Jensen, 2012).

The disadvantage of using a RA was that questions and prompts had to be set for the interviewer who was an outsider with limited knowledge of the programme so did not share the discursive or social practices of the students. This meant, in places, opportunities to delve deeper into individual experiences to gather deeper insight may have been missed (Bryman 2004). Additionally, on occasions, she modified questions and prompts in minor ways which meant there were instances where opportunities were missed in terms

of developing lines of explanation. However, as the RA remained a constant throughout the project the students did develop a relationship with her, as an outsider who was interested in their journey as a student teacher. An important consideration is that although I framed and arranged the research interviews, and so to some extent was 'present' as an influence, it was the research assistant who conducted the interviews and generated the data through dialogue. The main impact of this arrangement was that I was positioned to some extent as an outsider in analysing the interview transcripts. This position as insider but also outsider I consider, on balance, helped me to maintain a more objective stance during analysis (Robson, 1993).

A key issue occurred during the final round of interviews in that the interview recording equipment failed to record all the interviews fully. This resulted in there being only one full interview (Ellie) out of the seven undertaken. Following the discovery of this I decided to re-interview the other six participants myself. These interviews took place after the programme had finished and so the power relation issue was somewhat mitigated; they were no longer reliant on me for references and had graduated. This meant they had the opportunity to be more forthright, if they wished. Additionally, as we shared the language of the programme and I had a deep understanding of their experiences I was able to probe further and clarify points expressed.

The problem with these interviews was that the students were aware of the questions and therefore more prepared to answer fully, or they may have been more cautious in responses as I was interviewing them, or less detailed

in responses as they were repeating a prior experience. The time between the two interviews was a month and during this time some were successful in gaining jobs so this may have impacted on the views articulated.

Related to using interviews as a form of data collection, it could be argued, the very process of highlighting teacher identity as an issue worthy of further exploration through research meant the students were much more aware of the implications this had for them. Therefore it may have impacted on their explicit engagement with identity development (Goffman, 1959; Britzman, 1991; Jenkins, 2008). This would make the ideas they articulated much more explicit and potentially very different from other students who may not be as aware of teacher identity as an aspect of their own development during the ITE programme.

An additional issue was the representativeness of the seven interviewees and their selection as they acted as indicative commentators of the student 'voice'. This selection was purely opportunistic as, at the outset of the research, the twenty-seven students in the cohort were asked if any would like to volunteer to be interviewed during the first year of the programme. The seven participants identified themselves rather than being purposefully selected. They also agreed to continue to be interviewed in year two and three once a longitudinal study was identified as a focus for this study. The fact these students self-selected may indicate they were more interested in their teacher identity development and more motivated as learners so the data may differ from other students on the programme. However, such 'convenience

sampling' (Patton, 2002) is a common approach in qualitative research and was logical as they were easily accessible to me and relevant to the focus of the research given they were experiencing ITE and developing their teacher identities. Additionally, as Miles and Huberman (1994) note they were likely to provide the depth of information relevant to the research focus.

A criticism of the study may be the sample size however, the seven students generated a significant amount of data and act as an illustrative study of the phenomenon, allowing for the identification of relationships between influencing factors in identity development. As a small scale study I gained access to the insider knowledge the students possessed of their identity development, which may not have been as accessible in a larger study. From a pragmatic point of view it was also necessary to limit the project size to one which was manageable for a lone researcher with limited time available.

Despite this small sample size these volunteers did represent the type of student who applies to our ITE programme. One student, Della (aged thirty-nine), was a more mature student who had given up work to embark on a teaching programme and was juggling family commitments. Another two, Beth (aged nineteen) and Ellie (aged twenty-two) were slightly older students, who had some work experience after finishing A levels. Ellie had the additional challenge of having entered English HE after undertaking her education in Ireland. Another, Gina (aged twenty-one) was a student who had undertaken a non-traditional route; a level 3 diploma in childcare. This is an alternative to A levels and contributes towards university entry requirements in the UK. The

final three students, all aged eighteen were; Andrew, a young male student, Carrie and Fran who had all transitioned directly from A level education.

Within our university context, as a 'new' university, this representation tends to be how these cohorts are typically constituted, heavily influenced by the 'massification' agenda (Tight, 2012) and the non-traditional, or what Leese (2010) would term, 'new students', namely first generation to enter Higher Education.   Therefore, it could be argued, they present a representative sample (Bryman, 2004) of the type of students the course attracts, so although findings are particular to this group there may be aspects which could be transferred to other cohorts in order to develop programme practice further and in future, to course design. As Flyvbjerg (2001) argues, such small scale studies are needed in research to address issues of values, power and local detail as these are relevant to wider policy decision making and so it may also be that findings are relevant or influential in course design or practice for other ITE tutors within the sector.

Additionally, at the outset there were clearly some assumptions made about the nature of teacher identity, for example; students do have or create a teacher identity which they are capable of articulating, this is quite a sophisticated concept and therefore, problematic to research; there is something which exists which can be called a 'teacher identity' and is identifiable as such, when the literature suggests this is not only problematic but also fluid, flexible and changeable (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009,

2011); students understand what teacher identity is; and finally that teacher identity can be studied as something identifiable and concrete.

It may be that by highlighting identity as a research focus students were encouraged to consider this was a problematic area or they developed an awareness of identity as an issue worthy of further consideration. This would appear to be in opposition to the governmental notion of teacher identity which defines it within a set of standards (DfE, 2011) to be achieved before the formal warrant of QTS can be issued. These competing notions may have made students question more deeply what it means to be a teacher.

It is also acknowledged that as a researcher engaged on a daily basis with these students it may be that my relationship with them was different to the relationship I had with other cohorts (Greenbank, 2003). Through 'retrospective reflexivity' (Attia and Edge, 2017) I am aware that I was more attentive to their needs as a group so this relationship impacted on my professional practice and interactions with them as a tutor.

Finally, the issue of language and interpretation was one area I did not fully consider from a methodological perspective at the outset. As Atkinson and Delamont (2005) note, interviews and the narrative they create, are in themselves acts of performance where the interviewee may well be tempted to articulate what they believe the interviewer wishes to hear rather than their real thoughts and meanings. Through analysis I was aware there were ideas expressed which very much mirrored my own and colleagues' views and, on

occasions, students referred to tutor's ideas, acknowledging their agreement with them. This may have been because they found it difficult to express reality regarding teacher identity with language (Gergen and Gergen, 2007) or it could have been that, as part of the power relationship, they created a picture they wished the researcher to have rather than an accurate picture of their experience. As Coupland (2007:277) notes 'interviews are taken to be particular forms of interaction in which we construct and reflexively manage who we are.' Students may have presented themselves in particular ways for a variety of reasons including the possibility experiences were emotionally challenging. As Perakyla (2005) highlights there was an underpinning assumption students could capture the notion of 'teacher identity' linguistically and I am aware this appeared problematical at times for participants.

Additionally, through the process of analysis I effectively transformed the experiences created by the students into a story to report which is my story about the data rather than the student teacher's story, so it may well be different from a version they may have created (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Therefore, the trajectories reported and discussed in chapter five are selective representations (Gray, 2018) of the students' teacher identity development journey. The aim to identify student meaning and my role within the construction of the findings is acknowledged as a potential issue (Munro et al, 2004; White and Drew, 2011) alongside the potential difficulties in outlining a rather complex concept verbally.

My aim during data analysis was to understand the meanings of students who, it could be argued, are the experts in their own identity development (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988). I relied on the language used and my own assumptions, intuition, judgement and interpretation, to 'point something out' (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000:248) which is influenced by my own values (Greenbank, 2003), social and cultural background as well as knowledge of the programme and students.

To try to overcome this, as part of the process at the beginning of year 2 and year 3, the findings were shared with the student group in the form my initial two assignments on the doctoral programme, conference presentations (Seward and Renwick, 2012, 2013b) and a journal article (Seward and Renwick, 2013a) to see if there was any major disagreement with the outcomes. As a result of this a number of students commented on how the findings were recognisable as the experience they had experienced. This could be interpreted as being supportive of the findings being an accurate representation of their experiences.

It was evident that by operating reflexively there were two specific reflexive aspects which were at play during the research process. First, 'prospective reflexivity' (Attia and Edge, 2017) where it is acknowledged I had an effect on the research process; methodology, design, interpretation of data and reporting, as well as the effect this research had on me as a novice researcher, what Attia and Edge (2017) would term 'retrospective reflexivity'. Therefore it is acknowledged that within this practitioner research project I

played an active part, impacted on the data and was selective in reporting (Gray, 2018).

As a reflective practitioner and reflexive researcher I am aware of the issues with the research approach and have acknowledged these openly and honestly, whilst at the same time being aware that the data which is rich, deep and interesting does represent what these students were willing to share regarding the development of their teacher identity. I believe intuitively I was drawn to a methodology and methods which reflected my epistemological and ontological beliefs. As I have reflected further it is clear to me these related to my beliefs about learning and teaching and the social constructivist view I have about students as learners.

3.7 Ethical dilemmas

As good practitioner research emphasises the importance of 'ethical and moral thinking and decision making' (Heikkinen et al., 2016: 7) it was important to continuously engage with reflective thinking to ensure I secured ethical approaches, considered how knowledge of the phenomena was generated and acknowledged the impact of my own personal experiences and the impact on data created.

Research ethics require complex thought, judgement and planning as any research needs to reflect the contextual situation and institutional guidelines (Oancea, 2014). As Oancea (2014: 37) notes; 'ethical research practice is ultimately a matter of responsible, situated judgement'. In this study this

meant planning for the project and reflection took place annually as ethical permission was gained from my institution on a regular basis. This was instrumental as it forced me to consider what data was appropriate, as well as how this would be obtained and when. The resulting ethical clearance was granted on an annual basis and the students involved were fully informed of the research aims and subsequently gave informed consent (Christians, 2005; Denscombe, 2010a). On reflection it could be said, this was a rather utilitarian approach to considering ethical issues as it focused on gaining informed consent, avoiding deception, privacy and confidentiality and accuracy of data (Bryman, 2004; Christians, 2005).

However, there were additional considerations which posed problems for me to overcome as a researcher situated within the context, working alongside these students. Personally, there was a moral imperative to behave correctly both as an academic modelling the research process but also as a key tutor in their academic experience (Oancea, 2014). I wanted to ensure that I maintained a positive professional relationship with each of them, that trust was maintained, that they did not feel pressurised into taking part, that there was an openness around data collection and that there would be benefits for them as participants. These key principles or moral standards (Christians, 2005; Oancea, 2014) guided my decision making but it became increasingly difficult to separate out the tutor and researcher role as the research progressed during their three years of study. The challenge was to not let my knowledge of them both as a group and as individuals influence the collection of data or interpretation of findings. This was where gaining annual ethical

permission was helpful as it meant consideration had to be given to a schedule of data collection as well as to the form of data collected. Additionally, the two-year gap between the data collection and final analysis meant that the participants felt more removed from the research experience.

An on-going consideration was that of the power relationship between my-self as the researcher and the students as participants. Morally I did not want any student to feel 'forced' into taking part but have to accept that they may have considered withdrawal was not an option due to my role in writing their final references, where withdrawal may have been perceived as lack of engagement in learning on the course. However, this unequal power relation became much more prevalent as I approached the interpretation of data. I became acutely aware that the interpretation was mine alone (Almlund, 2013). Additionally, as it was my role to set the questions I had had a potentially powerful impact on the data collected and the dialogue within, and direction of, the interviews even though these were carried out by the RA.

This control meant that during the study I set the agenda for what was examined and how it was examined. Due to the on-going nature of the relationship I had with the students there was a possibility that I had an influencing role as I was aware of initial findings, frequently referred to the notion of teacher identity and made links to research procedures. This may have caused them to consider the notion of a teacher identity more than other groups on the same course and therefore, have had an indirect influence on the findings. It could be said that the findings are a co-production of this on-

going discourse (Fontana and Frey, 2005) and have therefore been influenced by my own interest in this area (Trowler, 2012).

In reflexively (Erickson, 2013) considering this dilemma I am aware that my interpretation was influenced by my own experiences, expectations and prejudices and any understanding relies on these personal elements, so it could be argued are conditional on these (Almlund, 2013). I am also aware that as some initial findings from year one were explored with a colleague, her influence may have been an aspect of the final interpretation. As noted previously, I also acknowledge I have approached the interpretation of interviews from a somewhat weak position, as I was not part of the spoken dialogue and have therefore interpreted this from the transcript presented. While both this, and the belief you cannot gain access to a person's true thoughts as all you have is the communication which took place to reflect on, could be said to be a weakness, I prefer to identify this as a more respectful research approach as there is an acceptance that data was partial as it signified what a participant was willing to share. Therefore, the interpretations reported are open and honest as no covert methods were utilised and they recognise the story being told is partial and for these students, the beginning of a much longer process.

The following chapters present the themes generated (chapter 4), the trajectories of three individual students (chapter 5) and dimensions which appeared to be significant in that they linked the themes generated (chapter 6).

Chapter 4 Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the themes generated by data analysis discussed in the previous chapter.

As this research explored student teacher identity development it is important to place the findings within the context of student outcomes. Of the students interviewed; Andrew, Beth, Carrie, Ellie and Fran all secured teaching posts. At the end of the programme Della decided she wished to work in a learning support role. After starting her final practicum Gina decided she no longer aspired to be a teacher and took a non QTS route qualifying with a BA (Hons) degree in Early Years Education. However, her data remained in the data set as it was relevant given the regularity of this option.

4.1 How do students experience the development of teacher identity during a three-year professional education degree?

Analysis indicated student teacher identity development was complex and personalised; each student experienced teacher identity development differently. However there appeared to be some common aspects which are outlined in the following themes, trajectories and dimensions.

Four significant themes relating to the development of student teacher identity were generated; affective relational elements (ARE), multiple identities (MI), contextually situated negotiation (CSN), and external membership requirements (EMR).

The CSN theme captured elements 'external' to the student as it involved the enactment of EMR in practice. CSN frequently appeared to be about 'acting' or 'doing' the job, engaging with practicum requirements and allowing for the 'interplay' of theory and practice. Whereas MI and ARE were aspects students carried with them 'internally'. ARE and MI were about 'being' or 'becoming' a teacher and having this identity as a recognisable aspect of their being.

4.1.1 Affective Relational Elements (ARE)

ARE refers to the emotional aspects of learning - both, positive or negative. It deals with the emotion of becoming a teacher and the fragile uncertainty students have of their teacher identity. It relates to relationships and the powerful internal emotional aspects a student carries with them, including; beliefs, values and capacity for reflection. As Beth (semester 5) noted; 'I'm always going to have some kind of underpinning philosophy'. These beliefs are combined with personal attributes such as; motivation, determination, confidence, resilience and were outlined by Beth in semester 3 'I know myself that I can be a good teacher. I work hard and know that I'm a caring person but … - it's terrifying. I know I need to work on my confidence still.'

The intra-personal and socio-emotional aspects frequently stem from their personal experiences both as a pupil and as an adult in school.

> I think it was belief from other people that it definitely does impact the way you think about yourself and especially as my mentor was so young as well she'd only graduated a few years before so it was lovely to hear, I know she was in the same position only a few years ago and seeing how far she'd gone and for her to say to you what she thinks of your teaching and basically allowing you full charge by yourself it gives you, it boosts your confidence but the children … could see them develop in the

eight weeks and especially when we had an autistic child in the class … who didn't really make relationships very often but like I got quite a good bond with him so that kind of like showed that I could build relationships quite easily (Beth, semester 6).

As Beth illustrated this belief from others that what you are doing is right was significant; giving confidence and self-belief. The fact she developed relationships with her young mentor, as well as an autistic child was highlighted as contributing towards her teacher identity development, as this is a significant aspect of being a teacher. The way she identified with the mentor was important for her and shows the significance of these relational factors in aiding students developing their teacher identity.

ARE has the capacity to cause reflection and initiate some kind of change in ways of being or powerful personal learning. As Carrie commented, she initially believed asking for help was showing 'a bit of weakness' (semester 5) whereas she noted changes, as she realised there was a support network around her which accepts, 'I'm human and I do make mistakes so I'm going to be doing things on placement that maybe don't go so well' (semester 5). This acceptance there was learning available through making mistakes is a 'mature' approach, indicating for her there had been some powerful learning about herself as both a learner and teacher.

This emotional experience was evident especially when students experienced challenges during practicum. Andrew captured this in semester 2 when he reflected on a challenging practicum experience;

at the start the teachers said we weren't allowed to teach because the children were too naughty for us and I was like 'oh' and I started to get smaller and smaller and smaller, … then one day I did a lesson … I just

had the children jumping up when they were shouting numbers and the teacher's like 'do this', 'do that' - I was on the floor - I was like 'I don't want to be a teacher any more. I don't - I can't do' ... That was the lowest I've ever felt about it.

The combination of the class composition and his approach to teaching contributed to a negative experience which he had to learn from in order to improve. To do this, he had to be determined and resilient, drawing on these attributes in order to show both himself and the class teacher he could be successful. He was particularly keen to, "prove her wrong" and show he was capable of being a teacher.

ARE also includes emotional responses to experiences which support student's own perceptions of what it is to be a teacher and confirms current personal beliefs. It was often illustrated through comments referring to alignment of ideas, values and beliefs in context (CSN). For Beth, seeing practice in opposition to her beliefs acted to strengthen her commitment to those beliefs;

> I still think of myself as an Early Years based teacher. Very much that play based and using resources and rather than just sitting down with worksheets …I still see myself that I haven't lost that, even though my teacher took that route (Beth, semester 4).

This indicated for Beth this was a deeply held belief and although she adopted her teacher's practice she did not fully subscribe to this as an effective teaching strategy.

Affective relational elements were closely related to CSN as this was frequently referred to as the site for identity development, the site where students applied these internal attributes in the external teaching context.

4.1.2 Contextually Situated Negotiation (CSN)

CSN relates to ARE but is 'external' to the student and deals with contexts they operate in. CSN describes students actively negotiating practices in settings, engaging with practice which is socially constructed with and alongside, others. Through this on-going process students worked on their teacher identity, testing out what worked and what was acceptable to others.

Initially, all students concentrated on negotiating their student identity; working out what was expected of them, organising their time and developing relationships with their peer group in university. This was the focus for their identity development in semester one. Carrie described developing positive relationships with her peer group;

> I enjoy working in groups because just like sharing ideas, bouncing ideas off each other ... We had a really successful project … it's helpful working in groups but ... I was more kind of quieter when I first started … sitting and working by myself, seemed like a better option, but now I know the group a bit more then I'm more willing to work in a group (semester 1).

Carrie firstly found group-work a challenge, as did Ellie and Fran but they all soon realised being part of the group was important and team-working would be necessary in their future role, so working in groups, negotiating ideas and developing team-working skills, from the beginning of the programme acted as preparation for their future.

Della and her student partner experienced CSN when they were both placed in the same class in year one. She outlined how it was;

> Difficult doing the planning together because you have to … do a lot of talking and how it's going to work and what your ideas are, because obviously we've all got ideas of how we'd like to be, so that was quite hard, but it got easier towards the end … because we kind of knew things about each other's work (semester 2).

She recognised at this early stage she already had ideas about how she thought she should be as a teacher; this had to be negotiated alongside her partner's ideas and beliefs. The process of talking and working out teaching plans resulted in them knowing more about their practices and ways of working in the classroom.

