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Research paper 3

What does it mean to be a teacher?

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Abstract

This paper examines some of the issues concerning my key research question – 'what does it mean to be a teacher?'

The first part of the paper comprises my proposal for a thesis where the intersecting factors and discourses which are relevant to an understanding of the development of teacher identity, will be examined. The links between personal and professional identity, viewed through the lenses of narrative and reflection, will also be considered.

A case study methodology and a phenomenological approach, focusing on the lived realities of three teachers' lives, will be used. To inform the case study, a number of methods will be used, including narrative elicitation techniques such as timelines and concept maps; a variety of forms of observation; and the analysis of policy documents and other texts. Analytic techniques are likely to include thematic analysis, double hermeneutic analysis, semiotic analysis and textual analysis.

I also outline the literatures in number of epistemic fields relating to professional identity in teachers which will be examined in my thesis. These include identity, professionalism, narrative and reflective practice.

In the second part of the paper, I report on pilot work which investigated the relationship between espoused and performative identity in one teacher in the post-compulsory sector. Thematic analysis and double hermeneutic analysis were used to interpret discussions between the teacher-participant and myself which were based on significant events observed in a taught lesson and a tutorial session. Based on this work, my ideas concerning the links between reflection, narrative and the development of personal and professional identity first started to take shape.

PART 1: Thesis proposal

Key question and proposed title

My key question and hence the proposed title of my work is:

What does it mean to be a teacher? In particular, and more specifically, I am

concerned with issues relating to why teachers think, feel and do as they do.

Background and rationale

My work will engage with the complex symbiotic relationships between

teachers' thinking, reflecting, espousing and doing. These are all aspects

which are inherent in the development of teacher professional identities.

Teacher identities will be examined through teachers' enactment of teaching

in the classroom - classroom practice- and as it is espoused; these aspects of

identity will be explored through the twin lenses of narrative and reflection on

practice. The work will investigate the possible relationships between a variety

of factors, discourses and processes that mediate and impact on the

development of professional identity. In using the term 'identity' I have drawn

on the work of Bauman (e.g. 2004), and I am referring to a fluid way of

thinking about and bringing together ideas about who we are and what we do

in situated contexts.   This will be discussed in more depth later on.

I intend to work with a small purposive sample of teachers in the secondary

and post-compulsory sectors in England, who have a variety of approaches to

teaching and learning, a range of personal and professional backgrounds, and differing amounts and levels of experience within the profession.

Currency and importance

This work is important because the negotiation of identity and the complex links between thinking, doing and acting for teachers have not so far been clearly problematized and yet in many ways they play a central role in the formulation of key ideas about the nature of teaching, and in policy formulation. The context in which we live and work as teachers and educators is characterized by Bauman's term 'liquid modernity' (Bauman, 2000). Modern life has as key features fluidly and dynamically intersecting fields, contexts and environments; and it is in this fluid context that centrality of identity as a concept is increasingly foregrounded. Those of us who work in and are concerned about education must acknowledge this. We must engage (in what by definition must be sophisticated ways) with what Edwards and Daniels (2012) call 'complex problems, which change as they are being worked on' (Edwards and Daniels, 2012, p.41).   If we do not, then we are likely to be disappointed – the hope of improvements in practice will not be realised.

Stuart Hall poses the question 'Who needs identity?' (Hall, 1996) and in answering this question, discusses how the question is central to notions of agency and to educational politics at all levels. In my work, these links are very clear. Engaging in identity work is necessary for teachers if they wish to

exercise professional agency and maximise their potential for development and growth; an understanding of the factors which affect teachers' sense of identity and agency is likely to be empowering.   The question 'What does it mean to be a teacher?' and the answers to it are also relevant to schools and other education institutions, and for teacher educators, for policy makers and for those involved in enacting these policies, particularly with the prevailing sociopolitical climate in the field of education. For example, with the development of School Direct and Teach First, we are already seeing the importance of issues relating to identity, agency and politics, for instance in the work of Muijs et al. (2010) whose work has explored the impact of Teach First teachers in their classrooms and schools, investigating their agency and effectiveness. Similarly, the work which the Building Research in Teacher Education (BRITE) group at Manchester Metropolitan University is currently undertaking includes research into how conceptions of teacher education knowledge are changing in the current educational climate and how such research might support new models of practice.

Given this cultural and sociopolitical climate, identity is key. The way in which it develops in professional teachers hooks into a number of discourses and debates and is reflected both in my methodology and in my practice and also in that of other teachers and teacher educators too.

My positioning, ontology and epistemology

Because of the intersection of my research topics with methodology, it is important that I consider my positionality, ontology and epistemology in relation to my work and the production of knowledge. The influence of my position on my work is a theme which I will return to often in my thesis. One of my initial interests was in what makes an individual into a 'teacher'; my focus was first on self-efficacy as a possible key factor and then changed to consider the professional identity of teachers in the early stages of their careers. Now this work is widening, in what feels like a natural and inevitable way, to include identity in teachers at a variety of stages of their careers. Over the years that I have worked in initial teacher education I have observed and talked to trainees and beginning teachers and have seen them change from trainees and (what one teacher described to me as) 'not quite teachers' to 'teachers'. As I have worked with these teachers I have talked to them about their identity. They have talked about this change in a way which was almost tantalizing; they recognised and could describe this movement from trainee to teacher, but they could not readily articulate the reasons for the change or explain the factors they felt were instrumental to it. In the early stages of my doctoral work I thought that there may be at least one 'fateful moment' (as Giddens, 1991 calls them) in the development of professional identity. By this Giddens means that there are a small number of significant life events which demand that the individual considers the consequences of particular choices and actions, and which impact on the development of identity.   However, increasingly my work seems to indicate that rather than

there being one 'fateful moment' there seems to be a series of points – an 'accumulation of tiny moments' perhaps, according to Beaton (2013) - which are significant in the development of teacher identity.   Hence, from the early stages of my research I wanted to elicit teachers' understandings about their identities and the 'fateful' or 'tiny' moments which were critical to professional identity development.