Through this process of CSN students learnt schools operate differently. This forced them to reflect on their beliefs and values and how they preferred to operate as a teacher. Ellie illustrated CSN when she reflected on her experience during the year two experiential practicum as it forced her to consider practices in the setting in order to come to an understanding of her own beliefs;

> The outdoor play that I saw … had a lot of things set up for the children and almost all of the children were playing with something and at first I thought 'oh that's a really good idea and they're all really into it' and then I just thought 'there's almost so much stuff here that maybe they're not'. We all just used to … love playing horses at lunchtime so then I thought well maybe, because lunchtime is … their time … we shouldn't be trying to … fit learning in their time. They'll still be learning but almost in a different way. It just kind of opened my eyes a bit ... So I'm still not exactly sure on how I feel about that … I'm questioning myself and I've found that in lots of things, that I'm actually questioning myself (semester 3).

This situated practice challenged her own experiences as a child and led her to question the purposes of play for young children. As a future early years teacher this debate was significant for her developing identity. She explained this change;

it's like experimenting … I just feel sometimes - because in the classroom you are pushing … learning objectives and what you hope for them to get out of it, but then I don't know if then they're really playing … I'm really struggling with that this year and I think that's something you come to a definition for yourself and what you believe because there's so much out there on play so it's one thing that is different for me this year (Ellie, semester 3).

She showed she was drawing on both her academic and practical knowledge to question her own beliefs about the value of play. Her personally agentic approach to reaching her own definition showed she was happy to develop her ideas about what was important to her as a teacher.

Students frequently referred to specific school or university based examples to illustrate CSN. In semester 5, Fran noted this negotiation included considering children you are working with; 'I would think about things and think "I'll do this and this and this" and then you get a class full of children and you think "that's not really going to work anymore"'. It was evident she was aware of taking into consideration the children in the context as they were central to the student negotiating their identity as a teacher. As Andrew (semester 2) demonstrated, CSN is supported by children and adults within the setting as these can strengthen the student belief in their teacher identity and their capacity to do the job. The children provided feedback and verified the student as the teacher; 'when I get called Sir and Mr … that's when it kicks in' this affirmation from others appeared significant.

CSN assumes the student has the capacity to act, that they are an agentic being (ARE) and can be proactive in some way and that the environment

allows for this, in that it is enabling, expansive and supportive. The experiences in the context develop student learning, understanding and knowledge. A key aspect of this 'boundary crossing' experience was the role of the 'boundary broker' and relationships which developed during practicum. These will be discussed in chapter six.

4.1.3 Multiple Identities (MI)

MI is closely linked to the previous two themes and refers to students changing roles from one context to the next (including university student to student teacher) and the different roles they already carry with them (son, daughter, parent). It is concerned with how moving between identities and across boundaries of multiple settings impacts on student perceptions of themselves as a teacher and how being a teacher can be difficult to separate from their own sense of themselves. In semester one, Carrie outlined a 'drinks' metaphor to illustrate her different identities;

> when I'm at home I have a cup of tea and that's kind of my like kind of my home drink…then I think when you go into a school, … I think you have to have a coffee … it's kind of more like powerful role I suppose… when I'm out with my friends ... something, ... like a vodka and coke … - but it's like my responsibilities at home … just being like a daughter… and a sister … when I went to a school like the idea of having a coffee ... just seemed more sort of powerful and grown up.

She was aware of the different roles she already had as she embarked on the programme and how these different roles required different ways of being and presenting oneself. This behaviour acts as an external marker to those around them of the identity they have and how they enact their beliefs in practice. In this case she linked being a teacher with being in an adult role.

An aspect of MI is the notion of aiming for a 'future' or 'possible self' and students frequently commented on this, as noted by Gina; 'I want to be the teacher that the kids remember' (semester 3). This notion of a powerful role model being significant, in terms of them aspiring to emulate this teacher, was commented on by Andrew, Ellie, Gina and Beth. It appeared that these role models often influenced students, as this was how they wish to be as a teacher and so these ideas become subsumed as part of their developing teacher identity.

MI involves recognition and awareness of how one aspect of their life impacts on them and their identity as a teacher. This involves personal history in previous roles, expectations of others and external elements, such as the Teachers' Standards, so links to all other themes. These aspects of MI are evident in student trajectories in the following chapter.

4.1.4 External Membership Requirements (EMR)

EMR represents the wider educational landscape students aspire to join as a fully-fledged teacher and provides the wider context or landscape for the other three themes. This external context impacts on everything they do from programme requirements; number of days in school, age phase coverage; to expectations of people directly involved with the student - parents, tutors, class-teachers. It is largely beyond the student's direct control (Teachers' Standards, Ofsted, qualification, expectations of others) but nevertheless plays a significant part in their journey of becoming an early years' teacher.

Ellie, in relation to the Teachers' Standards, noted the role of the mentor in making this explicit;

> I was marking up my QTS standards and the teacher said to me about the one about high expectations …I didn't really realise that I did that but she said to me that I set high expectations for behaviour and for learning and so I think I know more about myself than I did (semester 4).

This episode illustrated the importance of students being supported to understand this landscape and associated requirements as they have to mediate their experiences in light of these wider expectations. As an over-arching theme, engagement with it may be relatively straightforward, or cause tension for students in some way, as demonstrated in Andrew's and Della's trajectories, in the following chapter. EMR represents the heavily regulated 'performativity' and 'accountability' culture present in the current English educational landscape.

Students illustrated how they engaged with this theme in different ways. Fran paid little attention to the canonical practices in the Teachers' Standards referring to them as 'tick boxes' to be evidenced during practicum experience;

> I think it feels like the QTS standards are just a list of things I only really look at when on placement because I think oh I need to tick the box. I'm getting assessed on it (semester 5).

Even though these standards represent the requirements of becoming 'badged' as a teacher, for Fran they remained a peripheral aspect of her identity development rather than being integrated into her practice and used as a developmental tool. She appeared to be paying lip-service to the standards and using them in a functional manner, in order to meet requirements.

This was in contrast to Ellie who, after structured support, used them as a developmental tool;

> I think the grids and map that we had … really help you to see where you are and you can highlight them …you can easily see … there are some 3s there, I need to move to 2s … I think because of the way they're laid out and the questions you need to ask yourself you are really starting to understand them more and you can evidence them from what you're doing all the time … I think it has helped me and the teacher was very good when she was setting targets with me (semester 4).

It was clear she engaged more proactively with the performative nature of the Teachers' Standards and the external expectations to ensure she did well. For her, these external elements were utilised to aid her teacher identity development.

Though these standards represent the expectations of government and the wider profession, for these students, they were seen alongside expectations of others who influenced the student's identity development (parents, peer group, mentors). This dimension will be discussed further in chapter six but appeared to be a source of either support in the case of Fran, Beth, Ellie and Carrie, or a source of pressure, in the case of Andrew. He commented on the pressure he felt from his own parents and that; 'everyone thinks that as a teacher we need to change the whole world' (semester 5).

Additionally, the themes generated were connected by five dimensions; two external to the student; Teachers' Standards and expectations of others and two internal elements; agency and relationships. Boundary crossing as a dimension identified could be said to be an intersection between the internal and external aspects as students crossed between physical, contextual and

temporal boundaries from being an individual, a student and a trainee teacher. This relationship between the themes and dimensions mark a step forward in current research and understanding regarding how the elements which impact on student teacher identity development interrelate and is illustrated in Figure 4.1 below:
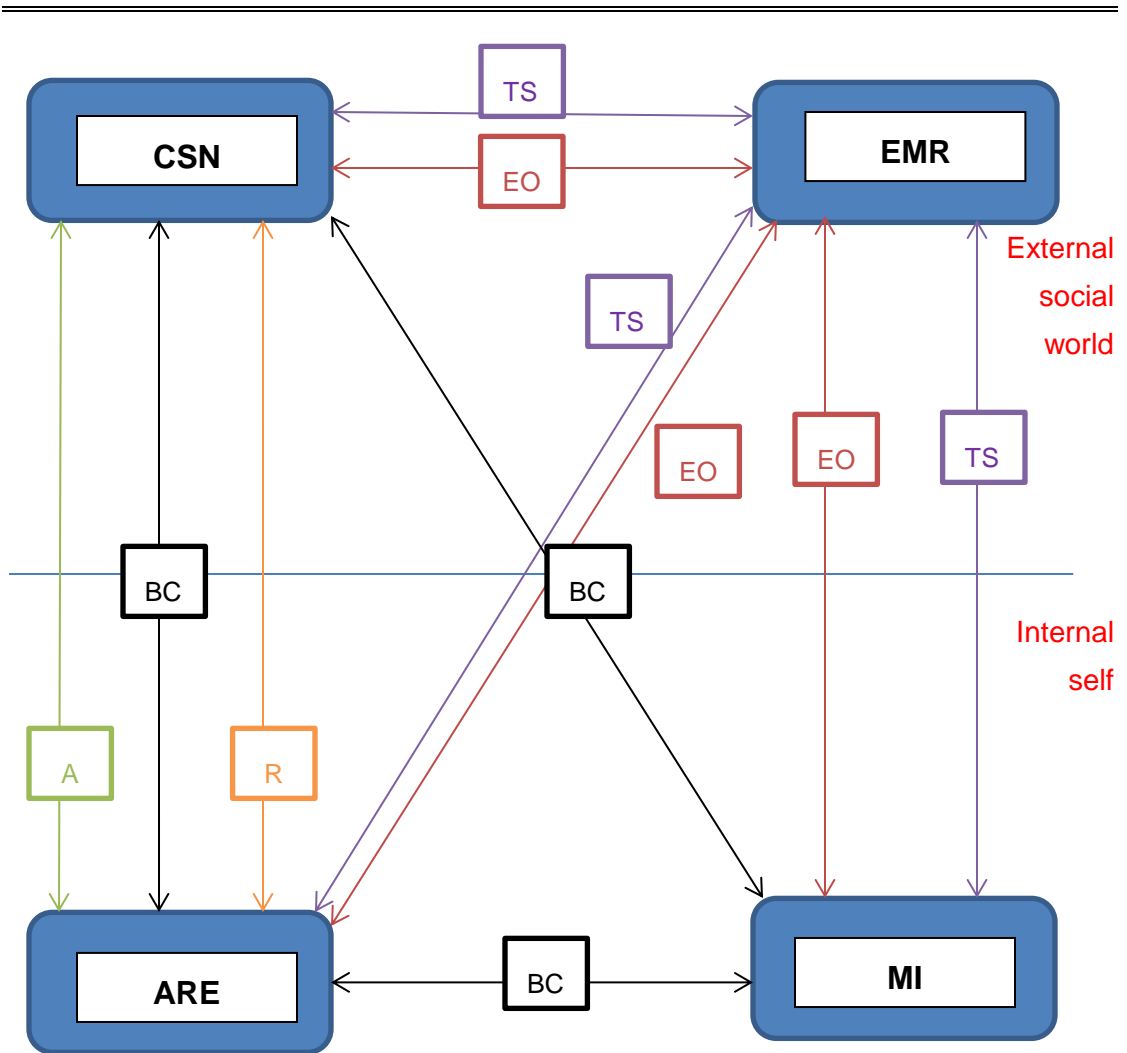
Figure 4.1: Themes and Dimensions

Figure 4.1 illustrates how the external social world and the internal aspects a student carries with them interact as students develop their teacher identity. External membership requirements impact on all aspects of student teacher identity development. Boundary crossing brings together aspects of the context with the individual student's emotions, dispositions, current and previous identities and role models. This is aided through relationships and student agency. Any misalignment between the internal and external aspects can cause tension, challenge and difficulty for the student.

Analysis identified that the two key and most frequently referred to themes were ARE and CSN in terms of having an impact on student teacher identity development during the programme. It appeared that the external practicum context (CSN) and the internal emotional and relational aspects (ARE) interacted frequently and influenced student teacher identity development. MI, though still significant, was mentioned less frequently by the student teachers. Nevertheless, this was significant in that it impacted on how they behaved, reacted and responded to contextually based experiences.

This chapter outlined the four key themes which were common aspects of how students experienced their teacher identity development. Additionally, there were aspects of individual experiences which were different and personal to the particular student involved. Examples of these student trajectories are outlined in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 Student Trajectories

5.1 How does student teacher identity change during the programme?

Analysis indicated the programme enabled student teachers to develop their identities in three different ways:

1. Transformation – the student maintained core beliefs but there was a definite, articulated change in student teacher views and beliefs about being a teacher.

2. Consolidation, which could be subdivided into;

 a) Consolidation and development – where the student teacher retained core beliefs and built on these to develop their teacher identity or;

 b) Consolidation and confirmation – where core beliefs about what it is to be a teacher remained constant, with limited evidence of change.

3. Rejection which could be;

a) Partial – the student attained the qualification to teach but did not pursue becoming a teacher.

b) Complete rejection, where the student opted out of the qualification to teach.

Given the limitations of this thesis this chapter outlines three illustrative examples of student trajectories which illustrate transformation, consolidation and confirmation, and partial rejection.

5.1.1 Transformation - Andrew: 'A Knight in Shining Armour'

Andrew, the only male in the sample, presented an emotionally articulated trajectory. At the beginning of the programme he outlined clear beliefs about the importance of play as a vehicle for children's learning, which had been developed through parental influences and a visit to Swedish schools prior to starting the programme. This belief was sustained throughout the programme from year one where he noted; 'they [children] were playing and learning' (semester 1), to year three where he commented; 'I still believe in play and the importance of the role it has' (semester 5). These beliefs were complemented by a growing realisation of the responsibility attached to the role of the teacher, and the centrality of children to his work as a teacher.

The weight of responsibility (CSN) was evident, as early as the end of year one, where Andrew explained 'I'm in charge of learning' and 'you're the person who's going to teach them – not how to be – but kind of go about things' (semester 2), further developed in year two, where he commented on the responsibility not just to children, but to colleagues;

> I didn't think about the teachers above us. Who I'd be sending children up to... if I don't do my job right then it's going to make it hard for the next teacher ... It's not just your year you need to get them through it's the whole school and working with other teachers … it's very important (semester 3).

In year three he demonstrated this strong responsibility towards children and articulated how his teacher identity had been transformed to a more child-centred, rather than self-centred view;

> I'd say beforehand I would have said I want to be the best teacher and that's a very bold statement but I think that's a wrong statement … I'd say that I want to give children the best education I can so it's - I think it was a more selfish way of looking at teaching beforehand. Now I'm looking at it the way that the children need their education. That's what worries us more now. I do think that I've changed in the sense that … I

think I do it a lot more now, thinking about putting the children first, their needs and … it's such a hard job I've realised …I think it's going to be very hard to keep all of these things going. It's going to be like balancing plates. Keep on having to maintain each one; each topic that I have to do; each person I have to please but I still really, really want to do it (semester 5)

Throughout Andrew's interviews there was a sense of his 'moral purpose' and being a role model for children. This was evident from the end of year one onwards when he described himself as 'a knight in shining armour', in that he was an advocate for children, addressing their needs and placing them at the centre of their educational experiences. This represented a clear shift for him as he moved from focusing on his own development to focusing on children's development. Andrew consistently outlined the emotional journey (ARE) towards defining himself as a teacher. This deeply emotional aspect appeared to be stronger for him than the other interviewees.

This emotional aspect was prevalent during practicum and, by the end of year one, he described himself as a 'trainee teacher' noting 'the power in my fingertips is just brilliant' (semester 2). At this point he commented on a problem with his confidence and by outlining a practicum experience he illustrated how he 'could get crushed so easily' describing him-self as 'gutted'. These comments represented the strong emotions he associated with becoming a teacher and how, in a short space of time, his teacher identity was impacted upon by his emotional response to experiences.

In year two he outlined the security he enjoyed working in a small group in university (CSN). This sense of belonging appeared to be more significant for him than the other interviewees. Additionally, he also expressed how he felt

he belonged within his practicum setting working with and directing the work of colleagues describing this as being; 'like a teacher' (semester 4). Even though during practicum he felt; 'it didn't allow us to teach the way I wanted to teach', his commitment to doing his best for children was evident and he used emotive phrases such as; 'loved it', 'it's the funniest job', 'it's brilliant' to describe his experience (semester 4).

In year three Andrew described himself as being 'apprehensive' about practicum and becoming a teacher partly because this involved leaving the security of university, acknowledging; 'there's a lot more … to learn' (semester 5). He felt the weight of expectations (EMR) from family, tutors, children and mentors noting this was more evident when he was not on placement, where he had more time to think about all the things he needed to accomplish;

> When I'm on placement I do see myself as a teacher but when I'm not on placement that's when I don't … - I think when I'm on placement I don't feel like it's such a big gap towards becoming a teacher but when I'm not on placement that's when I'm sat back and I look and I think 'oh I've got to do this; I've got to do that.

Alongside this emotional journey for Andrew was the constant 'interplay' of knowledge acquired during university and the practical application of this in practicum (CSN). This began in year one for him as he became aware of applying theoretical knowledge in school; 'what we've learnt over the term, like 'scaffolding' … that's our pedagogy, I think that's my kind of style … my teacher was saying I was doing that during my lessons' (semester 2).

He commented on how being able to see and apply theory made him feel positive; 'It is amazing and it's like a really good feeling when you think "oh Vygotsky"'. This notion of seeing theory was important to him as he noted; 'I don't fully understand it until I see it' (semester 2). This linkage was important for students; it illustrated the relevance of university input and gave them the knowledge to help understand practice as well as provided a basis to question practice. The fact Andrew was aware of this interplay by the end of year one, gave him strong foundations for analysing and developing as a teacher in subsequent years.

In terms of describing himself as a teacher Andrew presented a complex picture, fluctuating between feeling like a teacher and not. This was impacted upon by the emotions he outlined as well as the themes and dimensions identified through analysis. He entered the programme with a particular teacher he was taught by, in mind, who was;

> really good and he was really close with every class he had and I think I'd like to be really close. I think the relationship I have with the children is so important. That's one of the main things for me I think (semester 3).

This notion of wanting to become like this, was a driver for Andrew (MI) and created a strong focus on forming relationships, which he consistently referred to throughout.

 At the beginning of the programme Andrew's emphasis was on developing an independent student learner identity. He anticipated he would feel like a 'student teacher' on placement rather than just a 'person there to help', which was how he described his pre-programme experience. By the end of year one

his teacher identity had been externally verified by pupils, as he had been called 'Sir' and undertaken teacher tasks such as planning and delivering lessons so he described himself as a 'trainee teacher', 'acting' in the professional teacher role (MI).

However, before his practicum in year two he stated; 'I do see myself as a teacher but at the same time I don't … I am a teacher but I'm not going to exaggerate that. I'm a student teacher' (semester 3). He appeared to fluctuate between student and teacher, reflecting the different contexts of university and school and he tied describing himself as a teacher to the practicum context. Following the practicum he described himself not just as a teacher but as; 'a carer as well'. This illustrated the realisation of the significance of a holistic approach to educating children and that pupil well-being and conditions for learning were important to him. This continued throughout the programme.

By year three he had reverted to not ascribing the teacher label to him-self;

> I wouldn't describe myself as a teacher… - I know I'm not ready but I think that's quite a mature thing to say rather than going in all guns blazing and things like that. I know that I need some more experience. I'm inexperienced definitely. But I feel like I've got the right intentions (semester 5).

He recognised the continual need for development as a teacher and the significance of practicum for developing his teacher identity (CSN).

Overall, Andrew demonstrated the emotional and somewhat transient nature of teacher identity development. He transformed as a teacher, moving from a

self-centred view of his needs as being central, to a teacher who placed children at the centre of his practice; identifying and addressing children's individual needs in order for them to become successful learners. This was a more outward view of himself as a teacher where relationships (ARE) were central to his identity development and to children as individuals.

5.1.2 Partial rejection - Della: Passion to Disillusion

Della was the oldest of the participants (39 years) and the challenge, of being older and returning to study was evident in year 1; she was a parent, juggling home life with children, workload and the development of herself as a learner. She described her experience as 'challenging' and 'overwhelming' when referring to study as this was a new experience for her. Initially, she outlined her focus on developing a learner identity; 'I don't even feel like a beginner student at the moment'. Like other interviewees, she found the experience of study in HE challenging, however, she acknowledged it was 'stimulating' and 'exciting' (ARE). She noted the significance of developing relationships with similar people and her friendship with another mature student was highlighted as a mechanism of support for her.

At this early stage her teacher identity was framed in terms of the school context, like other interviewees she anticipated this would be the site of her identity development. However, she felt this would be un-problematical as she had a professional persona in the past (MI);

> I already sort of know that sort of professional persona that you have so … I'm already aware that I'm very different or was in my social work role

to what I was when I was out with my friends to what I am at home (semester 1).

She appeared to believe that as she had already created a prior 'professional' identity her transition to being a teacher would be reasonably straightforward.

At the end of year 1 she felt more like a beginning teacher, the practicum was significant in that she became aware of the responsibility of the teacher role; 'The enormity of what it's all about is starting to … hit home a bit but it didn't until this last placement' (semester 2). At this early stage the need to achieve pupil progress was more prominent for her in contrast to the younger students;

> The responsibility that your lessons are the future for those children, and that what you tell them should hopefully set them on their way - and it's quite an enormous responsibility when you think about it like that.

She noted the expectations of the Teachers' Standards (EMR) explicitly unlike other interviewees who, at this stage, only mentioned them when prompted. However, like other interviewees, the emotional aspect of becoming a teacher was strong; 'I love it' (semester 2).

At the end of year one she framed her teacher identity around 'doing' identifiable teacher jobs such as teaching maths and phonics. When asked what it was that made her feel like a teacher, she commented;

> The planning more than anything I think. Like thinking what you're actually going to do with them … and just being with the children. It's just lovely. There's nothing quite like it … and the feedback that you get from them (semester 2).

It appeared the physical environment of being in school, doing teacher type tasks and receiving acknowledgement of her teacher identity was significant.

In common with the other students the school context was the place where her teacher identity came to the fore.

Like Andrew she emphasised 'interplay' between academic content taught in university and how important 'doing' it was. She specifically mentioned the importance of understanding child development and seeing how this related to school practices. This appeared to be of significance for her and may have been related to her previous role in social care. She was also aware of the need to know children well and highlighted how this was difficult on short practicum experiences. She explained;

> the other thing that I thought was quite interesting to bear in mind as a teacher is that you haven't got that wealth of background with them to know what they're perhaps talking about to respond to them appropriately … I saw that, particularly with my own children, that when they're telling me something it might be sort of a bit abstract, the things that they're saying but, because I know what they're going on about because I've experienced it with them, I know what they're talking about and am able to sort of develop their own learning, whereas you haven't got that with 27 children in the class … that's what I'm acutely aware of, and when I was in class … they might be telling me something and I thought 'oh what's all that about?' I didn't have a clue (semester 2).

None of the other interviewees perceived this as a problem, so this appeared to stem from her parental role.

At this point she was confident enough to describe herself as a 'beginning teacher' and acknowledged she still had a lot to learn; some positive observational feedback from the mentor appeared to have been significant for her in describing herself as a teacher. She considered she had 'the potential to make a good teacher' and, in common with other interviewees, stated she had the 'moral purpose' associated with being a teacher; 'I want to make a

difference to their lives in the future' (semester 2). At the end of year 1 she appeared more confident and organised towards her goal of becoming a teacher.

In year two, practicum remained the significant site for her developing a teacher identity; 'you definitely feel like a teacher when you're in school. You're wearing the clothes; you're with the children and it feels real' (semester 3). She described how she selected aspects of other teachers' practices to create her teacher identity;

> As an identity goes I think … I'm still developing one. I'm sort of picking bits out of when I see good practice … and thinking yes that's how I'd like to be (semester 3).

This appeared to imply she was actively creating an identity by observing other teachers despite noting; 'you are who you are'.

She described herself as a teacher as; 'patient, calm, understanding… a nice way with children'. This seemed to confirm how complex her teacher identity development was, as there was an internal aspect which linked to her teacher identity but appeared to be juxtaposed to how she described actively 'picking' from other teacher's identities in terms of trying to create her own teacher identity.

Additionally, she also noted there were external aspects to being a teacher (Teachers' Standards, 2011b) which she needed to address as they 'definitely influence how you've got to be'. She talked at length about the standards in each interview as boxes to tick off and was clearly aware of the accountability

aspects of the role. This was in contrast to Ellie and Carrie who used the Teachers' Standards as a developmental tool and Fran, who perceived them as peripheral to becoming a teacher. They appeared to be a more central checklist for Della acting as a driver from the beginning of the programme.

After practicum in year two she described herself as 'practising' as a teacher, making mistakes and learning. She returned to the belief; 'I am who I am' and being a teacher did not mean she felt different as a person;

> I was thinking about this, whether I feel different about being teacher or, like the identity of being a teacher and I was thinking I don't feel different as a person. I don't know whether I expect to feel different as a person because I am who I am, but I was thinking as well that because I've done sort of a professional job and know how to conduct myself in a professional way, whether that's already there so therefore I don't feel any different (semester 4).

This notion of building on a previous professional role and being able to 'conduct' her-self professionally may have indicated she was 'acting' as a teacher.

The fragility and lack of confidence apparent in the younger interviewees did not appear to be an issue for her – she appeared to have a stronger sense of herself, there was little self-doubt apparent in younger students. The journey so far for her did not appear to be as emotional as it was for some younger students, though passion and enjoyment were evident.

At the beginning of her final year Della was able to articulate her personal philosophy and how this was linked to her identity as a teacher;

> a real philosophy of being led by the child's interests and, you know, making learning relevant to them, to their interests … encouraging them

to be resilient and have a go and take risks … be independent and all those things that I think that children need …to become independent learners and have the confidence as they get older (semester 5).

She commented it was difficult to know whether this was a change for her or whether it arose from her previous experiences;

I don't know whether things have changed … I think I'm perhaps coming at it from a different perspective to the younger people … I've had a job and have had to be those sort of child-centred sort of things (semester 5).

In contrast to Andrew and Beth, she stated she felt confident approaching her final placement. University had helped to deepen her knowledge and though she thought she would be a 'good' teacher her aim was to be 'outstanding';

I think at this point in time … I'd make a good teacher. I feel quite confident about going on placement and the responsibilities and you know everything that I need to have in place and do …I feel I'm going to be good…I hope to be an outstanding teacher (semester 5).

It was evident she used familiar Teachers' Standards terminology in describing herself as a teacher, indicating she had adopted the canonical descriptions of the educational community.

She highlighted theoretical learning enabled her to consider what she believed education involved and this gave her more confidence in her beliefs and judgements; 'I've become more aware of what I believe…is right for children and more self-assured of what I think.' For the first time she used a metaphor to describe being a teacher, comparing teaching to mountaineering;

I realise that it's a very challenging job… I'm sort of thinking a mountaineer climbing up a mountain… I don't know whether you could ever reach the top of that mountain because … every year you have different children; different challenges; different things to learn. You know I don't think that'll ever end but I think that's about lifelong learning (semester 5).

She recognised the challenges of working with a range of children and anticipated it would involve her in reflecting, learning and developing her teacher identity. The emotion of approaching final placement was evident and she described it as; 'overwhelming', 'exciting' and 'nerve-wracking' nevertheless, she appeared to feel quite confident.

In her final interview this excitement and confidence had completely disappeared. Della explained how the final practicum significantly impacted on her teacher identity; she was now less certain of becoming a teacher. The expectations of taking on the full teacher role made her question what was important for her as a parent with young children; 'it really impacted on family life which wasn't nice'. She outlined the clash between her beliefs and the situated practices of the practicum setting; 'whatever I did wasn't good enough, it wasn't right. I just felt heavily criticised which obviously then knocks your confidence and you just start to doubt – is it worth it?'

She discovered her vision for teaching was very different to what the setting 'wanted'. Despite this she maintained her beliefs about learning being child-centred with discovery, questioning and problem solving central to her practice. Unlike Beth and Andrew she did not compromise these beliefs which resulted in her experiencing real tension. These beliefs had been frequently discussed during the programme so she was certain and confident in her views but these were clearly challenged by the performative educational climate experienced in practicum; 'pressure is on to meet curriculum targets… that's where it really juxtaposes with what I believe' (semester 6).

She appeared disillusioned with the current education culture and talked at length about the pressure of external requirements – Ofsted, curriculum coverage, knowing rather than understanding, policies, phonics, parents and highlighted; 'There are too many contradictions and it is just so hard to please everybody' (semester 6). Though she passed the practicum, she stated she was perhaps naïve in her view and had become more 'realistic' about the pressure on teachers which made her; 'disheartened with everything…I don't think it's what I want to do anymore' (semester 6).

The Teachers' Standards had developed into a 'hoop' to jump through (EMR) and she referred to them as 'basic' and if 'you can't tick those off then there is something seriously wrong' (semester 6). Despite the rejection of becoming a teacher, she enjoyed the course and stated it had made her more confident and relaxed. She noted how it provided opportunities for her as it was a professional qualification.

For Della rejection of becoming a teacher was significant. The performative, accountability driven culture clashed with her personal philosophy and meant she became disillusioned with the teacher identity on offer. Unlike other students, she had no clear role model, either from her past or from her practicum experiences to draw on. However, she did compare her own experiences as a pupil with her experiences as a student teacher;

> When I was at primary school… I wasn't sort of aware that there was no … standardised curriculum … I didn't know I thought what we learned would probably be the same as what everybody else learned … maybe that's where my laid back views have come from because I do

remember in the infants we were just allowed to explore and we just learned the basics of reading and writing and you know there was no pressure to sort of learn - I'm just thinking about my final placement - of learning about friction and the basis of friction and forces. We just did it and understood that to make something move you either had to push it or pull it or lift it … rather than actually officially being taught that you have to learn that a force is a push and a pull (semester 6).

These prior experiences appeared to have been an unarticulated aspect of her beliefs. It may be that discussion of these approaches during the programme brought these to the fore for her, illustrating a deeply held belief based on personal experience as a pupil.

She left on a positive note, and stated; I've thoroughly enjoyed the course I really have … I do think it will open up different avenues … I think it's opened that opportunity up (semester 6). Her teacher identity trajectory resulted in a different but positive outcome. It may be unsurprising, given her other identities, she remained keen to work in the children's workforce even though she rejected a teacher identity. She built on her own experience as a pupil and developed strongly child-centred beliefs, which resulted in her rejection of the current teacher identity offered by the educational landscape of English education.

5.1.3 Consolidation + confirmation - Fran: 'I've not changed'

Fran entered the programme with the least amount of classroom experience with young children. Like most of the students who transitioned directly from 'A' level study she faced the challenge of becoming more independent as a learner and commented it is; 'Quite different … you have to read around subject but there's a lot more than A levels' (semester 1). Like other

interviewees she concentrated on developing her student identity (MI) discussing herself as a learner at length; how she did not like group work and preferred to see video clips of children learning because it made it; 'easier for you to see what they're trying to say' as 'it shows a real life example' (semester 1). Although she found it 'overwhelming' she did comment that the content built on her previous knowledge so nothing was; 'too surprising. It's all kind of fitted in with the bits that I've done previously so obviously it's just a lot of things to try and remember' (semester 1).

At this point, she had no clear teacher identity and made no attempt to try to describe how she would be in a classroom. She stated;

> I feel like if you put me in a school now I wouldn't really know what I was doing, but I think when I go on placement, when we actually observe a bit more, it'll become easier. At the moment it's a bit like, 'oh what's going on?' (semester 1).

This was less developed than other interviewees and may have been due to her limited classroom experience. When she discussed her approaching practicum she was more concerned about the practical aspects such as getting there using public transport. However, she anticipated; 'the experience will be good when I go in' (semester 1).

Following the practicum she reported she felt 'more confident', even though the school 'chucked us in at the deep end,' (semester 2). She commented, 'I'm kind of just putting myself out there as a teacher.' Which appeared to imply she was testing what others thought of her as a teacher (CSN); trying to see if this was right for her. She noted through reflecting on lessons and techniques used in coping with behaviour management she 'changed how I

was' in order to cope with the children and to 'enforce' expectations. She highlighted how she 'copied off' her class teacher because 'he had a really nice approach towards the children' (semester 2). This illustrated how she acted in a way congruent with setting expectations, taking on an established teacher's persona in order to be successful.

She discussed how this teacher acted as a 'role model' but did not compare his behaviour or values with her own, as these were not articulated at this point; 'our teacher was kind of the role model and we copied off him' (semester 2). It was evident Fran realised teachers operate differently, she commented; 'they were all so different. So different the way they taught.' This appeared to be something she had not considered before and coupled with her developing understanding around the fact children differ showed a gradual realisation teaching was complex as it involved catering for a range of interests and needs. She outlined;

> Even though there's only 10 in our class, all of them were so different … there were some who loved making things, some who loved being on the computer, some loved writing, some loved drawing, some just liked being outside (semester 2).

At this point she described herself as 'nervous' and that she still had 'a lot of work to do'. In comparison with other interviewees she appeared to have the least developed identity. However, she noted the practicum allowed her to engage with a range of teaching experiences; 'I've done maths, literacy, PE, ICT, phonics. I've done so much in school.' When coupled with supportive feedback; 'he always praised you for what we did but he would always tell us what he would do as well next time and it wasn't like disheartening', it helped

her develop in 'confidence' and confirmed for her this was the right career path; 'it …made me want to be a teacher more' (semester 2).

At the beginning of year two Fran talked at length about the newly introduced, non-assessed, experience in local schools (CSN). Unlike the other interviewees this was the main focus for her in the interview in terms of considering what had impacted on her development as a teacher. She commented;

> a lot of it was being spoken to by the Head teacher about what they do and how it works in their school, whereas in Uni we get taught it all but it's nice to see how it actually is in practice because you're shown examples of it, real examples and we got to do bits ourselves and things and we were spoken to as if we actually were teachers coming in (semester 3).

This notion of being treated as a professional and practice being authentic was important for her in terms of understanding how theory was enacted in settings and may have related to her limited classroom experience. Like Della, she perceived this as a way of gaining experience and seeing different ways of operating so she could choose what may suit her as a teacher;

> it gives you ideas of how you'd like to do things when you actually have a class of your own and things like that … you get to see how different schools do it and you kind of think well I'd like to try that or maybe I wouldn't do it that way (semester 3).

Unlike Ellie who questioned the practice she saw, Fran seemed to observe and accept the practice; she did not compare it with personal experience as a pupil or any previous classroom experiences. She appeared more accepting than Ellie, Andrew, Beth and Carrie at this point in the programme.

She explained how this experience coupled with university modules developed her understanding of the importance of children as individuals;

> 'You need to know the child … I suppose you have to kind of think of the child as a whole. Not just what you're teaching but you have to get to know them, how they work, how they feel about things.'

However, she did not feel her identity changed noting; 'I don't think I have specifically changed, maybe slightly kind of developed more. I might be more confident, more knowledgeable perhaps I think' (semester 3).

She perceived her year two practicum as an opportunity for 'interacting with children' which she was 'looking forward to'. When asked about whether the Teachers' Standards impacted on her, she commented they were a 'worrying afterthought' rather than an integral aspect to becoming a teacher. They were not central to developing her practice or a consideration in developing a teacher identity but used retrospectively to evidence what she had done.

Prior to her final practicum Fran noted her growing realisation teaching is situated in a wider landscape of practice which 'you don't always think about' (semester 5). When asked about her teacher identity she initially resisted describing herself as a teacher as she had not been in the classroom for some time, indicating practicum was the site for her teacher identity development. However, when asked what kind of teacher she would like to be she stated;

> I'd like Reception preferably but even at Key Stage 1 I'd want it to be a lot of playing, exploratory based things with continuous provision and children being able to work through what influences them; what interests them because I think the more meaningful you make it the better it's going to be for them and it's going to be more interesting to plan and to observe and things like that (semester 5).

This was the most detailed she had been when attempting to describe herself and it reflected the programme philosophy, implying she may have taken on a programme prescribed identity, rather than developing her own individual version. Other interviewees, though they described similar identities, appeared to be able to discuss these at more length and in more detail linking them to their beliefs and experiences whereas Fran did not do this. She appeared to be committed to practices which were prevalent in the early years' literature and which she had seen work, rather than deeply held beliefs about children and learning. She noted these ideas had grown 'stronger' implying they were unarticulated beliefs from the beginning of her identity journey.

Fran still maintained the Teachers' Standards (EMR) had little impact on her, taking a more functional approach to them rather than the deeply embedded approach Ellie and Carrie had. Following the final practicum she insisted they had little impact on her; 'I don't think when I'm teaching I really think about the QTS standards …what I'm doing ….is something separate… maybe it shouldn't be but that's kind of how I feel about them' (semester 6). They remained for her; 'just a list of things I only really look at when on placement because I think oh I need to tick the box' (semester 5). This was consistent throughout - they remained an external requirement to achieve the teacher 'badge'.

After the final practicum Fran maintained her belief practicum was the place for her teacher identity development as it was; 'while you're on placement that

you get to put it all together and actually decide how it works and how you can manage it in real life' (semester 6). For her it was about using academic content in the practical setting and managing this to achieve positive outcomes for both, her-self and children. Unlike Ellie, who noted she had been 'educated' on the programme, Fran felt she had gone on 'a kind of journey you go through everything and train.' This may mean she adopted a more functional, surface approach to learning and her identity as a teacher, rather than it being the transformative experience it appeared to have been for some interviewees. She did not appear to find it as emotional or challenging and she did not appear to confront any practices she disagreed with unlike Andrew, Beth and Della.

Her teacher identity appeared to be less well formed than the other students and when asked to describe her teacher identity she responded;

> I don't know. I think as a teacher I like to get to know the children and build a rapport with them and obviously I think everything has to start from the children and if they're not happy with what you're doing, you can plan a great lesson but if it's not relevant to them then they are not going to take from it what they should. So, I think it's very child centred (semester 6).

There was commonality with other student descriptions as having a child-centred philosophy, however, she was certain her teacher identity had not changed but 'developed slightly' during the course of the programme;

> I don't think my teacher identity has fundamentally changed I think it has just enhanced and developed slightly because I think I still believe in all the things I did when I first started but now I kind of know how I can make that work in the classroom and how that fits in with other beliefs and how that fits in with the requirements that you need and things. So it's not changed but now I know how to put it into practice more (semester 6).

It appeared that the programme had given her permission to surface her beliefs so she could translate them into practice. She noted;

> I think now that I'm at the end of the course having been provided with all of the experiences I think I now feel a lot more capable of being able to use my own teacher identity and be able to do things the way I feel they should be done rather than having to do them a certain way I feel that I have things in place to be able to teach how I believe I should be and am able to provide what I think should happen now I'm more able to do that than when I started.

She seemed to imply she took aspects of the programme which mirrored her own views to strengthen her practice and personal conviction these were right. She stated she could 'use' her teacher identity to do things her way because somehow the programme validated her beliefs. She expressed;

> 'it's something that is deep within you but then it's something that goes to evidence when you are actually teaching because it influences how you are going to do things and why you are going to do things' (semester 6).

For Fran, this appeared to have been a more straightforward journey unlike Della, Gina, Beth and Andrew who all had their ideas and beliefs about teaching brought into question.

Fran portrayed a picture of a student who addressed the demands of the programme in an organised, functional manner. She consolidated her beliefs, possibly discarding information which questioned these, so she could enter the teaching profession. However, this was difficult to ascertain as she did not really explain these beliefs in detail, other than reflect programme espoused beliefs and values. It may be that because she had the least amount of experience with children prior to starting the programme she subconsciously

adopted a teacher identity offered by the programme embedding it within her so it became her own.