In RP1 (Lord, 2012) I identified the factors which the literatures suggested were key in mediating early career teachers' professional identity, and proposed a framework which conceptualised these factors.   Figure 1 shows this framework in diagrammatic form.   I derived this framework from my review of the relevant literatures, and designed it to show the dynamic intersectionality of a number of factors which may mediate the professional development in early career teachers, and how this intersectionality links to their sense of agency. My ideas have their roots in the work of James Gee on identity as a lens in education (Gee, 2001) and in that of Urie Bronfennbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).   So far, the framework has shown itself to be valid; it reflects relevant aspects of the discourses and factors with which I have engaged as I have been exploring various aspects of the framework.
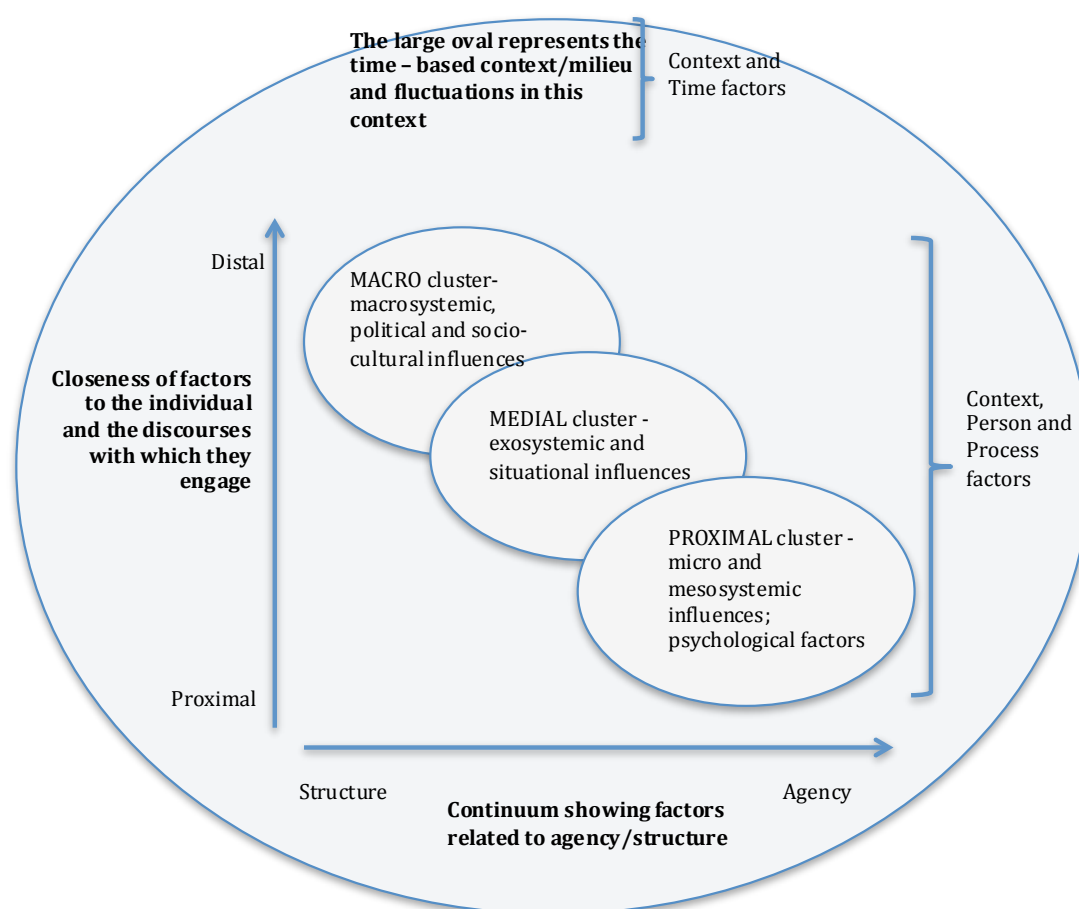
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework to show the interacting influences of a number of potential factors on the development of a teacher's professional identity

The first key aspects of this framework are shown on the two axes. The

vertical axis relates to the conceptual 'closeness' of the influencing factors to

the discourses with which an individual early-career teacher may be engaged;

the horizontal one relates to an emphasis on the structure/agency continuum.

The other key element of the framework is the interacting cascade of three

clusters within the conceptual space. The clusters include a number of

particular factors which I suggest mediate the process of the development of

professional identity. The first is the macro cluster, which relates to macrosystemic, political and sociocultural influences; examples might be government policy or attitudes towards teachers.   The medial cluster relates to exosystemic and situational influences; examples might be specific features of the school or college in which the teacher is working, such as the number of SEN or FSM pupils.   The third cluster is the proximal cluster, reflecting personal and psychological factors, such as the gender, age and career background of the individual teacher.