5.2 Summary

It was evident student trajectories were individualised experiences. This may be unsurprising given the range of background and experience students have undergone prior to starting the programme, the variety of practicum experience during the programme, voluntary and paid employment experiences. Additionally, beliefs, values, personal attributes and dispositions impacted on how individual students engaged with the experiences offered to them by the programme.

However, analysis suggested during their undergraduate programme students may have their identities transformed, consolidated or reject becoming a teacher. Despite different outcomes there were some similarities in student experiences in developing their teacher identity. These included the need for them to develop a student identity (MI) as they entered higher education, which initially took precedent over any consideration of developing their teacher identity.

Secondly, they all entered the programme with ideas and beliefs about what it is a teacher does and what this looks like in practice. This appeared to stem from previous experience, teacher role models or family members. Unlike other 'newcomers' in CoPs they were not 'blank slates', having had lengthy prior experience of education, albeit from a pupil perspective (MI). This meant

they entered practicum with preconceived ideas of what it is to be a teacher and what their own identity may be.

Thirdly, they all perceived practicum as the significant site for teacher identity development this was where their teacher identity developed, where practice verified theory (CSN), where they tested out their beliefs and values. It was here they experienced practice, working out what worked for them as a teacher, what they agreed and disagreed with. For agentic students, practicum acted as a stimulus for questioning theory and developing their own approaches and ideas about what being a teacher involved. For less agentic students, it meant they saw and implemented existing practices to develop a repertoire, making them recognisable as teachers.

Fourthly, it was during practicum they developed relationships and had their teacher identity validated by others; pupils, parents, colleagues, directing the work of colleagues and forming bonds with children in their care. External validation was important as it meant students were operating as a teacher within agreed practices in the landscape. Some students identified with particular teachers as role models, they saw they had things in common; beliefs, values, ways of working, age and these acted as images to students of their future self.

External sources of support were significant as they helped sustain student belief they were capable of becoming the teacher they wished to be, alternatively it could be an additional pressure for students to perform. Wider

educational landscape 'voices' became increasingly evident as students began to understand the wider landscape education is situated in and this included the Teachers' Standards, as an external bench-mark however, how they engaged with these differed.

The following chapter presents the dimensions, generated through analysis, which linked the themes and were evident in student trajectories.

Chapter 6 Dimensions

Analysis generated five common dimensions (figure 4.1) which effectively were aspects which linked the four themes identified and were evident in student trajectories. These dimensions comprised; agency, boundary crossing, relationships, expectations of others and the Teachers' Standards. They were significant as they were aspects students identified as impacting on their identity development and help understand what affect students' experience of developing a teacher identity. They should be considered by programme teams supporting students throughout this journey.

6.1 What impacts on student teacher identity development?

6.1.1 Agency

The notion of being an agentic individual appeared significant as it linked a willingness to become more independent with environmental factors. It provided a direct connection between ARE and CSN and impacted on student identity development. It was apparent in all student trajectories to some extent.

Agentic behaviours came from within the student; 'you have to find your own way' (Della, semester 1), their motivation and reflection, alongside a drive to develop an identity initially as a student and then as a teacher. When combined with a supportive, 'expansive' context, agency offered a dimension which enhanced identity development.

In year one, all students quickly realised they needed to become much more agentic as learners and drive their own learning within the HE environment. As Carrie (semester 1) outlined studying at university differed from her previous study; 'It's a lot more kind of self-initiated. You have to do a lot more yourself and go out of your way to do things like search for research … You don't get everything handed to you on a plate.'

In order to employ agentic behaviours a student needed to be in an 'expansive' environment during both university and practicum where there were high expectations and suitable support provided. The interviewees commented on a willingness to become more independent and take control of their learning and development but this was enhanced and encouraged in contexts where there were high expectations of them as a 'teacher'. As Carrie commented 'a lot was expected of us but in school I know a really good support network is there' (semester 5).

The most expansive environments allowed students to volunteer to teach subjects they had little experience in. They provided support and advice without 'spoon-feeding', enabling the student to learn from mistakes. These environments allowed students to undertake a wide range of 'teacher type' tasks, do the job, and gain experience; they had approachable colleagues who were willing to enter into dialogue regarding teaching and learning. In semester 4 Beth described her agentic behaviour;

> I just said 'can I teach PE?' which I think you've just kind of got to do if you're not teaching that much. I just said 'can I teach it?' and then basically it snowballed … it's the best way to go about I think just getting straight in there.

Whereas Ellie noted the significance of her mentor in scaffolding her personal

agency;

> She would help me with anything … and say 'have you got this ready for tomorrow? Do you need help doing anything? ... She didn't kind of abandon me … You know she was really helpful and she was interested in my development so I think that makes a huge difference to your own confidence. You know you feel that you have someone supporting you (semester 4).

It was evident agency was sometimes tied to a specific role model students

wished to emulate or become; their 'future self'. This was captured by Ellie

who compared her-self to her cousin;

> She's been teaching for 7 years. She did the very same course as me … she's just got outstanding with Ofsted and that's where I want to be and I'm a long way away from there. She's so good. She's so into it and everything … I don't think I'm that far along. I think I've got a good base. I think I won't really get to where I want to be for about six years' into teaching …that's my aim (semester 3).

There also appeared to be a link between agency and student's 'moral

purpose' for becoming a teacher; this wish to make a positive contribution to

the lives of children helped them maintain their drive to be a teacher. In

semester 4 Andrew highlighted;

> I believe in … Maslow's hierarchy … what the children need - food, clothing, things like that … - I've seen it while I've been in school and it's changed us to think well I'm not going to waste time rushing everyone to get ready and doing all this to kind of get the learning underway so that my Ofsted looks brilliant … I'm there as a carer as well as a teacher … I'm not just a teacher.

During the programme students developed an awareness of the need to be

agentic and employ agency summarised by Ellie in her final interview where

she referred to the programme giving her 'tools' to become a teacher;

As a teacher I feel that the course has prepared me or given me the tools to be able to deal with lots. Everything that's going to be thrown at me …They can't give you a recipe. It's not going to work … We've developed … skills to help us deal with whatever comes … it's been much more about giving you the mind to deal with what comes up (semester 6).

During final practicum Carrie noted she was much happier to be questioned and challenged about practice and welcomed this, as she was confident she could provide a justification;

I think it is nice to be challenged … I do quite like to be questioned about what I'm doing now because I feel like I can justify myself a lot more than I would have been able to in first year because I think in first year I would have been like I'm just doing it because I've been told to do it this way but now if I don't agree with something, I won't do it that way. I feel quite right to say I'm not doing it like that because it's not going to work, I want to do it this way and then even if it doesn't work I can reflect on that and then … develop my practice (semester 6).

From individual perspectives it was interesting to note Fran, for whom there is less sense of her as a teacher, said little about being agentic beyond semester 1 and having to engage with reading and Gina, who took a non QTS route, acknowledged she did not do enough independent work.

This sense of agency combining personal motivation and context was particularly relevant as students moved between university and practicum discussed in boundary crossing below.

6.1.2 Boundary Crossing

Students crossed multiple boundaries during the programme as they moved between university and work-based settings. This process is classed as 'boundary crossing' (Wenger, 1998) and it was in these school contexts

student teacher identity was validated by others. This meant boundary crossing was closely linked to relationships as a dimension and themes; CSN, ARE and MI.

All interviewees acknowledged the experience of boundary crossing impacted on how they viewed themselves, how they behaved, acted and understood what it was to be a teacher in the context. As Gina explained, this was a fluid experience; 'at the minute I'm in a student role but when I go into placement I'll be … a professional adult' (semester 1). This appeared to indicate there were more deeply intense sporadic episodes of teacher identity development whilst students engaged in practicum.

For these students this process was complex as each time they crossed the boundary between university and practicum they entered a new, often very different context and worked with a new age group. This was reflected on by Carrie when she linked the teaching expectations of the programme, opportunities in the classroom and how, as they crossed this boundary, they were offered opportunities to take on the teacher role;

> my second year placement I finally had the opportunity to take ownership of the classroom whereas in my first year placement I felt like I was a teaching assistant rather than a teacher. Whereas in second year they allowed me to be the teacher 60/70% of the time so I did kind of have a lot of power to … teach the children and from there I think I've … improved and I definitely feel more like a teacher than I have done (semester 5).

This boundary crossing experience was significant as it had the potential to be a powerful learning experience for students, directly connecting the context

with the student and how they felt about themselves as a teacher, through negotiated practices (CSN – ARE). This can cause them to question and develop their teacher identity. Both Beth and Andrew outlined their experience of being placed with a teacher whose practice they disagreed with. However, each took a pragmatic route and adopted that particular practice in order to meet the expectations of the school. Beth summarised this as she discussed her beliefs;

> I think because I'm Early Years I realise how important it is obviously throughout Primary that they need to have lessons that are fun and active and the teacher was quite worksheet-based and so I think I learned … not to do that because I didn't feel like the children were learning that much … I still see myself that I haven't lost that, even though my teacher took that route (semester 4).

It was evident students needed to adopt a pragmatic stance and maintain their beliefs and accept different teachers teach differently. They almost have to put aside their beliefs for a short time in order to cope with the pressures of practicum and to ensure they are successful and progress. This can evoke strong feelings as Andrew noted, because the practice was not part of his personally espoused repertoire;

> because it's not my class so it didn't allow me to teach the way I wanted to teach… I didn't like the fact that … it was all worksheet stuff and I hate it, I really don't like it (semester 4).

Analysis suggested that key to 'boundary crossing', as a positive developmental experience, was the 'boundary broker' (Wenger, 1998) who may be the class teacher, or the mentor who oversees the assessment of the practicum. For some students the ability to identify with them, or a member of school staff, was significant as mentioned by Carrie, Ellie and Beth. This was

summarised by Beth who stated;

> My last teacher I was on placement with was a male and I've never seen a male Reception teacher … he was a role model for me really. The children looked up to him so much because he was so … creative in his ideas … just so caring and you don't often see that from a male. You do, but not as often from males and they really did like him and it's just I wanted to be like him. He was just so nice (semester 3).

These brokers aided identity development through dialogue around the practical aspect of school practices and 'tacit' knowledge in the context, for example sharing examples of planning, welcoming the student as a colleague, allowing students to learn from mistakes, providing access to relevant school policies. This relationship was a powerful one and dealt with in 6.1.3.

During boundary crossing university 'paperwork' is designed to support the student but Fran commented she found it 'onerous' (semester 5). She appeared to imply paperwork requirements were distracting and detracted from the business of teaching. It almost created a barrier between her and her mentor as she had to ask for it to be completed with them; 'I've got this paperwork to fill in and I need this from you' (semester 5), as they are responsible for using this with the student.

However, as the paperwork became more familiar over time, it appeared to become less of a barrier to student development. Andrew initially described it as a 'barrier' but, through engagement with it as an expected practice, he perceived it as a useful document which tracked and helped develop his progress. For Carrie and Ellie, it became a more developmental tool. This is discussed further in the Teachers' Standards section.

At the point of boundary crossing individual students outlined prior experience, for example, Della found this more seamless, as she had been in a professional role in the past, so felt confident in her professional identity as an adult working with children. Ellie had prior experience of boundary crossing; between two different education systems and employment roles which she acknowledged meant she actively took on different identities in different contexts.

Analysis indicated boundary crossing was an emotional part of identity development with students feeling 'nervous' and 'excited' before entering the new context. A successful practicum meant they crossed back into university feeling more confident with their teacher identity. Andrew illustrated this at the end of his first year where instead of describing himself as a student, he described himself as a 'trainee teacher'. His boundary crossing experiences in year one resulted in him feeling more confident, even though he recognised the responsibility associated with the role.

However, a challenging or negative practicum experience led students to negative feelings. Della described being 'disheartened' and questioned her future career pathway, following final practicum;

> I think I've become more realistic … definitely more realistic … it's not this pretty little 9 - 3 job with six weeks off in the summer and I don't think people fully understand what teachers do and the work they do do to prepare for their class … my teacher identity has just definitely become more realistic but more disheartened with everything that's kind of happened on that last placement because I don't think it's what I want to do anymore (semester 6).

In Gina's case, it was the raised expectations and increased responsibility when crossing the boundary to final practicum which contributed to her decision to reject becoming a teacher; 'I'm not a teacher anymore, I'm not a student teacher …I progressed and I've changed what I assumed I was going to be from this course' (semester 6). For her the identity struggle was about how she defined herself on exiting the programme as her outcome was not the one anticipated.

6.1.3 Relationships

Relationships were an important dimension for student teachers in developing their teacher identity. Relationships developed during the programme connected CSN and ARE and impacted directly on student teacher's identities. Relationships were significant in that they provided support and challenge for identity development and, it was through relationships, students received confirmation of their teacher identity.

Students found themselves in a web of relationships initially those between peers and between students and tutors were identified as significant, as they provided students with a sense of connection and belonging to a unique group within the faculty. Carrie noted this was a more adult relationship than in school and that expectations encouraged students to become more mature and behave in a professional manner.

Relationships in school were frequently developed with the 'boundary broker', mentioned above. This role was significant in that the broker acted as a

'guide' or 'facilitator' for students allowing them membership into the CoP. This notion of being treated as a teacher and perceived as a member of the school team was important for these students in developing their teacher identity; it provided external acceptance into the CoP. As Andrew highlighted, he was treated as a member of the school team and this contributed to him beginning to adopt a teacher identity; 'I'm really grateful to them for letting us become part of the staff and not just a student. I was like a teacher' (semester 4).

Beth noted the importance of the beliefs of the 'boundary broker' and school staff in terms of her development as a teacher; 'it was belief from other people that definitely does impact the way you think about yourself' (semester 6). For Beth the manner in which mentors, as 'boundary brokers', gave feedback was a significant aspect of the relationship;

> he was really helpful towards me though. He told me what went well, he told me what didn't but he was just so honest but so nice about it. He didn't make me feel embarrassed because it had gone wrong. He made me look on the bright side and it's really nice having someone like that because like having him it felt like he wanted you to be there as well (semester 3).

In contrast when Andrew received poor feedback from his boundary broker in year one he experienced a negative, emotional impact on his identity development; 'I was gutted, absolutely gutted'. However, he was motivated to demonstrate resilience and show he could do the job well as he sought 'to prove her wrong.' This clearly illustrated the relationship between CSN and ARE and the importance of student agency within a context when dealing with

mentor feedback. The capacity to respond in a proactive, positive manner appears central to student development as a teacher.

The most successful relationships enabled students to access the CoP and develop their place within it as a colleague. They were accepted as teachers by the children in their care, by parents and the wider community. For Carrie this relationship, with not just the mentor, but the wider community was especially significant, as she was placed in her local school during her year two practicum. This context meant she had an established relationship and place within the community, so was heavily invested in the context;

> I don't know whether that was because I was at home at a school that I knew really, really well so I've felt I've had to make more of an effort and try even harder to impress the school that I want to end up working in eventually. I've got quite a strong attachment to the school so I just wanted to be amazing but now I feel like I've developed a lot more. Not just as a teacher, as a person as well. I've learnt so much from it. It was a real kind of roller coaster of emotions being on placement. I find it quite emotional but I think it's because the school meant a lot to me and I didn't want to let them down.

This investment meant wider opportunities were available to her and she,

> was involved with everything. With knowing the community as well I could talk to parents, whereas on other placements I haven't really had the opportunity but because I knew some of the parents anyway, I was able to do that. I was able to do some of the assessment … I was able to not only work with my class I worked with the whole school and the wider community as well (semester 4).

Each student interviewed discussed specific children or instances where relationships with children taught them something about themselves as a teacher. In semester three, Andrew stated; 'I think the relationship I have with the children is so important.' He commented further;

> I'm there as a carer as well as a teacher … I'm going to be with the children for a long time compared to what their mam and dads are … I'm

a big part of their life so I think I'm not just a teacher. I really enjoy like sorting everyone out - 'have you got this? Have you got that?' There's this little girl and she used to come in, she didn't have any shoes, … instead of telling her to sit down and I'll sort it out for her - no, together… we all sorted out the shoes and by the end of the second week she was going to get her own shoes

This indicated his relationship with children was based on knowledge of them as individuals so he could ensure they were catered for in the most appropriate manner. This child centred approach is central to the programme and was a common thread for all interviewees.

In addition to the significance of relationships with children, students acknowledged the importance of relationships with other colleagues beyond the mentor or class teacher. As Carrie explained; 'me, the class teacher … and the TA … developed a really good kind of professional relationship' (semester 4). Working and directing the work of other adults was significant as this demonstrated student teachers were in charge in the classroom. For example, at the end of year two Andrew commented;

> you know when you've got someone with you they're always your TA in the lesson so I'll be like - do this and I'm going to do that but now I've had people who have appeared to do their job - real staff, real people - so like I've had to manage the staff on my own and tell them what I'm going to do. Can you do that? Is that alright with you? … we're compromising… - it goes back to the relationship that I had with the people. If I didn't have the relationship I wouldn't have been able to do that.

This demonstrated to Andrew he had created suitable professional working relationships as expected of a teacher, so he behaved in a way congruent with the teacher role.

It was evident some students had strong prior relationships with past teachers

which acted as role models for them. There were aspects they drew on to develop their own teacher identity so there existed a link between the past, present and future teacher they aspired to be. Additionally, current role models appeared to be significant, similarity in views, beliefs and even age allowed the students to imagine themselves as a teacher. Ellie summarised this; 'my class teacher was young as well. She didn't have that long out of Uni. She's only 26 … two years older than me and we got on really well' (semester 4).

In addition to these relationships, were significant relationships in their lives with family and friends explored below.

6.1.4 Expectations of others

Analysis indicated other people's expectations of students impacted on them. Though these were external to the student, they appeared to be significant in that they created additional stress or support for them. The only student not to mention these was Ellie, who appeared to have a strong sense of self, which was internal to her rather than being externally mediated by others.

These external expectations seemed to link to their identity as a teacher as they set expectations for them to attain in addition to the Teachers' Standards. There was an element of feeling they needed to develop as a teacher for other people; parents, tutors, prior teachers. Andrew, as the only male participant, felt he needed to prove himself as an Early Years' Teacher and that there was a general expectation it was a more female orientated role;

'I've got to show everyone that I'm not just your dopey fella. I can actually do it' (semester 3).

For Andrew, the expectations of others caused additional stress; 'my mam, she's so bad … she wants the best for us but like she expects us to be this amazing person who's going to turn education on its head and do all this' (semester 3). He also wanted to please others such as his tutors, he points this out; 'I felt like it was important for the lecturers, for my Mum, for my Dad' (semester 5).

Gina also mentioned previous teacher's expectations, as it was their expectations which caused her to enter the programme in the first place. She acknowledged this in her final interview, after she had decided not to become a teacher; 'my teachers expected me to just go onto it…they just assumed that I would be going for it and I just got pushed in that general direction' (semester 6). Given this admission perhaps it may be unsurprising she decided to opt for a non QTS option.

In contrast, for Fran the expectations and support from family and friends sustained her in becoming a teacher rather than applying pressure for her. She stated;

> My family as well … they're really encouraging. They were ringing up most days asking how it was going and that just like encouraged me to do it … my friends as well. They were always really encouraging. Like I know it's something I want to do but sometimes when you feel a bit stressed you feel like 'oh is this for me?' but they all really helped me (semester 2).

Carrie as the only student who undertook a practicum in her local school, pointed out the additional expectations this placed on her, as she; 'didn't want to let them down'. By the end of the programme she also highlighted she was more aware of the number of people who have a 'voice' or expectations in education which appears to overshadow the 'voices' of children. She explained;

> I didn't realise how many people had such an impact on education and even though it's the child that receives the education they have very little say... that was really … surprising for me as well of how many people have their different says and how many people as well don't actually know an awful lot about education can have such a massive impact (semester 6).

Della also alluded to these wider external expectations in the form of parents, colleagues and government and felt the pressure of the accountability agenda and 'being accountable' for 'ensuring progress'. Following the final practicum she noted how she struggled to fulfil these expectations which were especially prevalent as an issue for her, as a parent with young children. This meant she had to 'evaluate what is more important to me' (semester 6). This influenced her final decision to work in a support capacity in school.

As external drivers for student engagement, expectations of others link to the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011b) discussed below.

6.1.5 Teachers' Standards

Unlike previous research, data analysis suggested the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011b) appeared to be a significant dimension in student teacher

identity development, as they outline the canonical practices and expectations of teachers within England. They link all themes identified as students are judged against these during practicum and are interpreted in the context, by the mentor, acted upon, reflected on and developed by the student, providing them with a framework of what it means to be a teacher.

They are part of the on-going dialogue throughout the programme when students cross between university and practicum as they are used to create targets to achieve during practicum. They form part of a constant dialogue between students and their mentor who is required to grade them against these standards. All students demonstrated they were aware of the standards and that these gave them the 'badge' of being a teacher; a passport into the wider educational landscape of practice.

Unsurprisingly the use of the standards increased during the three years as students became familiar with them. It was apparent the centrality of the standards differed for each individual. Ellie and Carrie utilised them as a central developmental tool, to develop themselves as a teacher, whereas Fran paid little attention to them, seeing them as 'hoops' or 'tick boxes' to achieve; a kind of afterthought. Beth and Andrew described the standards as 'common sense' and used them to reflect and develop but in a more haphazard, less independent manner, than either Carrie or Ellie.

What appeared to be significant for Carrie and Ellie was the importance of a supportive mentor, in year two of the programme, who modelled the use of

the standards and entered into dialogue around the standards, giving examples and scaffolding student's use of them. Ellie provided an example; 'she was setting targets with me. She'd say 'that relates directly to standard S2 which you will be able to prove that way' (semester 4).

This was where the link between relationships and the teachers standards was apparent for students, their 'broker' acted in a manner which supported the target setting process in a very explicit way, which enabled them to use the standards as a developmental tool to develop their practice and teacher identity. The following from Carrie, in semester 4, illustrated this process;

> Just going through the standards with the teacher and highlighting on the sheet that we've got and just talking about them … I know before I didn't really take much notice of them … but I definitely looked at them a lot more closely during placement to make sure that what I was doing was relevant … definitely engage with them a lot more now … and that will help me.

Della's experience differed as she did not experience such careful scaffolding in using the standards;

> I wasn't really given any sort of constructive feedback so I don't really know how I did progress … when I sort of asked what could I have done differently of the class teacher … she sort of gave me a few ideas … Having got the feedback in the final report and seeing what they've said there, I know where I need to work on to develop so that sort of relates to the standards (semester 4).

This lack of scaffolding in year two became evident in her final interview, where she outlined she did not know how to achieve the Teachers' Standards and related targets making them boxes to tick in order to survive the final practicum. She stated; 'I knew what I needed to do … but I didn't know how to do it but I knew what I needed to do to pass you know to get the QTS part of

the course' (semester 6).

As a 'boundary crossing' object the Teachers' Standards are central to attaining QTS for these students and provide a 'benchmark' of expectations of 'how to be, how to act and how to understand' (Sachs, 2005), so it is important students are enabled to work with them in a forward looking, developmental manner. This is a key role of the mentor and analysis showed how, if the standards were shared and the student was supported in using them, they became a powerful learning tool, which enabled students to engage with the expectations of becoming a teacher. This appeared particularly significant in year two of the programme and enabled students to use them more independently in the final stages of their learning.

6.2 Summary: To what extent do student teachers develop their teacher identity during their initial teacher education programme?

Analysis indicated students do develop their teacher identity during their three year ITE programme however, to what extent and how this occurred varied. It was evident that initially students concentrated on developing a student identity as they made the transition between prior education and HE. During the first part of year one this was their focus and all interviewees referred to this as their key identity activity. They commented on the need to be 'independent' and 'organised' as learners as they were not 'spoon-fed' but required to be autonomous. This development of student identity was not mentioned as key identity activity beyond year one, where teacher identity development took precedence.

For some students such as Andrew, Ellie and Carrie, developing a teacher identity was about surfacing deeply held beliefs about what being a teacher involves allowing for articulation, examination and questioning of this through the programme. These students articulated personal views and beliefs about being a teacher and these were challenged and transformed by the end of the programme as students articulated a strong sense of the teacher they had become. Views were frequently challenged by practicum experiences, such as Andrew's experiences, where he became more certain of his approaches to teaching when confronted with practices he disagreed with.

For Ellie there was a transformation as theory became important for her practice as it allowed her to consider different views and reach considered conclusions of what being a teacher involved. By year three she noted; 'I'm a lot more sure now about what I believe and the things that are important to me… I feel much more sure of myself as a teacher…the more reading I do, the more of a well-rounded idea … I get' (semester 5).

For Beth, though her core ideas remained the same she built on these, extending her definition of herself to include being creative as a teacher with an emphasis on strong relationships. Although ITE confirmed her initial ideas she developed beyond these so there was a greater sense of how she would be as a teacher. For others such as Fran ITE was about confirming and consolidating what she already claimed to know. Her only attempt at any articulation of herself as a teacher came towards the end of the programme, whereas, all other interviewees made attempts to grapple with this throughout.

Even at this point, she exhibited a less well developed sense of the type of teacher she had become.

Following the final practicum, for Della, there was a deeper awareness of the reality of the role and the challenges this posed. She appeared disillusioned and disheartened with teaching, as she felt her values and beliefs were in such opposition with her final practicum setting. She found her beliefs about the purpose of teaching, overshadowed by external requirements; 'it's possibly been a negative experience I do think it's been a realistic experience' (semester 6).

Similarly, Gina's concerns with the bigger picture of the educational landscape of practice – the social and political context of teaching coupled with the wider accountability and performativity agendas prevalent in English schools, were evident from the beginning and a consistent issue for her throughout. These concerns and experiences in schools finally led her to discarding the notion of becoming a teacher. She was unique in that throughout her programme she had been the most concerned with these external pressures, even in semester one she noted in education; 'everything's changing again'.

In conclusion, these five dimensions, coupled with the four themes, provide a conceptual framework (figure 4.1) for developing an approach to enable student teachers to develop a teacher identity.

Chapter 7 Discussion

This chapter discusses the principle findings in relation to the research questions and literature outlined in chapter two. This discussion is organised round the research questions examined, culminating in recommendations for ITE.

7.1 How do student teachers experience the development of teacher identity during a three-year professional education degree?

This research shows students experienced an individualised, erratic process of teacher identity development (Lamote and Engles, 2010) rather than a linear progression suggested by Wenger's CoP framework (1998). Gina presented a vivid metaphor of this erratic undertaking, when she likened the development of a teacher identity to having rocks thrown into a puddle;

> someone throws a massive rock into the puddle and you can't see your reflection, it's all distorted and then as you go through first year it becomes a little bit clearer … you're sort of understanding why you do this and what links uni work with the practical work … in like second year the water is still dissipating, it's still rippling out … you can sort of see yourself, it's a bit blotchy … you get into third year and you're like oh right that's what I look like (semester 6).

She realises ITE can disrupt beliefs and ideas, creating waves of uncertainty for students, which they then have to work through in order to understand their own thinking, beliefs and identity.

Analysis shows identity development is experienced through constant boundary crossing experiences which offer multiple opportunities for the reinvention of a teacher identity. Students appear to develop short term

identities adapted to each new school context they found themselves in, viewing each practicum experience as 'starting again'. This meant during the programme students constantly engaged with identity work, including deeply sporadic, intense episodes during practicum where they were required to negotiate ways of being a teacher (Wenger, 1998; Johnston, 2016). As Andrew commented; 'when I'm on placement I do see myself as a teacher but when I'm not on placement … that's when I don't'.

They experience teacher identity development as a challenge to ideas and beliefs. Practicum experiences frequently bring into question beliefs and students find they have to understand contextual factors and expectations in order to be recognised and validated by others as a teacher (Gee, 2000). The development of teacher identity during periods in the university appeared less intense for students and this offers teacher educators an opportunity to actively engage students in discussions about their teacher identity in a 'safe' space.

As a constant 'newcomer' in CoPs students do not reach full membership, remaining as 'tourists' or 'sojourners' (Wenger, 1998; Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b) due to limited time constraints. Therefore it appears there is limited evidence of transferability of practices or of student teachers impacting on CoPs. This status means students have limited opportunities for demonstrating 'expressibility', 'knowledgeability' and 'accountability' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015).

As 'tourists' (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b) it would be logical to assume, there will be little impact on identity development from the practicum experience. Whilst this may be the case for Fran, the interpretation of data would disagree with this because, even as temporary members, the other student teachers demonstrated their teacher identity was impacted on and changed. Andrew describes being 'transformed', Ellie is, 'enlightened to think differently', Carrie notes, she has developed 'wider horizons', Beth has 'developed a backbone', Della has, had a 'realistic experience' and become aware of the complexity of the teacher role and Gina has unplanned identity development, as she rejects becoming a teacher. This appears to indicate there are possibilities during ITE for student teachers to experience significant changes to their substantive teacher identity. Beliefs and ideas of how to be, act and understand (Sachs, 2005) can be transformed, consolidated and developed.

However, for those such as Fran, who adopt an instrumental approach and 'copy' (Wilkins et al., 2012) 'old timers' (Wenger, 1998) there is little tension or questioning, and subsequently, limited development of a teacher identity. This coping strategy means she has the least emotional challenge (Wilkins et al, 2012) during the programme and may mean that for her learning and identity development has been limited as she notes; 'I haven't changed'. As Woodgate-Jones (2012) and Smagorinsky et al. (2004) highlight such, imitation limits opportunities for identity development and there is limited benefit to the CoP for having her there. Such a lack of identity development may mean that for Fran there may be greater challenges to her teacher

identity as she enters the profession, ones she may find difficult having not experienced this during the course of her ITE programme.

During the programme there appears to be an overall cumulative effect on identity development because student teachers see, experience and have to accommodate contextual practices. Experiencing such a variety of CoPs means they often identify practices which do not align with their preferred identity. These appeared to act to strengthen their beliefs in terms of how they wanted to be and act (Sachs, 2005). In cases where students were well supported (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b) and allowed access to shared practices there appeared to be a greater impact on overall teacher identity development as they were able to question practices in light of beliefs, relate it to personal experiences as a pupil as well as compare it to theory. In these CoPs they are likely to behave in ways which are more congruent with their developing teacher identity.

It was evident that developing a teacher identity during ITE is not the straightforward, linear progression which the Teachers' Standards university paperwork would appear to imply (Wilkins et al., 2012). This means teacher educators should make this explicit for students, discarding the myth that they will experience a logical progression through the Teachers' Standards.

Analysis indicated that for most students there was a slow realisation of the wider political context of being a teacher and by year three students understand that the wider landscape impacts on classroom practices as noted

by Carrie however this is not always viewed as problematic. This is in contrast to Kelchtermans' (2009) research with experienced teachers who did experience deeply emotional identity issues in relation to wider landscape expectations. It could be said that some student teachers only just begin to understand the political impact of the wider educational context as they are about to enter the profession, so it is less of an issue for them. Della and Gina were exceptions to this in that they were more aware of the performative educational landscape and could not reconcile their teacher identities with this.

Findings illustrated part of the reason students experienced developing a teacher identity differently, was because they began the programme from varied starting points, based on personal history and experience. For example, Fran, who appeared to have the most straightforward identity trajectory, had the least prior experience with pupils, whereas, Della who has children and had prior experience of a professional role, experienced a problematic journey.

These varied prior experiences and identities mean they do not enter ITE value or belief free; they already have ideas about themselves as teachers (Furlong, 2013). Andrew illustrated this in his first interview where he outlined his personal 'lay theory' (ibid) beliefs about the importance of play as a vehicle for young children's learning. However, despite differences they all developed a child centred teacher identity rather than focusing deeply on curriculum and subject knowledge they focussed on relationships in contrast to the study by

Anspal et al. (2012). This may be due to the focus of early years' education and the programme philosophy of placing the child at the centre of all learning and development.

For all interviewees, the programme itself was a positive experience, even though it was challenging and when there were unexpected outcomes. For example, though Gina chose a non-QTS qualification she remained committed to working with children. Della, who rejected becoming a teacher, still articulated how it was a positive learning experience. So, though it is a 'roller-coaster' (Carrie), there were positive outcomes for all involved.

7.1.1 An emotional experience

Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) acknowledge how identity trajectories are unique, and developing an identity can be problematic for individuals as they take part in and manage tensions between different practices. It is almost inevitable that students engaged in an ITE programme, with regular practicum in a range of settings, will meet some tension or clash with their personal views of themselves as a teacher. It is how they react and deal with these situations, which becomes crucial in developing their teacher identity. This means student teachers should expect that developing a teacher identity will be an emotional journey of becoming (Timostsuk and Ugatse, 2010). This has implications for the teacher educators and the programme, because it needs to inform student teachers and support this emotional process.

Similarities with Johnston's (2010) research were evident, even though his research included secondary trainees, as evidence presented pointed to developing a teacher identity as a deeply emotional process, in which the relationships between the student teacher and school colleagues impacted on their confidence and sense of self as a teacher. It is clear practicum is a complex, social context in which interaction is crucial in enabling students to develop a professional teacher identity. As Johnston (ibid) highlights, negative feedback can be destructive, and impacts on student well-being. This was articulated by Andrew, who noted he could be 'crushed so easily'. Additionally, Beth and Gina outlined the manner in which feedback was given as being significant, emphasising the 'right kind of support' was necessary (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b). This has implications for mentors who need to know the student teacher well, so feedback can be tailored so it remains purposeful and developmentally focused but without being destructive.

The regular boundary crossing means it is likely students will experience some kind of failure because as Fenton-O'Creevy et al. (2015a: 42) note; 'Experiences of failure are an inevitable consequence of moving into contexts with an unfamiliar regime of competence'. Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) also highlight the emotional aspect of boundary transitions, as significant issues. Therefore, implications for teacher educators are that these issues need to be discussed and acknowledged with students in the university context with learning opportunities designed to support students in engaging with this kind of emotional experience.

Students need to understand that as their teacher identities begin to emerge during practicum, they will be tested and how they deal with this testing will have 'emotional consequences' (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015c) as threats to identity are related to perceptions of incompetence, failure, poor lessons, and feedback. This emotionality was illustrated by Della's final practicum experience, where she optimistically anticipated she could be an 'outstanding' teacher however she became 'disillusioned'. The emotional effects identified by Anspal et al. (2012) seem to be more concentrated for students in this study, leading to students experiencing fluctuating feelings about their developing identities. It may be possible for ITE programmes to mitigate these issues somewhat by reducing the number of boundary crossing experiences students make during ITE.

Yuan and Lee (2016) also acknowledge the importance of the emotional aspect of student teacher identity development. They outline how 'emotional flux', during practicum is evident as student teachers experiment with the professional aspect of being a teacher. Findings presented here were consistent with this view and the experience students had of having strong emotions interrelated with their teacher identity development (Zembylas, 2003). Within this complex, emotional process relationships with pupils, mentors, colleagues and an emerging sense of professional agency, was evident in findings, as students became more confident in describing themselves as a teacher. They were gradually more assured of their beliefs and values, having considered these during the programme, so it appeared that, for the students involved, ITE gave them a greater sense of confidence

and agency based on a more developed professional teacher identity. Unlike students in the study by Anspal et al. (2012) these students exited confident to enter the profession.

Findings contradicted Robert's (2006) claims that student beliefs are 'immune' to ITE. However, that is not to say this professional identity will not change or be tested and developed further during their career (Flores and Day, 2006; Nias, 1996; Kelchtermans, 1996, 2009; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). For these students ITE had a positive impact; they developed a greater sense of themselves as a teacher, with tools to cope as an NQT in the profession and a more clearly articulated opinion of what they believed being a teacher entailed. It may be that for these students regular engagement and reflection through the interview process helped them consider their teacher identity, alternatively it may be that the programme provided some support for them in developing a teacher identity.

7.1.2 An on-going challenge to personal beliefs.

Most students experienced teacher identity development as a challenge to their beliefs, values and philosophy. As noted above student teachers do not enter ITE value or belief free (Sternberg et al., 2014), as the individual journeys illustrated they bring with them ideas of the type of teacher they wish to be and are already committed to specific beliefs and values around teaching. For example, Beth articulated an ethic of care, and all of the student teachers placed value on having children at the heart of education.

Both Nias (1996) and Kelchtermans (1996; 2009), in their studies of experienced teachers, explain how values and the moral dimension of teaching mean teachers are liable to experience emotional feelings of vulnerability. Andrew's comments, regarding his experiences in year one, illustrated this is also true for the student teachers involved and is an aspect of teacher identity they needed to recognise, as it could impact on their feelings in the workplace context.

Support for student teachers needs to include some way of addressing these negative feelings, so they can understand them and work with them to feel more able to cope. This could involve surfacing student teacher beliefs, previous role models and future selves, so that students can better understand their professional identity, build on it and so empower them to make decisions.

Ultimately, student teachers need to be aware that developing an identity as a teacher is an emotionally, complex undertaking, which requires work. Kelchtermans' (2009) later work adds the political dimension to teaching which combines the power and interests situated within the school but impacted on by local and national issues of control and standards. He acknowledges these can also result in teachers feelings of vulnerability. It was these broader political issues which Della and Gina found concerning and difficult to work with, which resulted in the rejection of a teacher identity.

The significance of teaching philosophy, values and beliefs is highlighted by Day et al. (2005) in their research with more experienced teachers as it is closely aligned to commitment, similarly student teachers in this study emphasised the significance of these aspects. Therefore this study appears to suggest philosophy and commitment are career long issues, which should be considered in ITE. Day et al. (ibid) also comment that experienced teachers appear to have a cluster of values, which are a stable element of their teacher professional identity. This appeared to be the case with Andrew, Beth and Carrie in this study; by the end of the programme they had developed a core set of articulated beliefs which they were committed to. Additionally, like the experienced teachers in Day et al. (ibid) study Ellie, Beth and Carrie associated a commitment to teaching with working hard and setting high standards, so it appears this belief may be common in student teachers as well as more experienced professionals.

7.2 How does student teacher identity change during the programme?

Analysis indicated ITE impacted on student teacher identity development differently. There did not appear to be any clear, linear progression but an erratic process of becoming with intense periods of identity work during practicum coupled with more reflective episodes during university. Students moved between describing themselves as a teacher and not. Whilst Anspal et al. (2012) posit students work through stages moving from a focus on themselves, to teaching methods and skills, to a pupil learning focused identity. Students in this study did this more quickly, as the programme is shorter in length, and did not appear to be as concerned with subject content

knowledge but moved very quickly to a child centred teacher identity, which remained consistent. This could be due to the early years' focus of the programme where the child is central to theory and practice and where a child centred approach is embedded within programme philosophy. To explore this possible difference further between early years' student teachers and primary counterparts more research would need to be developed where subject specialist primary ITE students were involved.

Data indicated core beliefs for these students remained consistent (Roberts, 2006; Priestly et al., 2015) but were open to different levels of addition from simple development (Fran) and additions to beliefs (Beth) to transformation where initial ideas about being a teacher were markedly changed and students were aware of this and able to articulate changes in themselves. This was visible to those around them as Carrie explained; 'my parents have noticed a change'. It may lead them to question practices and live with some uncertainty about beliefs (Ellie), to a change in outlook so their identity goes beyond themselves (Andrew). Even for students who rejected a teacher identity there was a level of change, as ultimately rejection was possibly the biggest transformation possible.