As is shown in Figure 1, the clusters share a good deal of overlap and interaction, as well as having their own defining characteristics.   Each cluster and the overall interaction of clusters is also dynamic in nature, reflecting the idea that identity is in fact a process, not a static entity (e.g. Zembylas, 2003).

My second research paper (Lord, 2013) developed this work and used a variety of narrative elicitation techniques which illuminated a number of factors concerning espoused identity in early career teachers.   In my most recent pilot work (see p.49 et seq.), I have investigated identity through the twin lenses of practice and reflection and considered the ways in which teachers' identities and practices intersected.

As my work has developed, it has become obvious that there is no disjuncture between the concepts and realities of 'professional identity' and 'identity', at

least for the teachers with whom I have been working and for others whom I

know well. Ivor Goodson articulates this in a much-quoted article,

> In understanding something so intensely personal as teaching, it is
> critical that we know about the person the teacher is. (Goodson, 1981,
> p.69)

I contend that emotion is the lynchpin to the intensely personal nature of the

professional work of teaching (e.g. Nias, 1996). To explain this further and to

illustrate the possible lack of distinction between personal and professional

identity, I have borrowed the idea that teaching is what may be termed as a

'moral profession', from Elizabeth Campbell (2008). I suggest that in a moral

profession, values, caring and ethics are the key currencies; attributes and

attitudes which are fundamental to an individual, in whatever manifestation.

Hence, the boundary between identity and professional identity is blurred.

Professional identity may be seen as one of the multiple identities that make

us the people that we are. Each of these identities can draw from the others

in complex and subtle ways- for example, my roles as a parent, as a cognitive

individual, as a civic engager and as a teacher are all inextricably linked. In

order to clarify this further, I have developed a theoretical overlay (figure 2)

which complements the conceptual framework (figure 1) and which outlines

the complex relationship which I suggest exists between personal and

professional identity.

An overlay is needed because although the conceptual framework reflects the

intersection of activities and discourses, it cannot and does not reflect the

day-to-day realities of a teacher's life. There is a sense in which the

connections between the personal and professional play out in the conceptual space where the clusters of factors intersect. The links between the personal/professional and their intersection (shown in Figure 2), and the conceptual framework are made by narration, reflection and reflexivity.

The overlay uses the terms 'personal identity' and 'professional identity'. I accept that these are contested terms which may not even be possible to define in a pure fashion. However, these two concepts of personal and professional identity interact and are embodied through an individual teacher's identity and agency.
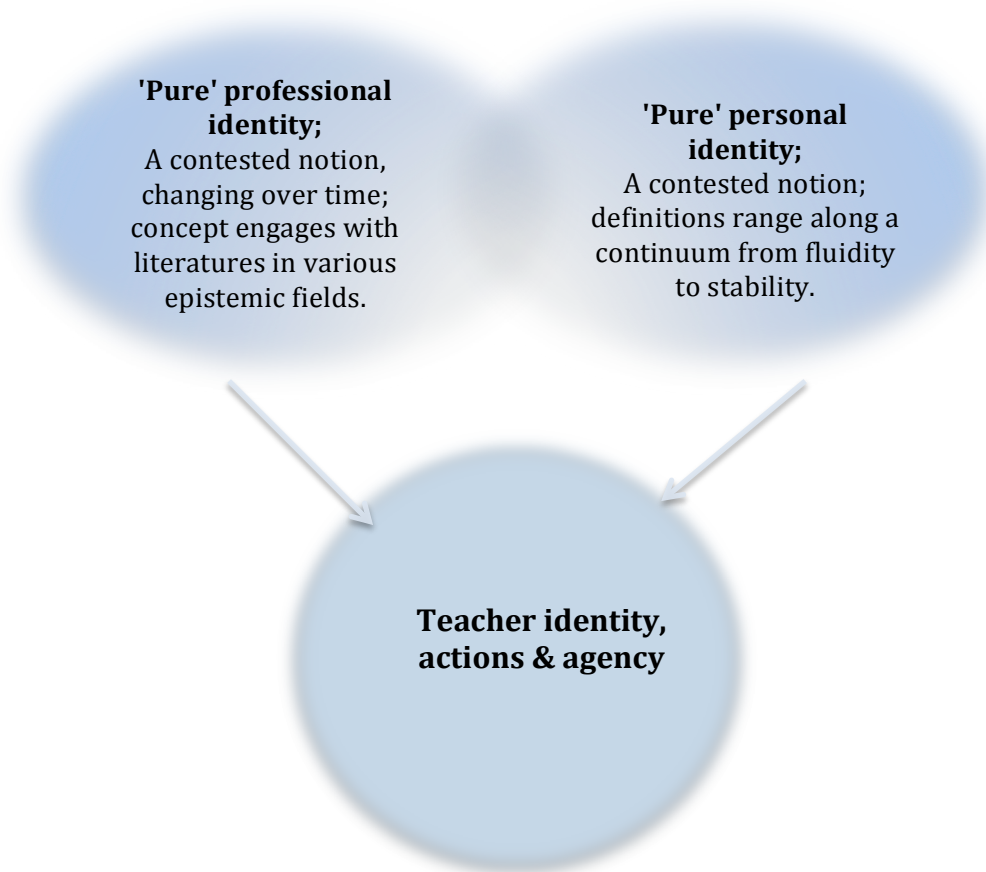
When I think about 'pure' personal identity, the term 'identity' is used in different ways and carries different meanings in a variety of literatures and discourses. For some psychologists, personal identity is concerned with the identification of a number of fixed or at least relatively stable traits. Situated at the other end of what is a rather fuzzy continuum are the ideas of thinkers such as Novak Bauman (e.g. 2004). Bauman's concept of liquid modernity expresses the condition of constant mobility and change he sees in identities and relationships within contemporary society; this idea of course directly contests the idea of stable traits. My own use of the term 'identity' is located more towards the 'fluid' end of this spectrum. In my thesis I will investigate this continuum and discuss the issues and challenges which arise from these concepts and their definitions. In doing this my motivation is to work with terms and definitions which are useful and which reflect the