All students remained on a trajectory into the profession and there was no evidence of any student achieving full membership of a CoP, therefore identity challenges will remain at the forefront of their development as a teacher during Induction. As Johnston (2016) argues it is unrealistic to expect student teachers to become more than peripheral members of a CoP with such limited

amounts of time on practicum. He argues they could be more accurately defined as 'guests' or 'visitors' (Johnston, 2010). This 'guest' status was illustrated by Della and the expectation to comply whereas, Carrie and Ellie reached a more fully acknowledged status as student teachers, though not achieving full membership, they could be more usefully described as 'sojourners' within the CoP (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b; Yandell and Turvey, 2007). This gave them more opportunities to engage in wider school life, control planning, teaching and learning both for themselves and for pupils, but without the full responsibility of being the teacher.

Although the CoP framework (Wenger, 1998) provides a useful starting point for student teachers in term of the 'modes of identification' the more recent notions of 'knowledgeability', 'expressibility' and 'accountability' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015) are less applicable given the 'guest' status students experience.

The CoP framework does not allow for student's varied experiences as pupils and how this places them in a unique position within a school workplace setting. Unlike most 'newcomers' they have long-term experience of being in classroom contexts albeit from different perspectives (pupil, volunteer, student) which means they enter any practicum CoP with ideas about how to be, act and understand (Sachs, 2005). It would be appropriate for teacher educators to engage with this more fully in preparing student teachers for initial practicum experiences, exploring initial teacher identity ideas and how they imagine they will be as a teacher. This prior experience and imagined

self means that tension and vulnerability is almost inevitable for those who have a role model or 'future self' (Hammerness et al., 2005) in mind, so student teachers need to be prepared for this challenging experience.

Based on these limited findings it is clear that during our programme teacher educators should work in more depth with student teachers, enabling them to develop their teacher identity and to prepare them for the issues they may face during their ITE journey. This needs to go beyond an emphasis on the Teachers' Standards, which denies emotionality and caring aspects of becoming, to the exposure of role models, explicit engagement with emotional aspects and ways of dealing with challenges to beliefs. Dealing with teacher identity development cannot be left until they enter the profession as they clearly grapple with this during ITE.

Unlike the Anspal et al. (2012) study the students in this research exhibited the capacity to learn and develop from problematic situations, so though Anspal et al (ibid) advocate the need for positive identity experiences, this study showed it was also possible for negative experiences to have a positive impact on identity development. Students such as Andrew and Beth, whilst they saw and had to utilise 'inauthentic practices' (Wilkins et al., 2012), noted these acted to strengthen their professional identity in that they realised this type of practice did not match their beliefs about the purpose, methods of teaching and their perception of their future teacher self. However, as Trent (2010), reporting Alsup (2006), notes where tension becomes intense and overwhelming, identity development can become blocked. This would apply to

Della's final practicum where she felt her teacher identity was in conflict with the teacher identity on offer in the context, resulting in marginalisation and rejection of a teacher identity.

Even though there was a possible pattern of identity development, from idealism to being more pupil focused, data showed this was individualised with student teachers following an individualised path of identity development. It appeared to be less simple than Anspal et al. (2012) indicate as starting points were varied. For ITE tutors this illustrates the importance of knowing student teachers, as individuals, so they can provide personalised support for teacher identity development.

Ibarra (1999) describes three steps in 'becoming' a teacher; initially by observing role models, student teachers identify potential identities. The data reported here, developed this and indicated this may have started for some students, such as Gina and Andrew, when they were a pupil. Data reported also indicated this could be a family member in the case of Ellie or it could be teachers they met during the programme, as in the cases of Beth, and Ellie. Alternatively, it could be a culmination of teachers reflected by Carrie, who had an idealised, 'possible self' working in her local village school, deeply embedded in the local community.

Secondly, Ibarra (ibid) outlines how student teachers experiment with these as provisional selves, to see if they are validated. Fran's strategy of 'copying' (Roberts, 2006) her mentor, even though she articulated no clear role model,

could be said to be this kind of experimentation. Andrew's continual focus on relationships, as his role model did, was vindicated and this became a core aspect of his identity, as did Beth's caring approach.

Thirdly, Ibarra (ibid) states student teachers use these provisional identities as benchmarks to evaluate themselves against internal and external standards, for example judging whether they 'acted' (Sachs, 2005) in a way congruent with the person they want to become. Clearly, for Beth and Andrew, inauthentic practices meant a temporary suspension of the 'possible self', whereas for Della, on a longer practicum having to adopt an identity and practices she deeply disagreed with and which did not align with her 'possible self', was a barrier to her teacher identity development. Gina rejected the possible self on offer in the wider landscape as it did not align with the teacher identity she wished to develop.

Ibarra's (1999) work implies student teachers constantly work on their teacher professional identity, therefore identity is temporal (Wenger, 1998), and defined within the context. As a continual process of becoming, there was a sense of momentum throughout the programme which began as students started the programme and developed two parallel identities; one as a student and one as a student teacher. What was evident was that initially, students focused on developing an identity as a student operating in university. They all mentioned the challenges they faced in becoming more autonomous and independent as learners in the HE context. This was the identity challenge

they had to deal with first, but beyond the first term developing a teacher identity took precedence, in their identity work on the programme.

Data suggested most of the students interviewed entered ITE with preconceived ideas of the type of teacher they wished to become. The fact they chose an early years' pathway, indicated they had a vision of a 'future self' (Hammerness et al., 2005; Hamman et al., 2013) as a teacher who works with younger children and appreciates the significance of play as a vehicle for children's learning.

The only student to enter ITE without any articulation of her teacher identity was Fran, who presented her professional teacher identity development as the most continuous process. She claimed, 'I've not changed', but had ideas confirmed, 'enhanced and developed slightly', in a relatively straightforward manner. On the programme she learnt 'how to put it *(her teacher identity)* into practice more' implying her identity was something to be used as it had been validated by the programme. Alternatively, it may be her teacher identity and beliefs remained constant (Priestley et al., 2015). However, this was difficult to verify from the data as she did not articulate any kind of teacher identity at the beginning of the programme to compare with her limited articulation towards the end. She 'claimed' an identity, which could be recognised as embedded within the programme. There was little evidence of a 'transformation' of her identity (Wenger 1998) as she presented an instrumental approach (Wilkins et al., 2012) to developing her teacher identity which denied the emotionality of becoming a teacher.

Fran's claims to remaining the same may mean she 'filtered out' content on the programme which challenged her unarticulated views of what it is to be a teacher and adopted a more functional approach; only accommodating beliefs and ideas which resonated with these views (Sternberg et al., 2014; Furlong, 2013). This inability or, unwillingness, to articulate ones ideas around a teacher identity, would make it problematic for teacher educators to engage with students such as Fran in terms of challenging beliefs and in discussing pedagogical practices. This is significant in that Sachs (2005) and Sternberg et al. (2014) indicate these beliefs guide teacher decision making.

However, even though data illustrated some student teacher identities were altered there appeared to be a core aspect of beliefs which remained consistent, giving student teachers a continuous sense of teacher identity alongside changing elements, as they progressed and developed throughout the programme. For Beth there was confirmation and development of beliefs about her teacher identity. At the end of the programme, whilst she articulated a teacher identity which is consistent with her incoming personal goals (Sexton, 2008) there was evidence of development of her ideas. She had become more certain about her beliefs and had developed an identity as a teacher with a 'backbone' who was willing to defend her beliefs and practices, more so, than when she began her identity journey. Her identity development appeared to have been a cumulative journey where she strengthened her identity, cementing and developing her original beliefs to incorporate the additional aspects of being 'creative' as a teacher, who placed 'relationships'

with children more centrally to how she operated in the classroom. While she had had her identity confirmed, she was not resistant to change.

Roberts (2006) identifies resistance as a potential problem and asserts when students have 'predispositions to act' or behave in particular ways, it can 'filter' the content of ITE. This does not appear to have been the case for Beth; she remained open to programme ideas and accommodated changes into her teacher identity and maintained her core beliefs (Gee, 2000).

For Andrew, Carrie and Ellie, there appeared to be a greater change, as they experienced a 'transformation' of their teacher identities, as Andrew noted;

> Beforehand I would have said I want to be the best teacher … but I think that's a wrong statement … it was a more selfish way of looking at teaching …I think…now… about putting the children first, their needs (semester 5).

Though he maintained his core beliefs as being a teacher who valued positive relationships with children, who attended to individual needs and had an approach which valued play as central for children's learning, his focus in being a teacher shifted from himself to children in his care. This mirrors Anspal et al. (2012) findings, where student teachers move from focusing on themselves to focusing on pupils and their progress. However, this is in contrast with Lamote and Engles (2010) research as students in this study left the programme largely confident in being a teacher.

It appeared the value Andrew placed on the significance of relationships was based on a previous teacher role model and this focus was a common thread for Andrew throughout, he frequently focused on relationships he had with

children as being significant, defining himself as a 'knight in shining armour', or advocate for children. His focus on relationships extended to colleagues and parents as he became aware of the responsibility attached to the role.

Carrie, like Beth, at the end of the programme, stated she was confident to be questioned about her practice as a teacher and that she would do what she felt best for her children. Her confidence in herself as a teacher, who placed children at the heart of her practice was evident. She developed from being a teacher who accepted practice, to one who would question and defend her beliefs. She clearly recalled she was naïve on entering the programme but stated she was more confident and ready to exit the programme, having developed her teacher identity and a passion for special educational needs. This naiveté and unrealistic initial beliefs about being a teacher, relates to both Anspal et al. (2012) and Ketchtermans' (1993) work and, similar to their findings, Carrie grew in confidence, developing a more realistic view of education as she progressed. For Carrie, her personal identity development and change in ideas resulted in her being more willing to consider her 'future self' as a professional, working away from home, which was a transformation of her original personal goal of working in her local village school.

Ellie's transformation, meant she learnt to question beliefs and practices, she noted; 'my views have changed on so many things' (semester 5), so much so she struggled to remember what her initial teacher identity involved. Unlike, the other students she appeared to be the most independent and agentic from

the beginning of the programme, and these affective relational elements led to her continual questioning and thinking.

It appeared that identity changes were influenced by the affective, emotional aspect students experienced during practicum. This linkage between Affective Relational Elements and Contextually Situated Negotiation related to the relationship between factors students carry with them and how this is reflected and worked on during practicum. Their deeply emotional journey and challenge to beliefs could be uncomfortable at times, as they were forced to confront differences in practice. Both of these themes were interrelated to the multiple identities they developed; student and student teacher, coupled with idealised role models who act as aspirational 'future selves'.

It was evident that most student teachers experienced an identity change during the programme, but this was a personalised experience which was impacted on by a number of factors which are discussed in the following section as affective relational elements, contextually situated negotiation, multiple identities and external membership requirements interact during their ITE journey (fig 4.1).

7.3 What impacts on student teacher identity development?

Izadinia (2013) outlines, how research papers analysed, suggest that further research should examine identity as a social phenomenon; this would extend to ITE provision, as noted by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), which could include student teacher identity development, as a social phenomenon during

ITE. Izadinia (2013) also, highlights the significance of trying to understand the challenges of the process of student teacher identity development in order to identify factors which contribute to the process of becoming. This research goes some way in contributing to this understanding, in that, findings presented identify the following as having a role to play in student teacher professional identity development; context, agency, boundary crossing, relationships, role models, multiple identities, expectations of others, Teachers' Standards.

7.3.1 Context

Context is identified by Beijarrd et al. (2004), who note the significance of the expectations and opportunities offered, alongside external knowledge, values and norms, and interactions with other professionals. This aligns with Wenger's (1998) CoP theoretical framework. Izadinia (2013) also highlights the significance of context and the data generated in this project confirmed this. Izadinia (ibid) also notes the significance of prior experience, in relation to engaging in the context. Ellie illustrated this as she drew on her experience of studying in HE prior to commencement of the programme to cope with the transition and this influenced her student identity, as an agentic learner. Data presented extends Izadinia's (ibid) findings to include the significance of prior and current role models, as outlined in section 7.3.6.

Findings illustrated all student teachers believed their teacher identity was developed on practicum. Their professional identity was bound with the school and university context (Correa et al., 2014); contexts which are regulated by

laws, cultures, values, duties, norms and tacit knowledge which student teachers need to develop an understanding of, and mediate through their own pedagogical beliefs and professional identity. As Lamote and Engles (2010) suggest practicum gives a more realistic view of what is involved in being a teacher, from task orientation to becoming more pupil focused (Anspal et al., 2012). In their study Lamote and Engles (2010) noted a decrease in self-efficacy, rather like Anspal et al. (ibid) and doubts about ones capacity to manage all the duties associated with being a teacher. Despite the rollercoaster of identity development, in the final year most student teachers outlined how they were confident and ready to exit the programme to enter the workplace as teachers, as Carrie noted; 'I definitely feel as though I've come to the end of my time at university … I just really want to get into … my own classroom' .

Whilst the elements identified in this study can be linked to Wenger's (1998) theoretical framework and concepts of 'engagement, imagination and alignment' there are additional aspects identified as significant. The relationship and validation of others, beyond 'old timers', such as pupils and parents has a role to play in identity development for student teachers. The unequal power relationships need to be acknowledged, as a potentially significant issue and students need to be given 'tools' to deal with this within CoPs. The impact of marginalisation and denied legitimacy, as an issue, need to be explored in ITE. Though this offers opportunities for potentially powerful learning it can also be detrimental to student teacher identity development so students need to be enabled to deal with such situations. The pressures of the

external landscape beyond the CoP, also has the potential to impact on student teacher identity, acknowledged by Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015), in terms of the notion of 'accountability' but the potential of this to become a barrier should be explored further within ITE.

7.3.2 The non-assessed context

As a result of the findings from the first year of this thesis, the programme team introduced an experiential, non-assessed practicum experience in order to allow students to develop a greater understanding of the scope of the teacher role as well as explicitly link aspects of theory and practice. The experience was two days per week, over three weeks. The format meant students had academic input during university sessions around assessment, reading and outdoor play. This was followed by input in a school setting around the same foci, with time also spent working with children in three schools to see how the schools interpreted theory and included it in practice.

All students commented on the usefulness of this, freeing them from university paperwork meant they could look more widely and critically at school practices in the three areas. Both Gina and Fran commented on how this allowed them to 'pinch' ideas, indicating prevalence for 'copying' or 'acting' (Goffman, 1959). This was in contrast to Ellie who had a strong reaction to play provision, comparing it with reading and her personal experiences, she highlighted; how it 'enlightened me to think a bit differently and a bit more widely', illustrating that this kind of experience in a school context can stimulate thinking, which perhaps, on assessed practicum can be

difficult as they focus on meeting standards and expectations. Context is also significant in that, if it is expansive (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2005) and supportive it creates a place for students to experiment with their teacher identity, as it allows them to use agency, discussed next.

7.3.3 Agency

As Day and Kington (2008) assert identity is a suitable aspect for research into teachers' lives, because it is needed for teachers to be able to pursue valued goals, which involves commitment and resilience, to manage tensions and live with contradictions, while being effective in the classroom. As they note there is a, 'dynamic relationship between identity and agency' (ibid, 2008:19). This is illustrated in the data where students in an expansive context were allowed to employ agency. This was evident for most of the students, as they were allowed to adopt and develop practices, acting on children's responses to teaching to improve learning. Andrew, was able to independently notice the interplay of theory and practice (Schepens et al., 2009), applying university taught theoretical concepts to things he observed in the classroom. He based comments about his identity, incorporating the needs of children, around Maslow's (1943) theoretical ideas of addressing basic needs in order for children to be effective learners. These beliefs became part of his identity and the knowledge he developed. This active process of identity development and 'practical knowledge building' is noted by Beijaard et al. (2004: 123), who state; 'identity formation is a process of practical knowledge-building characterized by an ongoing integration of what is individually and collectively seen as relevant to teaching.'

Sachs (2001) also notes the significance of agency as teachers constantly re-establish and negotiate their professional identity. This active construction of identity is prevalent in the teacher identity literature (Sexton, 2008; Endedijk et al., 2012) and is consistent with findings presented. For the students in this study the capacity to act and drive their own learning and development as a teacher was crucial. Considering and questioning practice is fundamental to becoming what Sachs (2001) would term an 'activist teacher'. Andrew hinted he may have been developing this type of teacher identity as he noted he was a 'knight in shining armour', willing to put children's needs first, as did Beth and Carrie who stated they were more able to stand up for what they believe is best for children.

Fran's behaviours during practicum; accepting practices, copying them and adopting a 'what works here' approach (Wilkins et al., 2012) implied limited agency. She used her capacity to act in the setting to reproduce practices and take on an offered teacher identity, causing little disruption to either herself or the setting. Unlike other students, who attempted to try different practices, she played it safe. As noted above this meant there was limited development for her, as a professional, little indication of developing an 'activist' identity and limited benefit to the CoPs she was involved in.

Ellie, clearly had an agentic approach to the development of her teacher identity, she demonstrated she questioned and considered practice in semester three where she compared her experiences as a child, with theory

and school practice. The fact she stated it was complicated and she needed to consider the issue further illustrated an agentic approach to her development. This was enhanced by her mentor who supported her target setting and provided suitable feedback and feed forward for her thus enabling her to apply this approach independently to subsequent practicum. She summarised her capacity for agency in her comments at the end of the programme where she described how she had been given 'tools' during the programme and needed to apply, and build on, them as she entered the educational work-place.

Gina's decision to opt for the non-QTS route to completion of her degree illustrated agency. It became clear that on entering the programme she had followed the expectations of others, rather than entering through her own choice, she developed an identity of a student who questioned educational policy and decided that in the current performative climate becoming a teacher was not right for her. She struggled with the demands of policy and practices which were not what she felt were best for children.

The dilemma for teacher educators is how to encourage agency when ITE is focused on compliance within the wider neo-liberal agenda of education. Additionally, being removed from the practicum context can make it difficult to judge how such questioning approaches will be received by teachers. Tutors can encourage a questioning, reflective approach in university and give students opportunities to develop these skills, then subsequently encourage application during practicum, but the context of the CoP may not value this

approach and so this practice can place students in a difficult position, if the CoP demands a more 'entrepreneurial identity' (Sachs, 2010) or a 'what works here approach' (Wilkins et al., 2012).

It is clear the notion of student teacher agency is bound with context, as outlined above, alongside, boundary crossing and relationships discussed next.

7.3.4 Boundary crossing

During the programme students can experience up to six boundary crossing experiences. This includes both assessed and non-assessed practicum one of which is organised by the student themselves. This means there is continual movement from context to context which requires a constant renegotiation of identity in relation to student expectations, expectations of the CoP and practicum requirements. As student teachers cross these boundaries they are expected to behave and act as teachers, negotiating practices, and how to 'be', 'act' and 'understand' (Sachs, 2005). It is through this 'engagement' (Wenger, 1998) students become competent as a teacher, demonstrating their teacher identity to others and receiving 'validation' of this (Gee, 2000; Jenkins, 2008; Johnston, 2016).

There was no evidence in the data of students transforming practices within CoPs, as suggested by Wenger (1998), but there was evidence of student engagement in varied practices; creating resources, developing their own ways of presenting and engaging children in learning. This illustrated all the

students involved, at some point, were trusted to be competent in developing and taking responsibility for children's learning. It was apparent most students appeared to create positive relationships with mentors, colleagues and children which, allowed for deeper engagement and learning.

Like Wenger's (1998) notion of 'engagement' in a CoP, Lamote and Engles (2010) note the importance of engagement with classroom teaching as it causes shifts in identity. This was supported by the findings which illustrated student teachers developed new values and insights during practicum, and as they became aware of the responsibility and obligations in teaching their identity shifted. Most students reflected on their naiveté at the beginning of the programme and how they had developed a more realistic view of the complexity of teaching and of their teacher identity. As Beth stated; 'I think all I pictured … was teaching… 9-3… you get into schools and realise that just isn't the case' (semester 6).