realities of what I am seeing in my research. Certainly so far, I have not found the trait, almost 'tick box' approach taken in some of the classic work by psychologists such as Allport and Odbert (1936) and Cattell (1965) to be useful in my understanding of the lived realities of teachers' lives. There is of course a high probability that such trait theorists would have a case for suggesting that I am oversimplifying their ideas; however, my fundamental assumption – of fluidity as opposed to stability in identity- is a useful one in conceptualizing and articulating my thinking.

This relationship between personal and professional identity is shown below in diagrammatic form (figure 2).   As the diagram shows, professional and personal identity may be seen as being embodied in teacher identity, agency and actions. As personal identity is inextricably linked both to professional identity but also to performative identity, and hence to practice, I suggest that unraveling the strands which comprise a teacher's personal identity and professional identity is not just a thankless task, it may well be a redundant one.

Clearly, the relationship outlined in figure 2 does not exist in a vacuum.   To interrogate these ideas effectively it is essential that we understand that the lives of teachers are situated within the discourses which are reflected in my conceptual framework and its context of intersectionality.

Figure 2: The relationship between personal and professional identity, as embodied in teacher identity, agency and action.

'Pure' professional
identity;
A contested notion,
changing over time;
concept engages with
literatures in various
epistemic fields.

'Pure' personal
identity;
A contested notion;
definitions range along a
continuum from fluidity
to stability.

**Teacher identity,
actions & agency**

For each individual teacher it may be the case that different factors within this conceptual overlay concerning personal and professional identity are nuanced and/or emphasised.   The following two cameos show how these possible differences in nuancing and emphasis may manifest themselves.

Cameo 1: Zoya

Zoya is a young Muslim woman.   She worked as a microbiologist before deciding to train as a biology teacher; in fact she worked for several years in

a commercial laboratory setting before she returned to university to study for her PGCE. She lives in the inner city and works in a college close to her home, where she lives with her parents, her husband and other members of her extended family. Zoya's religion and the values she associates with it are very important to her. She wanted to teach to 'make a difference', having felt that there was a lack of fit between her values and those of the company for which she was working. At work, Zoya is seen to be a competent teacher and one who clearly believes that the profession is key in developing young people's skills and self-esteem; the college has just given her a pastoral role setting up the student buddy system.   Key to her identity as a teacher and hence to her agency is her idea that teaching is fundamentally a caring profession.

Cameo 2: Robert

Robert is a white male PE teacher in his 30s. One of the reasons he was interested in teaching PE is because he played football at county level and was a member of the university athletics squad. Robert is and always has been keen to get young people involved in local sport, and he has arranged the local school football leagues with this in mind. Robert sees sport as a good way of engaging young people in education and in providing opportunities for them to develop their teamwork, communication and leadership skills as well as giving them a rounded educational experience where PE provides a balance to the wholly desk-based school subjects. Robert always wanted to teach PE, as he can work with young people and

see them achieve success, as well as seeing it as a way of being paid for doing what he enjoys.

The differences between the two cameos can be seen in the teachers' focus on their personal and their professional identity as it affects agency. For example, Zoya is first and foremost a teacher, rather than a subject specialist; her understanding of teaching as a caring, moral profession is what shapes her agency and her actions at work.   She sees her work with the young people who are involved with the college buddy system as emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). On the other hand, Robert is driven by his passion for engaging young people in sport. His commitment to developing young people's soft skills (such as teamwork and communication) through the medium of sport is his main focus. Again, this is emotional labour for Robert, but expressed differently, and more directly through the curriculum.   However, Robert and Zoya are similar in that both of them are interested in young people, and they both see young people's confidence and self-esteem, developed by teachers' caring capital, as important, even though the ways in which they facilitate young people's self-concept and confidence are very different. These cameos show that individual teachers may be located within the discourses which I described above and which are shown in figure 2, in ways which are differently emphasised and nuanced; they also show how teacher identity draws from the moral, emotional, personal and professional arenas in subtle, complex and interacting ways,

and how this relationship plays out in a context of dynamically intersecting

fields, illustrated in my conceptual framework (figure 1).

Another major area which has become increasingly prominent as I have

engaged in thinking and reading about teacher identity relates to the close

links between the narrative techniques and reflective methods which I was

using (and intend to use in subsequent work) with teachers to explore their

professional identity. It is clear that the methods and the subject matter in my

work are inextricably linked. Certainly in the pilot study which is reported in the

second half of this paper, the role of narrative and reflection in identity work

was seen very clearly.

Gayle Letherby (2003) uses a 'cookbook' analogy to articulate the links that

may exist between the methods we use and the data we produce using those

methods.   She says,

> Surely our choice of recipe (method) and the way we prepare and cook
> the ingredients (methodology) affect the kind of dish (knowledge) we
> get. Further, different cooks using the same ingredients, because of
> their different views on cooking and food (epistemology) may produce
> quite different dishes.   (2003, p.4)

The pilot work (which I report later in this paper) with my teacher-participants,

where I was talking with them as they developed narratives and reflected on

their practice, was work which in part was co-constructing their narratives and

simultaneously aspects of their identities. By 'co-construction' I mean that

both my perspective and that of the teacher-participant were embedded in the

construction of the narrative and hence the construction of aspects of the

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teacher-participants' (and of course also my own) identity, but in different ways, with different emphases.   To continue with Letherby's analogy, the teacher participants and I were two different cooks working together in the same kitchen.

Indubitably therefore it is the case that professional identity is both espoused and enacted symbiotically.   In many ways, thinking, narration, reflection, and doing can all be conceptualised as part of professional identity work.   Hence, another key interest is the role of narrative and of authentic reflection in the negotiation of professional identity and agency.

Research aim

My key question is:

What does it mean to be a teacher?   In other words, why do teachers think, feel and do as they do?

In order to investigate this question, I have devised these specific research questions: -

- How do teachers negotiate identity and agency as they navigate through their daily lives in different contexts in the educational field?
- What does it mean to be a professional within teaching? What factors might mediate the development of professional identity in teachers at various stages of their careers?   The links between espoused identity

and identity in action, or what Judith Butler (e.g. 1993) might describe as performative identity, are also key and will be considered.

- What are the links between professional identity and personal identity in teachers?   Or is the distinction a false one?

A separate question, which relates both to methodology and to the tools of engagement with teacher professional identity is: -

- How do narrative, and reflection as a particular kind of narrative, play a part in the fluid development of professional identity?

Literatures

The term 'supercomplex' characterizes both an abundance of data and also multiple interacting frameworks for understanding (Barnett, 2000). This is exactly what the concepts and data that I am and will be working with are like – they are rooted in the complex problems of teaching and of teacher identity, which change even as they are being worked on, and which are situated in a number of sociopolitical and cultural arenas.   Key variables in the supercomplex arena of teacher identity include personal identity, values, emotions, and authentic reflection on one's practice, reflexivity, the nature of professionalism and of professional development, as well as the complex intersectionality between these. In addition, the negotiation of identity and of agency is situated within another supercomplex arena – the socio-historic-political context in which teachers live their professional and personal lives, and which I first included in my conceptual framework in my earlier work (Lord, 2012).   It is no surprise therefore that the super-complexity of the arena is mirrored by the complexity and intersectionality of the literatures which are relevant to this study and which I will research for my thesis.

Identity

Richard Jenkins states that 'identity…is the touchstone of the times' (Jenkins, 1996, p.30); and even fifteen years on 'identity' is still a slippery concept, discussed in sociological and psychological circles in myriad ways. If discourses outside the Euro-American ones within which much of my work is situated are also considered then the troubles with 'identity' as a concept become considerable.

My initial reading about teacher identity began with the work of Gee (e.g. 2001). His work on different lenses through which to view identity in education is clearly key to my research. However, there is a spectrum of literatures on identity with which I will engage more fully in my thesis. As I suggested earlier, identity can be conceptualised along a continuum from 'identity as a set of traits' (e.g. the work of Cattell (1965) and of Allport (1936)) all the way to a more fluid set of concepts concerning 'identity as action in configured worlds' (e.g. the work of Holland et al., 1998).

Some work on identity suggests that identities are produced through discourses and that they are dependent on an 'outside' and hence are in a way dislocated. These accounts are largely structural and are enacted within codes and cultures, often delineated by language. Other approaches come from a more psychoanalytic tradition and consider the work of authors such as Melanie Klein (e.g. 1959) and concepts such as identification, for example, as well as other unconscious processes.   Yet another tradition is rooted in a social relations idea (e.g. Tajfel, 2010), where identity is contextually informed and where individuals have existence as particular sorts of person, derived from an understanding of historical and social contingency and of the plurality of 'personae'.   Trying to engage with all these literatures may well be an impossible task. Nonetheless, in my literature review I will attempt to track particular themes, debates and positions concerning identity – a task which is suggested by duGay et al. (2000) to be less daunting than trying to map 'the field'.

Professionals

There is a fuzzy boundary between the literatures on identity, and those concerning professionalism and professionals; the distinction I make here is hence rather artificial.

There are various literatures which relate to the concepts of 'the professional' and of 'professionalism' which exist in a number of epistemic fields, for example sociology (e.g. Martimianakis et al., 2009), history (e.g. Gewirtz et al., 2008) and philosophy (e.g. Downie, 1990). Some of these literatures address the status, identity and perceived identity of teachers; others consider the changing notion of the professional and professionalism over time. In particular I will consider the work of Anne Edwards (e.g. Edwards and Daniels, 2012) on the changing definition of what it means to be a professional, within a framework based on cultural historical activity theory (Cole, 1996).