Active engagement by these student teachers demonstrated the power of the student teacher to negotiate (Wenger, 1998) their own identity, work and shape the context for learning in classroom. This capacity to act is linked to agency, internal motivation and the external context. However, student teachers may have a limited capacity for engagement depending on other aspects of their life; psychologically they can only cope with so much at once. Della provided an example of limited capacity, as she was involved in a balancing act of juggling parental identity with teacher identity. Her identity effectively 'filters' her engagement during final practicum, as she disagreed

with the situated practices she chose to marginalise herself. Smagorinsky et al. (2004) point to this notion, that at a site of conflict, student teachers can develop resistance and a sense of agency so tension during practicum can benefit students learning and identity development. However, Della's choice of resistance and subsequent marginalisation led to limited learning and the rejection of a teacher identity.

Wenger (1998) notes, that during boundary crossing the notion of 'alignment' is significant for identity development. This was an aspect Gina struggled with in terms of aligning her developing identity with the wider societal expectations of a teacher identity. She disagreed with the highly performative, accountability driven nature of education in England characterised by constant governmental changes. Both Beth and Andrew aligned their actions with context expectations, even when disagreeing with practices (Kubiak et al., 2015a). As Fenton- O'Creevy et al. (2015a) note, this short term 'provisional alignment' where they aligned their practices with those of the setting, even though they may not be committed to these, allowed them to progress through practicum. This was an effective way of negotiating the tension involved. Such 'provisional alignment' made them appear to present an expected teacher identity, whilst remaining committed to alignment of a teacher identity which valued active learning, exploration and play, rather than more passive approaches to learning.

Whilst Anspal et al. (2012) emphasise the importance of positive experiences for identity development, Sexton (2008) and Wenger (1998) both note how

'misalignment' can also have positive outcomes for student teacher identity development. Beth and Andrew illustrated this in the challenges they faced over using worksheets with young children. Beth, 'pretends' (Woodgate-Jones, 2012) through adoption of this approach but, at the same time, noted she disagreed with it, whilst Andrew tried alternative methods, more in line with his beliefs. Correa et al. (2015) note this 'dilemma to confront individually' as one which student teachers respond to differently. In this study, how Della dealt with this misalignment was in contrast to Beth and Andrew, having her beliefs disregarded and being 'expected to comply' (Wilkins et al., 2012) and 'conform' (Correa et al., 2015) to contextual practices, resulted in her partial rejection of a teacher identity.

Enabling student teachers to understand 'alignment' should be a role for ITE tutors; empowering students to connect local and global practices, their teacher identity, motivation and values. The non-assessed practicum in year two was designed to develop this understanding in an explicit manner, so they could see the theory and compare it with school practices and then, through reflection, their own position based on values and beliefs. This could become an aspect of ITE provision or alternatively on-going, non-assessed serial practicum experiences during ITE may help address this and should be a consideration during programme design.

Some CoPs may view the temporary nature of the practicum experience as peripheral to their work and not provide the welcoming context (Fuller et al., 2005; Johnston, 2010), valued by the student teachers in this study. The

temporary nature of practicum can have the potential to cause less investment from 'brokers' in the school CoP in terms of access to; learning artefacts, tacit knowledge and can influence the perceptions of 'old timers' and how they perceive their role, whether it involves supporting eventual entry into the wider educational landscape or merely supporting temporary localised membership.

These perceptions can influence the amount of support student teachers receive and the expectations placed on them, as Fuller et al. (2005) note it can be either an 'empowering' or 'disempowering' experience. As Johnston (2010, 2016) explains, such a 'disempowering' experience where student teachers are denied legitimacy or marginalised can make learning problematical. His research indicated 'conflicting pedagogic' values can cause problems in interactions between student teacher and mentor, this was confirmed by Della's final practicum experience, where the pressure to replicate teacher practices left her feeling 'disillusioned'.

A key aspect of these boundary crossing experiences are the relationships student teachers are enabled to create and become part of in the CoP, discussed next.

7.3.5 Relationships

Relationships are central to the practice of teaching because teacher identity is 'socially legitimated' (Beijaard et al., 2004) the perceptions of others and societal expectations are significant (Handley et al., 2006) and relationships

are central to the CoP framework and to developing a teacher identity (Wenger, 1998; Johnson, 2010, 2016). This links to Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner's (2015) notion of 'expert' in the field and being able to demonstrate 'knowledgeability'. The recognition of this by others is important in being able to describe oneself as a teacher.

This means relationships with mentors, class-teachers, colleagues, children, parents and their university partnership tutor monitoring practicum are important alongside relationships with the wider landscape, local, political aspects and the Teachers' Standards, which they need to engage with, to 'prove' or evidence these have been met for grading purposes. Where more, equally balanced power relations exist and control is negotiated between student teacher and mentor, enabling them to work together on evaluating learning, teaching and targets, there is scope for the development of a more secure professional identity (Johnston, 2010) as illustrated by Ellie and her mentor in her year two practicum. This relationship helped her become more agentic and able to take responsibility for her own development as a teacher.

Relationships can have a significant impact on student teacher emotional well-being and capacity to learn on practicum. There is a complex relationship between confidence, support and challenge offered (Johnston, 2010) and strong relational bonds help student teachers develop confidence and competence to do the job. Nias (1984), in her study of experienced teachers, similarly notes how harmonious teams can have a positive impact, enhancing performance. However, she acknowledges, negative experiences can lead to

the questioning of personal beliefs. Della's final practicum experience illustrated the negative impact poor relationships can have on student well-being and belief in their capacity to be a teacher. These poor relationships led to her finishing the programme, lacking self-belief in her capacity to be a teacher whereas more positive relationships for Carrie and Ellie increased their confidence and self-belief.

Smagorinsky et al. (2004) and Ibarra (1999) also identify that identity development comes through engagement with, and the reactions of, others noting how engagement can lead to relationships and experiences which mediate identity development (Beijaard et al., 2004). As Jenkins (2008:44) highlights; 'it isn't enough to send a message about identity: that message must be accepted by significant others before an identity can be said to be 'taken on''. They employ 'impression management strategies' (Goffman, 1959; Nias, 1984) which link to Sachs's (2005) notion of 'acting' in the role of the teacher; dressing like a teacher, doing teacher tasks. This is illustrated by, Gina who captured her approach to developing a teacher identity when she consistently referred to it as 'an acting job' and Della who outlined the significance of doing planning, in year one, as this made her feel like a teacher. It was evident these students adopted an 'adaptation repertory' (Ibarra, 1999) utilising suitable ways of behaving and practices in certain situations, identifying what worked in the setting, based on their observations. This may be best illustrated by Fran and the development of her professional identity.

Student teachers in this study reported they valued validation from school colleagues but they also commented on the significance of peer relationships and relationships with pupils and parents. Andrew commented on this when he outlined the significance of children referring to him as 'Sir'. Additionally, Andrew and Beth both commented on the significance of 'belonging' to the early years QTS group within university. Beth explained; 'I think being in the early years group … was really nice because a lot of us believed in the same things' (semester 6). Della received validation of her teacher identity from a peer, which she appeared to find significant. Gina received validation for her teacher identity from parents. These notions of 'belonging' to groups and having secure relationships with all involved in their ITE are traceable through the comments students made. Secure relationships allowed for risk taking, questioning of ideas and experiences as well as for identity development.

Carrie who, in year two, was heavily invested in and had a long-standing relationship with the local context, found the need for validation of her identity impacted on her drive to do well on practicum. Realising her goal of teaching in her local school meant she found the experience emotional but also one which allowed her access to the wider responsibilities of being a teacher. She engaged with out of school activities and met with parents, opportunities which were not available for other students during the practicum. This indicated a strong reciprocal relationship between her and the school, allowing her to flourish as a teacher and develop her identity.

With regard to the significance of relationships in developing a teacher identity, Yuan and Lee (2016) in their research, comment on how unequal power relations during practicum, leaves student teachers open to negative emotions. This was evident in some individual student journeys. For example, Andrew, discussed how he felt 'crushed', following feedback on a poor lesson. As Ibarra (1999) highlights relationships and feedback help students to adjust their teacher identity, so it is important for mentors to consider how feedback is relayed to the student teacher. Beth and Gina both commented on the significance of, the way feedback was given, within student-mentor relationships, offering the 'right kind of support' (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2015b).

Unequal power relations were evident in Della's experience where she became 'disheartened'. After having a strong 'imagined identity' (Wenger, 1998) of being 'outstanding' in relation to the Teachers' Standards (2011b) her practicum experience failed to meet her imagined expectations and resulted in disillusionment. She noted that within the CoP, 'whatever I did wasn't good enough'. This meant she felt vulnerable (Kelchtermans, 2009) and questioned whether becoming a teacher was 'worth it?'

Trent (2013), like Johnston (2010), in his study also noted relationships as central to the development of a student teacher identity. He too pointed to the power aspect as it could limit the amount of agency a student could employ in a practicum context. Fewer opportunities for students to exercise decision-making and negotiation of teaching and learning, led to increased

marginalisation and questioning commitment of becoming a teacher. Della's experience mirrored this and highlighted that in ITE there is a need to consider social relationships in school can be problematic so students need skills to work in these difficult situations especially as identity work is an essential aspect of the practicum experience, where student teachers try to position themselves as a particular kind of teacher (Trent, 2013).

This can be even more problematic if the identity offered by the programme conflicts with the identity on offer during practicum, as illustrated by Beth and Andrew's experiences of contexts where, there was an emphasis on young children working formally, which is in contrast to programme views. In comparison, Carrie and Ellie both 'thrive where they fit in' (Wilkins et al., 2012). They developed positive relationships with teachers and communities and there was a sense of them becoming accepted as teachers within their school cultures.

Yuan and Lee (2015) in their study of three pre-service teachers in China also comment on the significance of relationships, identifying relationships with mentors, colleagues and pupils as most significant. The student, mentor relationship is instrumental for students in developing agency and relationships with colleagues help to 'author' the student as a teacher within the CoP (Rodgers and Scott, 2008). This was evident where Andrew and Carrie discussed relationships with both wider school based staff and teaching assistants they were working with. Ellie's relationship with her mentor, in year two, was particularly significant in that she received support

with teaching which appeared to match her stage of development as a teacher. Alongside this was the mentor's ability to engage with target setting with her, scaffolding the process of grading and self-assessment which is crucial if students are to take control of their development as a teacher.

For some student teachers relationships also related to their mentors or class teachers as 'role models', while for others role models came from family members or previous teachers, these are addressed in the following section.

7.3.6 Role models

Findings generated indicated relationships with role models, both current and prior to beginning ITE, were significant. Ellie met two role models during the programme. In year two she benefitted from having support from a mentor role model who helped her focus on her development in the Teachers' Standards scaffolding this process, so she became more able to monitor and track her development independently through the remainder of the programme. Additionally, in her final year, she was based with a teacher of similar age, providing her with another strong role model of how she could be. She also drew on another significant personal role model; a family member, who undertook the same programme, who she aspired to be like; a possible 'future self'. These role models appeared important, as they impacted on how students pictured themselves as future teachers, giving them an identity to aim for.

These ideas around the significance of teacher role models, though mentioned in the literature (Ibarra 1999; Lamote and Engles, 2010; Izadinia 2013), but not discussed or researched in detail appear significant for a number of the students involved and would benefit from exploration during ITE. Gina, though she eventually rejected becoming a teacher, had two strong roles models of teachers, evident in her apprenticeship as a pupil (Lortie, 1975). They were; 'amazing' and had a 'relationship' and 'rapport' with pupils, she valued. They gave her clear ideas about how she would prefer to 'act' as a teacher and the type of relationships she wished to develop with her pupils. However, she recognised in the current neo-liberal climate, she struggled to meet these personal aspirations and did not see such dynamic teachers during practicum.

Beth also came into contact with two teachers who acted as role models. One was a teacher she was placed with in year one where she identified with his ethic of care and consideration for children. This seemed to resonate with her personal 'moral purpose' and gave her the belief that this was an appropriate element to have as part of her teacher identity. The other teacher role model was during her final practicum where her mentor was a young teacher who, like Ellie, provided a sense of a vision of a teacher Beth could become (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2011). It appeared these young teacher role models acted as concrete examples of the success students undertaking ITE can have; the type of teacher it is possible to become.

Andrew had a previous teacher as a role model, who always had positive relationships with pupils he taught. Andrew described how he responded and how he aimed to be like him. This resulted in his teacher identity having a strong, core, relational aspect which remained constant throughout the programme.

Della and Fran had no clear role models, either before or, during the programme. Della seemed to have an idealised notion (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2011) that because she was older, had children, and had had a professional role before, becoming a teacher would be relatively straightforward. Fran had no starting role model and though she copied from her teacher in her year one practicum, this was not significant, as she adopted this strategy throughout. There was no evidence for either Della or Fran that role models were significant.

As some students mention role models as significant this research indicates this is an area for discussion with student teachers during ITE. These role models need to be surfaced and explored in terms of their impact on the individual as well as the impact on the wider group of pupils. It is here this research differs from other contemporary research in the field and would be worthy of further exploration in other ITE programmes. These role models could act as examples of teachers to be critiqued during the programme, comparing their ways of 'acting' and 'being' and the impact of this on pupils.

7.3.7 Multiple identities

What was clear from the data was that student teachers bring with them and develop different multiple identities during the programme. They may be sons, daughters, parents, co-workers, as well as early years' student teachers. As Wenger (1998) highlights membership of a CoP during practicum is only part of their identity, a nexus of multi-membership is evident and students have to reconcile these into a single identity. Della commented; 'I am who I am', recognising any teacher identity needed to 'fit' into her personal identity. Her resulting conflict during final practicum where her parent and teacher identities could not be reconciled resulted in a partial rejection of a teacher identity.

Other students such as Gina and Ellie also noted this link between the personal and professional and the fact these came together for them in being a teacher (Nias, 1984); this made being a teacher difficult to separate from who they were as a person. However, Fran did not find this an issue; she appeared to be able to separate out herself as a teacher from being who she was. She perceived her teacher identity as something to be 'used' when teaching, implying it was separate from her personal identity.

Carrie, on the other hand, described how the programme not only impacted on her professional identity, which 'blossomed' but that there was an impact on her personal identity that family members noticed as they commented she had 'changed' as a person. Additionally, for Carrie her identity as an individual invested in the community, placed pressure on her during her second year

practicum because she had a sense of responsibility to the people in the local context.

This reflects the research of Day and Kington (2008) with experienced teachers as they noted that teachers in their study constantly worked on three competing identities to form a 'composite' identity. Firstly the professional teacher identity and what it means to be a good teacher. Secondly, a socially located identity in a specific school and context, for students in this study, this would be a student on the early years programme. Thirdly, the personal identity located in life outside school, linked to family and social roles such as mother and wife, in the case of Della, for example. Day and Kington (ibid) found that teachers can experience tension within and between these three competing identities, as in Della's case the challenges between the personal identity and professional identity caused her tension. Whereas for Carrie, the synchronicity between her professional, social and personal identity during her year two practicum resulted in a positive impact on her developing teacher identity. She benefitted from this local practicum as it gave her confidence and confirmed her teacher identity as being relevant and suited to the context.

Student teachers in this study worked on their identities throughout the programme initially focusing on developing a student identity as they made the transition into university. This involved negotiation, working out expectations, relationships within the group and their status within the faculty and the wider educational landscape. Their main focus during the rest of the programme was their professional teacher identity situated in practicum

settings. For some they brought elements of themselves and their 'personal identity' to their practice. Others such as Fran and Gina appeared rather more detached from including any personal aspect into a professional identity. Gina may have adopted this approach as she continually questioned whether she wanted to become a teacher, while Fran may have taken on professional identities offered by settings, in order to achieve 'validation' as a teacher.

Analysis appeared to indicate students had different multiple identities as starting positions, for example, Carrie was a Rainbows leader working with young children in a community group, shop worker, daughter, as well as student teacher and Della was an ex-professional, mother, daughter and student teacher. These identities alongside the different experiences during programme, meant they were engaged in constant identity negotiation, transferring an aspect of one to another where there was compatibility. Additionally, these current identities were also in play with past identities, as pupils, and with the future-self identities of the teacher the student teachers aspired to be. This created a complex picture of identity development which Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015: 24) refer to as 'quite a dance of the self'.

However, while this process of becoming a teacher remained ongoing, it was nevertheless impacted on by aspects outside the control and direct influence of student teachers. These external expectations are addressed below as there was evidence they impacted on student teacher identity development.

7.3.8 Externally mediated requirements.

Teachers operate in a heavily regulated educational landscape, dominated by a neo-liberal, accountability and performativity agenda. This means student teachers are expected to conform and achieve progress in relation to the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011b) which describe the role, practices and values a teacher is expected to exhibit throughout their career. As Yandell and Turvey (2007) note, they provide a conceptualisation of a teacher's professional identity. As such, it can be said Teachers' Standards form an aspect of a teacher's identity which is introduced during ITE as a core part of the university paperwork used during practicum to judge and grade the performance of the student as a teacher; they are a central aspect of the practicum requirements. This means student teachers need to mediate these external requirements with their own beliefs about themselves as a teacher.

Therefore, it would be logical to expect that these are central to developing a teacher identity for the student teacher however, data showed that how the students in this study regarded these differed. While they all accepted the Teachers' Standards as un-problematical and agreed standards were necessary, as they provided a 'framework' (Ellie, semester 5), or as Sachs (2001) would term 'standardization' the attention student teachers gave them differed from; explicitly using them for development purposes, as Ellie and Carrie did, to summative 'ticky boxes' described by Gina and Fran.

Ellie as the student who articulated her engagement with the standards most, felt that because 'you're working towards them' it 'affects how you're working

which affects how you are' (semester 6). This centrality of the standards for her may be attributed to focused mentoring support in year two where she was supported in using the standards to evaluate, review progress and set targets by her mentor. Carrie also experienced supportive use of the standards in year two and was able to use them for developmental target setting.

However, from the evidence presented, some students such as Fran saw them as a tick box (semester 5). For her they were peripheral, like Della and Gina, who described them as 'hoops to jump through to be defined as a teacher' (Gina, semester 5) implying they had minimal impact on her identity development. Andrew initially described them as a 'barrier' and that he 'did lessons to get the standards' (semester 4) however, he moved to a more confident, integrated approach where he realised they were integral to good classroom practice and were developmental 'stepping stones'. On the other hand, Beth described them as being 'tucked away', almost an unconscious aspect of her teaching as they were 'common sense' (semester 6) aspects of being a teacher.

It was evident each student engaged differently with these canonical expectations but they all understood the standards 'counted' as a tool for making judgements about them as a teacher and how effectively they had 'authored' (Rodgers and Scott, 2008) themselves as a teacher within the particular CoP. They acknowledged standards created pressure to perform in

a certain way to achieve the QTS 'badge' but this was what should be expected of teachers.

This aspect of the research findings contribute to understanding how the Teachers' Standards contribute to identity development and it was evident that all students could benefit from supportive, structured mentoring around how to use the Teachers' Standards as a developmental tool, as opposed to a summative, judgemental tool. It was apparent that Della could have benefitted from this focused support as she claimed though she knew what her developmental targets were, she was less clear about how to achieve them.

This difference in emphasis in using the standards indicated student teachers already have ideas about a teacher identity (Wilkins et al., 2012; Lamote and Engels, 2010; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009) when they enter ITE, built on previous experiences and 'once they have actual access to the practice, they soon find out what counts' (Wenger, 1998:156). In interactions within the CoP they began to discover the local interpretation and expectations (Beijaard et al., 2004) and how their teacher identity 'fitted' within local practices. For those student teachers who were supported by teachers who focus on standards, there appeared to be a greater development of personal agency and control over reviewing their own performance and learning whereas, for student teachers who did not receive this type of focused support intuition appeared to guide their decision making and practice.