Professionalism can of course also be codified; for example by the teaching 'standards' (Department for Education, 2013) and by various professional bodies such as the Teaching Agency (formerly the GTC). These codes and understandings draw on and add to the knowledge that we have regarding politics and policy making in educational settings. The current political climate of managerialism- which has as a feature the politicisation of the concept of both 'a professional' and of 'professionalism' –has spawned a large body of grey literature which is likely to be relevant to my thesis. This body includes policy and marketing documents from a number of organisations

such as the teaching unions, the Institute for Learning, and the National

College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), as well as from the Department

for Education. For example, 'Credibility and Professionalism' is one of the

key topics in the NCTL 'Good Practice for Leaders' site (National College for

Teaching and Leadership, 2011).

Individual teachers are located within these discourses concerning

professionalism. It could be contended that teachers are pure professionals

– almost 'professional pedagogues'. This notion of pure professionalism is

one which is discussed by Schön (1983), for example.   However,

increasingly professionalism is also discussed as being hybrid.   Teachers are

often dual professionals- a media studies teacher, for example, may also be

a journalist and may 'have' the dual teacher/journalist identity.   Noordegraaf

(2007) suggests, in an article which raises some interesting discussion

points, that this professional hybridity may be related to the rise of the new

public management, as described by Hood (1991), and to the increase in

what he calls 'welfare state occupations' (such as teachers and social

workers), as well as to what he describes as the weakening of classic

professions (such as law and medicine).

I will also look at related work which concerns itself with the changing nature

of professionalism in the 21st century and with what it means to be a

professional as the neoliberal agenda of deprofessionalisation takes hold, as

is discussed by Stephen (Ball) in his 2008 paper 'Performativity, privatization,

professionals and the state'.   This work also includes that of Lesley Scanlon

(2011) and the Demos report 'DIY Professionalism' (Craig and Fleschi, 2007)

for example.

A moral profession or vocation?

As I have mentioned above (page 10), the idea of teaching as an emotional

and moral profession, as identified by writers such as Nias (1996), Campbell

(2008) and Buzelli and Johnson (2002), is perhaps for me what most closely

links ideas about personal and professional identity. Hence, the literature

concerning this link is also important to my work.   For example, Jennifer Nias

(1996) describes how teachers have always talked with passion about their

jobs and how they invest so heavily in teaching, and in the values which they

believe their work represents.   She identifies the close links between

personal and professional identity in this quote:

> 'Teachers invest their 'selves' in their work, often so closely merging
> their sense of personal and professional identity that the classroom or,
> in the case of primary headteachers, the school becomes a main site
> for their self-esteem and fulfilment, and so too for their vulnerability.'
> (Nias, 1996, p.297).

This value-laden, moral aspect of teaching which is a quintessential part of

being a teacher and doing teaching is perhaps why teaching may be

considered a vocation. There are also some interesting literatures which I will

engage with for my thesis about the link between professions and vocations

(e.g. Gustafson, 1982) and about the ease or difficulty of maintaining

discourses of vocations in a culture of performativity (e.g. Troman, 2008).

Narrative, reflection and their impact on identity

In teaching, reflection and reflexivity usually, although not invariably, go hand in hand. Reflection which is done by teachers is often about personal reflexivity. In addition, reflection can usefully be seen as a particular form of narrative, and vice versa, in that reflection and reflexivity both involve a form of narration which by definition asks about identity in practice. Of course, in so doing they illuminate the performative act - and can bring about some troubled moments.

Hence the three intertwined concepts of narrative, reflective practice and reflexivity are fundamental to the mediation of professional identity in teachers (e.g.Williams, 2011). There is a large volume of literature here which is important because, as I have commented, the subject matter of identity is intrinsically linked to my methodology as well as to issues surrounding narrative and reflexivity.

One epistemic field in this area concerns how the very act of narrating and of narration affects an individual's learning and understanding of how they act in the world. Ivor Goodson and his colleagues have made major contributions in this area. According to them;

> 'It is not just the present situation which influences one's understanding of the past. The way in which people *understand and articulate* their present situation is important as well. It is, in other words, not just the 'now' that is always present in one's story of the past; it is also one's *story of the now* that impacts on one's story of the past.'(Goodson et al., 2010, p.7).

Therefore, the act of narration is not a neutral act. Rosenwald and Ochberg

(1992) explain further:

> How individuals recount their histories – what they emphasize and
> omit, their stance as protagonists or victims, the relationship the story
> establishes between teller and audience – all shape what individuals
> can claim of their own lives. Personal stories are not merely a way of
> telling someone (or oneself) about one's life; they are the means by
> which identities may be fashioned.
>
> (Rosenwald and Ochberg, 1992, p.1).

In other words, narration creates aspects of identity.

Jerome Bruner (1987) also discusses how narrative is a tool, and articulates

the problematic nature of the relationship between life, reflection and narrative

in the conclusion to his 1987 paper 'Life as narrative:-

> If we can learn how people put their narratives together when they tell
> stories from life, considering as well how they *might* have proceeded,
> we might then have contributed something new... Even if, with respect
> to life and narrative, we discover, as in Yeats's line, that we cannot tell
> the dancer from the dance, that may be good enough. (p.32)

There is already a well-established and vibrantly growing body of work

concerning reflective practice in education which has its roots in the work of

Dewey (1938), and of C. Wright Mills (Mills, 1959), whose work on the

'Sociological Imagination' argued that it was key for individuals to see their

biographies as being interwoven with the public and political 'stage' of society.

In arguing this, Mills presumes a reflective and questioning attitude towards

existing taken-for-granted assumptions, structures and policies. I expect to

see that such an attitude is key to the hermeneutic analysis which I will be

undertaking in my thesis and also to effective reflective practice in teachers.

It is clear then that there are close links between narrative enquiry and reflective practice.   Downey and Clandinin (2010) point out that there are intersections, overlaps and tensions between these two forms of enquiry/practice. They both have their foundations in the work of John Dewey (e.g. 1916; 1938) and his philosophy of experience.   For Dewey, human experience is key to development:

> Every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into. (Dewey, 1938, p.38)

And

> When we experience something we act upon it, we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return: such is the peculiar combination. The connection of these two phases of experience measures the fruitfulness or value of the experience.
> (Dewey, 1916, p.96)

Tabachnick and Zeichner (1991) argue that the notion of 'reflection' should not be an ill-defined catch all which lacks real coherence. From my initial reading it would appear that the literature on reflection and reflexivity is rather disparate, and systematizing the reading I do in this area will be part of my work.

Some of the classic work on reflection and its links to professional practice and identity that I will review is the work of Donald Schön. The use of his ideas about reflection both 'in action' and 'on action' (Schön, 1983) will be seen in my double hermeneutic analytic approach (page 58) which I derive

from Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).   Schön's work has been

discussed and developed by other theorists and by practitioners, but his work

nonetheless provides a good basis for thinking about reflection.   For both

Dewey and for Schön, teaching is a complex activity which requires thoughtful

action and the use of reflective professional judgment.   One important area

for me to consider is the relationship between knowledge and action in

teaching. In this regard, the work of Max van Manen (1995) is likely to be a

starting point for me; he introduces the necessity of considering the

epistemologies of reflection and reflective practice.

Bamberg (2012) suggests that such narrative self-reflection, together with

narrative self-disclosure, can be seen as two of the 'cornerstones of a

narratively grounded approach to a rationally-reflexively monitoring of

selfhood'. (p.79). Accordingly, Bamberg articulates one way of

conceptualising the link between identity and narrative, although the

assumption that rationality and reflexivity necessarily go hand in hand may be

rather optimistic.   This is a huge and messy area of thinking and one where

the issues relating to narrative, reflection and identity need to be clearly

problematized.   It is becoming increasingly clear to me that the literatures on

reflective practice, reflection, narrative and identity development are

intertwined in a complex way, as of course are the concepts themselves.

For example, the links between reflection and identity work are discussed by

Jackie Walkington (2005), who considers the role of reflective practice in

developing teacher identity.   Even if the relationships between narrative,

reflection and identity are generally acknowledged as being hard to unravel, it is clear that there is a link, which needs problematizing, investigating and conceptualising. This is one of the tasks, through firstly a review of the relevant literatures, for my thesis.

Sociopolitical context of teaching and hence of identity development

The conceptual framework which I derived from my reading of the literatures, in conjunction with the work of Urie Bronfenbrenner, emphasises the importance of considering the macro-level sociocultural and political discourses within which teachers and teaching are located and hence, within which the processes of identity development are situated.

Policy and the development of current discourses in education are fundamental to an understanding of this. Not only is the construction of policy important, but the enactment of policy within schools and colleges is also extremely significant. The link between policy, policy enactment and professionalism is one which I intend to investigate further. One example is highlighted in the recent work of Dave Hall (2013), which focuses on the simultaneous rise of leadership and of New Public Management (NPM) within the English education system. He discusses how this context is characterized by the classic NPM troika of markets, metrics and managers (O'Reilly and Reed 2011). One of the issues that Hall addresses is how discourses of leadership and of distributed leadership have enabled schools and teachers to

adapt to educational modernisation in ways that have undermined teacher professionalism.

The micropolitics of schools is in area which has always interested me, and I am looking forward to engaging with some of the complex literatures in this area for my thesis. I am expecting to draw heavily on the work of Michael Apple (Apple, 2011) Stephen Ball and his colleagues (e.g. Ball, 2008; 2012; Braun et al., 2010) and Jenny Ozga (e.g. Ozga et al., 2011) in this regard.

Methodology and methods

My research design can be seen as postmodern in that the researcher (me) and the research question are not and cannot be distinct.   The methods I choose are closely linked to my research question(s) about identity development as well as to my epistemological and ontological position as a researcher.

I am concerned to understand the lived realities of teachers' lives and hence I have tended towards a phenomenological perspective.   I am also very conscious that all social research is political and positional, as it takes place within a variety of policy contexts.   In order to acknowledge this in my research I am drawing on the work of Oakeshott (1933), who talks about the 'arrest of experience' as being a requirement of research. This means that social research requires us to question taken for granted assumptions, both our own and those of others.   Clough and Nutbrown (2002) suggest that this can be done through various forms of what they term as 'radical enquiry'. In my work I will be employing this form of enquiry by looking to the roots of situations and engaging in exploration beyond the familiar and personally known, in a way which helps to make the familiar strange.