As well as these external canonical expectations and expectations of colleagues within CoPs, student teachers also highlighted the pressure from expectations of those around them, such as family members. Andrew, in particular felt this, he noted his mother had high expectations for him which was an additional pressure. Carrie also noted the pressure of having a local practicum in a context she was already invested in and commented on the pressure to 'impress'. However, she explained despite this she; 'developed a lot more. Not just as a teacher, as a person as well.' This illustrated the significance of this practicum for her identity development as it brought her 'professional', 'social' and 'personal' identities together, as noted by Day and Kington (2008).

Given developing a teacher identity is a socially situated, lived experience and there are different approaches to using the Teachers' Standards during practicum, within ITE there should be further focus on discussing the standards with student teachers, moving beyond target setting, so they understand what they mean in practice and how they relate to their developing identity as a teacher. These could be related to role models and future selves to begin to spotlight teacher identity as an aspect of thought and consideration within ITE.

7.3.9 Summary

It is evident there are a number of complex factors which impact on the development of a student teacher's identity development, as illustrated by figure 4.1 and that working with these factors is an ongoing, personalised

undertaking. Students have to bring together elements from their past; beliefs, values, role models, with their present, contextually situated experiences; external expectations, multiple identities, current role models and their future aspirations of the teacher they wish to become. This emotional trajectory of identity development is impacted on by their personal agency and relationships created with people during the programme.

7.4 To what extent do student teachers develop their teacher identity during their initial teacher education programme?

Encounters with others and experiences on the programme impact on who students are and it is clear from the findings presented that most student teachers did develop their teacher identity during ITE. As Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015: 19) note;

> As a trajectory through the social landscape, learning is not merely the acquisition of knowledge. It is the becoming of a person who inhabits the landscape with an identity whose dynamic construction reflects our trajectory through that landscape.

This emerging teacher identity will be continually worked on and developed as students enter and progress within the profession (Day et al., 2006a). There was evidence of a gradual 'becoming' as student's professional identity was either; transformed, consolidated or rejected.

7.4.1 Transformation

For some students; Andrew, Carrie and Ellie, it appeared their initial teacher identity was transformed. They demonstrated a clearly articulated change in identity, as ideas, beliefs, ways of being, and behaving altered. As Sachs

(2005) highlights, their identities have changed in that they have changed their ideas around 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand'. Though they are not aiming for acceptance into a particular CoP during the programme through their legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991) in a number of varied CoPs their identities were transformed so they were recognisable as teachers in the wider educational landscape of practice. These findings reject both Roberts (2006) and Priestley et al. (2015) premise that ITE has little effect on student teachers, as data illustrated there are identifiable differences in their identities as they exited the programme.

7.4.2 Consolidation + development

For other students such as Beth, who consistently described herself as an 'early years teacher', there was consolidation of her teacher identity in that her core beliefs remained intact but she widened her conception of her teacher identity and included elements of being a 'creative' teacher who bases her teaching on strong 'relationships' with children. This appears to align with Gee's (2000) ideas a round having a core set of beliefs which remained constant. She appeared to have strengthened her beliefs and was willing to stand up for, and defend these, having developed a 'backbone'. This illustrated she developed confidence in her teacher identity, building on, and developing initial ideas.

7.4.3 Consolidation + confirmation

For Fran there appeared to be no impact on her incoming teacher identity, she claimed not to have changed, having had her beliefs strengthened and

confirmed. She maintained a teacher identity focused on a child centred approach. As discussed above this may, or may not be the case, as she may have adopted a programme offered identity.

7.4.4 Partial rejection

It appeared the ITE experience resulted in a partial rejection of a teacher identity for Della, at least in the short term, as she exited the programme. The clash of beliefs about children's learning coupled with pressures of balancing a parental identity with a teacher identity and the performativity agenda resulted in her decision to abandon being a teacher even though she achieved the qualification of QTS. She recognised the amount of personal investment a teacher identity required and felt this was something she could not commit to as a parent of young children. These issues are evident in Nias' (1984: 273) research with experienced teachers where she notes they abandoned teaching 'because the job absorbed too much of themselves'. As Day and Kington (2008) explain the constant need to manage identity is demanding, and Della was unable to manage the tension and contradictions between her vision of her professional identity and the reality of the work-place.

7.4.5 Full rejection

Gina was the only student teacher within this cohort to exit having decided to graduate without QTS, though this was a recognisable occurrence on the programme. She found defining herself as a teacher difficult and rejected the label parents assigned to her as early as year one. She struggled with the

highly accountable, performative nature of the educational landscape and like Della, found this did not meet her beliefs about being a teacher. The fact it became clear she entered the programme because this was what was expected of her by others, may also have been a contributory factor in her final rejection of being a teacher, as she may not have had the deep commitment required to develop a strong sense of teacher identity (Day et al., 2005).

It appeared both student teachers who rejected the teacher label found the political dimension of teaching difficult to reconcile with their beliefs. These external power and control elements which impact on CoPs are underplayed by Wenger (1998) but can cause discomfort for student teachers in terms of the moral dimension of teaching and what is best for pupils. Clearly these 'political' and 'moral' dimensions (Kelchtermans, 2009) have an effect on student teachers' developing identities in that how they make sense of, and mediate these issues, impacts on their developing identities.

As Day et al. (2005) outline, teaching in the twenty-first century involves performative agendas and competency where teachers are accountable to a range of stakeholders which means teaching, in many ways, is an unstable profession demanding constant change and development of teachers and their identities. Therefore student teachers entering the profession need to have engaged with some initial identity work during their ITE programme so they have a more certain sense of self and what is important to them, in order to be able to cope with the demands, which will be placed upon them, as they

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enter their Induction Year. Therefore this engagement with identity development needs to be considered during programme design.

7.5 Recommendations for ITE: develop a pedagogical approach to student teacher identity development

This section outlines recommendations for areas of ITE provision including; programme design, partnership working, school-based programmes, national policy implications and international implications.

7.5.1 Programme design

Whilst it is clear there is potential for an ITE programme to impact on student teacher identity development, the factors impacting on this, as outlined above, can have different degrees of impact for individual students. What is evident is that student teachers have different experiences, life histories, expectations and operate in different contexts during the programme. Beijaard et al. (2004) highlight the importance of student's own theories and beginning with personal history and how students have been shaped by it, the research reported would add the significance of including, specific teacher role models, and why they were significant, linking these to student aspirations of a future self so linking past and future. Through continual revisiting of these, analysis, critique, and examination with current experiences may be helpful. Clearly given the findings reported and current research teacher identity development is worthy of exploration in ITE, as it has potential to impact on student teachers and future commitment, motivation and retention (Day et al., 2005; 2006a).

In a programme in which time is short (Twiselton, 2017), it would be appropriate for ITE programmes to examine the number of times student teachers cross boundaries into new contexts. Continual serial school experience may be beneficial where students spend one /two days per week in school alongside their university experience with their assessed period of practicum being situated in these school settings. For students engaged on our programme this would reduce the boundary crossing experiences so reducing the constant feeling of 'starting again'.

Such non-assessed experiences appear to support identity development, as it frees student teachers from a focus on university paperwork and gives them the space to observe, analyse and think about practice in relation to theory. This is a more outward view, so rather than focusing on themselves as a teacher the focus becomes the impact of practices on children. Discussion triads can be a useful strategy for discussing and analysing what they have 'noticed' (Mason, 2002) and linking this to aspects of their teacher identity.

It is evident ITE programmes should consider how they prepare students for this coming together of their internal attributes alongside the external world they seek to enter as they develop their teacher identities (fig 4.1). Therefore, a pedagogy of becoming a teacher would be worthy of consideration by programme teams and may include the following, from table 7.5.1, alongside an annual, constant, non-assessed serial practicum and regular assessed school practicum experience.

	Activity
Year 1 Semester 1 Serial practicum school 1	Support for student teachers in becoming an independent student learner. Examine what it means to be a teacher. Expose and examine role models, beliefs and values. The teacher as a role model linked to Teachers Standards. Develop team-working skills and relationship building – communication, negotiation. Introduce the idea of 'noticing' during serial practicum and examination of aspects of practice/incidents, interplay of theory and practice.
Semester 2 Assessed practicum school 1	Explore student's view of themselves as a teacher and the teacher they wish to become Consider the professional aspects of the Teachers' Standards and how this works in practice. Revisit role models, beliefs and values and challenges they faced during practicum. Unpick aspects students 'noticed' during practicum in discussion triads.
Year 2 Semester 3 Serial practicum school	Explore the breadth of the teacher role, associated challenges and ways of dealing with these. Further noticing and the interplay of theory and

2	practice.
Semester 4 Assessed practicum school 2	Return to personal beliefs about being a teacher and examine how these may work in practice. Reflection on critical episodes, ways of behaving and alternative courses of action. Comparison of how different teachers act. Further exploration of the Teachers' Standards, including a critique of aspects which may be omitted.
Year 3 Semester 5 Serial practicum school 3	Examine societal expectations of being a teacher. Dealing with responsibility and maintaining a life/work balance. Revisit values and beliefs; explore changes, developments and how to overcome challenges.
Semester 6 Assessed practicum school 3	Consideration of the type of teacher they wish to become during final practicum alongside a definition of their teacher self. Explicit identification of personal strengths and areas for development leading into becoming an NQT. Explore the teacher they aim to become. Wider expectations of being an NQT.

Table 7.5.1 Suggested activities to develop pedagogy of becoming a teacher.

It is clear any ITE programme needs to work with student values and beliefs about what it is to be a teacher and expose deeply held ideas about becoming a teacher. The idea of teacher role models need to be explicitly explored and critiqued during ITE as they appear to provide an aspirational self for students. ITE should consider how students can be supported in developing skills and attitudes in relation to working with others, clear communication alongside the ability to negotiate and operate in a corporate manner.

Maintaining a personal university tutor who develops an on-going relationship with an individual student is important in that it is within this relationship issues, beliefs, challenges and incidents can be discussed in a 'safe' environment. In terms of our programme it would be good practice for the personal tutor to visit the student teacher during their experience in school to understand more deeply how they act and behave as a teacher within the school context. It is within a secure relationship where students are more likely to share deeply held beliefs and ideas about the type of teacher they aspire to be. The development of the personal tutor as the 'boundary broker' would allow support for student teachers in the analysis of situations, providing alternative viewpoints and drawing theory and practice together. This would develop deeper learning from boundary encounters and may help mitigate negative practicum experiences.

7.5.2 Partnership working

Further school mentor development is needed in terms of ensuring there is 'scaffolded' support for student's teacher identity development. Additionally,

year 2 seems to be a significant place for the use of the Teacher's Standards and developing student understanding of how these work in practice and how they can utilise these as a key driver for their development as a teacher. This requires further commitment from school-based mentors and a willingness to have their own identity, beliefs and values challenged. However, if students are in a school CoP for a whole year this may be a more seamless process in terms of defining themselves as a teacher and may encourage school settings to enable students to become more then a peripheral CoP member thus providing more opportunities for 'knowledgeability, expressibility and accountability' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015).

Continuous serial school experience would need additional mentor support in terms of ensuring students were enabled to observe a range of practices, age phases and were supported through dialogue to discuss their developing ideas around effective teaching and their personal beliefs and values. This would be a greater commitment than currently exists in terms of traditional undergraduate programmes and may demand further consideration for school partnership arrangements, as school partners would need a deeper understanding of the university based input in order to provide suitable, consistent support for student teachers.

7.5.3 School-based programmes

Implications for school-based programmes include a recommendation that provision would need to include some examination of student beliefs about their teacher identity and challenges to this on a regular basis. This would

need support from a member of staff skilled in discussing potentially difficult dilemmas and in supporting the development of strategies for coping with challenges to beliefs and values.

School-based students are in an advantageous position in that they are school based and therefore have access to tacit knowledge and daily practice, like Wenger's (1998) original 'newcomers'. However, the challenge in these situations will be around how these taken for granted practices can be made explicit and discussed with students as they begin to question what they observe. This needs to go beyond a simple replication of teacher practice to enabling students to develop their own unique teacher identity where they are able to remain true to values and beliefs and analyse evidence, make judgements, justify and implement approaches. Such school settings would need to be willing to allow this experimentation and recognise there is potential learning and development for them as the 'newcomers' move to becoming a more core member of the CoP.

7.5.4 National policy implications

In terms of national implications, there is an on-going need for highly qualified and reflective professionals to work with our youngest children as this has a long lasting impact on pupil outcomes (Sylva et al., 2004; Taggart et al., 2015). The data reported indicates these students had deep concerns regarding the continual testing regime and accountability aspects of current provision and the impact this had on practice. This was prevalent especially where young children were working formally when early years research,

literature and pedagogy (Siraj-Blatchford and Sylva, 2004; Barblett et al., 2016; EYFS, 2017) outlines a more suitable approach is through play and following children's interests supported by highly skilled professionals who understand child development and learning.

Additionally, the Teachers' Standards (2011) would benefit from further revision to include an aspect around the importance of developing a recognisable teacher identity which goes beyond observable behaviours. This then has implications both for ITE and for the wider profession as this would be integral to becoming and being a teacher. This means the Ofsted inspection requirements for ITE would need to be reviewed to include opportunities for students to work on developing their teacher identity in a carefully planned manner.

7.5.5 International implications

This notion of teacher identity development is of international concern and much of the research cited is from international studies (Beijaard et al., 2004; Schepens et al., 2009; Anspal et al., 2012; Correa et al., 2014). Teacher identity is a relevant area for attention by government and ITE providers internationally because of the implications it has for longer term retention and teacher well-being (Day et al., 2005). A number of international colleagues are increasingly concerned about the significance of teacher identity as a factor within the development of both pre-service teachers and more experienced practitioners (Douglas, 2018; Hyry-Beihammer, 2018; Virta, 2018) due to the

impact this has on decision making within the classroom (Van Kan et al., 2010).

This study provides an illustration of early years' student teacher identity development in England but contributes to consideration within this wider international agenda with further research needed to ascertain how nursery and kindergarten pre-service teachers in other national contexts may experience similar tensions. Increasingly as governments move to applying external standards for judgements of teacher competence this research points to the significance of considering more affective elements which impact on teacher identity and the personal investment both students and teachers make in developing their professional identity.

7.6 Summary

The value of this research is that it builds on previous research and identifies the links between the factors which impact on student teacher identity development proposing an outline for programme teams to consider during ITE course development. Where previous research has tended to focus on one aspect which impacts on teacher identity development, the findings presented illustrate how, for student teachers, these act together during their undergraduate ITE experience indicating the need for this to be an aspect of an undergraduate ITE programme if we are to enable future teachers to enter the profession with a strong sense of who they are as a teacher.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

This illustrative study identified that developing a teacher identity begins during ITE and aspects of identity development which impact on post-graduate student teachers (Sexton, 2008; Furlong, 2013; Johnston, 2016), newly qualified teachers identity (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2011; Wilkins et al, 2012) and experienced teachers (Day et al., 2005; Kelchtermans, 2009) are evident in the trajectories of these undergraduate students. Developing their teacher identity is a significant part of their work on the programme. Therefore this should be considered as a necessary part of any undergraduate ITE programme.

The study identified how development of identity, by the student teachers, involved internal factors; 'affective relational elements' and 'multiple identities' and how these interacted with external factors; 'contextually situated negotiation' and 'external membership requirements'. The interaction of these factors and trajectories has been shown to be strongly influenced by dimensions of; 'agency', boundary-crossing', relationships', expectations of others' and 'teaching standards'.

Figure 4.1 illustrates how these factors connect and therefore provides a starting point for discussion for undergraduate programme teams in terms of how they can successfully raise awareness of these issues with student teachers during ITE. A suggested progression has been included which would be worthy of further consideration or small scale pilot study within programmes to ascertain whether this enables student teachers to more

explicitly engage with their teacher identity development, so empowering them to cope with the tensions and dilemmas faced during their ITE.

This longitudinal study has contributed to an understanding of the trajectories of students' teacher identity development. It has identified three broad categories of 'transformation', 'consolidation' or 'rejection' with pathways within consolidation and rejection that have serious implications for student outcomes and quality of teachers gaining qualification to practice. Therefore, the findings have considerable implications for the design and facilitation of initial teacher education programmes. A much more rigorous and research-informed approach to supporting teacher identity development is required in many teacher education programmes.

As this research has provided an illustrative example of early years' student teacher identity development further exploration of teacher identity development would be worthwhile in our primary undergraduate programmes to make comparisons and ascertain whether primary trainees experience similar issues and whether the elements identified are similar given the different age phase and subject foci. It would be useful to ascertain whether there were similar outcomes in terms of transformation, consolidation and rejection of a teacher identity.

Wenger's CoP framework provided a useful framework for consideration of identity development, however, the limited time spent on practicum means there is limited opportunity for students to impact on CoPs and to develop

'expressibility', 'knowledgeability' and 'accountability' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015) so during ITE the focus should be on the 'modes of identification' as these would provide useful theoretical starting points for students to consider their teacher identity development.

However, if serial practicum were to be included as a consistent aspect of ITE provision there may be more opportunities to develop 'expressibility', 'knowledgeability' and 'accountability' (ibid) as settings may feel a greater sense of responsibility for trainees and allow them more access to artefacts and opportunities. Additionally, if the CoP framework were to be used during ITE there would need to be some development to account for the impact of past role models and the deep emotionality associated with this process of becoming.

As it is apparent there are links with issues practising teachers face regarding their identity development these should be surfaced with student teachers to prepare them for this career long endeavour. Therefore, there is a moral need for programme staff to enable student teachers to develop strategies for dealing with challenges to beliefs and values and the tensions this can cause. Student teachers need to be enabled to make sense of the interplay of academic theory and ideas and work-based practices as they journey through multiple contexts of practice. They need to be made aware of the disjuncture of theory and practice and the emotional impact this can have on them (Johnston 2016). ITE tutors should be enabled to support students through this emotional process of 'becoming', going beyond progress against targets

to a deeper examination of tensions, incidents, role models, aspirations towards a future self in relation to educational theory and research on a regular basis.

This foregrounding of identity, as a key element of a QTS programme, would allow students to discuss particular issues in a 'safe' environment where they feel they belong and where relationships are more permanent. Acknowledging students have ideas about the type of professional identity they wish to develop and what this is based on, would give a basis for reflection and discussion of key issues within contemporary education and the dilemmas this can pose for their professional teacher identity. Surfacing some of these ideas around teacher identity could generate useful discussions around the nature of being a teacher in the twenty-first century and, how alignment with landscape wide issues, can impact on identity as a professional. If these discussions happen during ITE, it may be that there is less of a 'reality shock' (Veenman, 1984 cited in Correa et al., 2015) as they enter the profession as a qualified teacher. In the longer term this may lead to increased retention within the profession.

It is evident developing a professional teacher identity is a life-long emotional and philosophical undertaking, which brings together beliefs, values, practice and context. It starts from before students enter university, as they develop ideas about what it means to be a teacher from; experience as a pupil, observing teachers, identifying with role models, and throughout their ITE programme (Johnston, 2010; Yuan and Lee, 2016). During the programme

they meet theory and experience 'being', 'doing' and 'understanding' (Sachs, 2005), progressing into induction (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2011; Wilkins et al., 2012) and further throughout their career (Nias, 1984, 1996; Day et al., 2005; Kelchtermans, 1996, 2009). It is a continuous journey of development and redevelopment, responsive to context but one in which the student teacher, and later, teacher stays true to their core values and beliefs of what it is to be a teacher.

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