In my previous work (Lord, 2013) I suggested that narrative enquiry was one of the best ways of generating an understanding of identity because it is rooted in stories of individuals' experiences. Connelly and Clandinin (1999)

suggest that such 'stories to live by' can help us to understand 'how knowledge, context and identity are linked and can be understood narratively' (p.4). Similarly, Goodson et al. (2010) propose that the 'interior conversations' that people have, where individuals define their personal thoughts and courses of action and create their own stories, are key to their identity and understanding of their own place in the world. They suggest that this storying and the construction and presentation of narratives become a significant influence on how people see themselves and ultimately on what they do. Certainly in my earlier work and in the pilot for this paper (see page 49 below) the links between narrative and identity were what illuminated the field for me and encouraged me to develop my thinking in this area further.

Ofsted is currently concerned that teachers should be reflective practitioners, as their subject professional development materials indicate (e.g. Ofsted, 2013) and indeed there is a sense in education that reflection is in general a 'good thing' (Hillier, 2012). However, I would argue that there is often a lack of authentic reflection. As Moore and Ash (2002) identify, much reflection is either ritualistic - a token reflective activity, with lip service paid to it (perhaps because it is often linked to discourses of performativity and competence); other reflection may be categorised as pseudo-reflection in that the teacher intends to reflect but that the activity engaged in does not lead to development or change. Authentic reflective practice may and indeed should lead to both changes in professional practice and in professional identity. I intend to use methods which encourage both authentic reflection and narrative in my work.

One way of thinking abut the links between narrative/reflection and action/identity is to use the ideas of Jerome Bruner (e.g. 1986) in relation to narrative. Bruner believes that narrative thinking incorporates dual landscapes; the "landscape of action" (plot) and the "landscape of consciousness" (motivations). The former outlines the actions and actors, the latter outlines their mental states such as goals, beliefs and emotions. The landscape of consciousness within a narrative then in some sense allows the reader to get inside the head of the narrator. The two landscapes are both essential and distinct – Bruner likens the difference between them to Oedipus sharing Jocasta's bed before and after he learns that she is his mother (1986, p.14).   This duality of landscapes links actions and consequence and enables us to interpret motivations and intentions.   The two landscapes roughly equate to 'what teachers do' and 'what teachers think and say about it'.   As far as my research is concerned, the landscape of action is what teachers do in the classroom – what their actions are. The landscape of consciousness is related to teachers' intentions and feelings. These landscapes will be illuminated and linked in my work by observation of practice and by the investigation of reflection and narrative.

Proposed Research Design

Arenas of study, participants and samples.

For this research I intend to complete three case studies. My focus will be on secondary and post compulsory teachers with different backgrounds and at

different stages of their careers, in at least two schools and/or colleges. Three

individual teachers will be the cases; teachers whose beings and doings are

situated and will be examined in the complexity of lived and real moments in

schools, classrooms, in the existing socio-political climate and in their

histories and personal lives. To engage with the case studies, I will use an

array of methodological techniques; the key features of my methods are

narrative and observation and a hermeneutic analysis of features emanating

from these narratives and observations.

The reason for working in the secondary and post-compulsory sectors is

because my high degree of familiarity with these sectors may mean that I

have insights which will inform my analyses and the development of my

methodological techniques.   Also, as I pointed out in my earlier work (Lord,

2013) the nature of a subject teacher's job in a secondary school or college is

very different from that of primary school teacher's job, working intensively

with one class of children on a number of curriculum areas. Hence I am

limiting the current study to the secondary and post-compulsory phases.

Methods
The methods which I am choosing to use are closely linked to my conceptual

framework (Figure 1) which identifies three clusters of factors which may

mediate the development of identity in teachers. In order to engage with these

factors I intend to use a variety of methods which are related to the factors

which may be primarily categorised in each cluster.   However, I am expecting

that there will be a large degree of overlap between clusters of factors. This is

related to the nature of what I am examining – there will be particular mixes of the macro, medial and proximal level factors in the individuals' understandings of who they are and what they do.   It is important to me to use a variety of methods, not because of a need to triangulate my data, but rather to show the ways in which the data contradicts and supports itself, and to illustrate the complex intersectionality between the factors which I research.

Proximal level – methods

This cluster of factors in my framework reflects personal and psychological factors relating to the individual, such as their gender, age and career background.

The research questions which I can locate mainly in this arena include those liked to the negotiation of identity and agency and the links between personal and professional identity. In addition, the methodological question about the links between narrative, reflection and identity is likely to link to factors in this cluster.

Some of the methods which may be appropriate for elucidating the factors which are both proximal to the individual teacher-participants and which have direct impacts on their agency are: -

Timelines
As in my earlier work (Lord, 2012), I intend to ask my participants to draw and annotate a timeline for their career as a teacher.   I will ask them not to worry

about exact dates but to show, in whatever way they prefer, the significant

events in their life that affected their career or career choices, and also to

show any events in the wider world which might have been significant to

them. This is a deliberately open brief.   The purpose of this technique is to

elicit personal understandings and to provide a basis for further discussion.

Concept maps

Again, as in my pilot work for RP2, I intend to ask participants to construct a

'concept map' with the central concept 'Me as a teacher - what I think, feel

and do' (my operationalisation of espoused professional identity) - and to try

and include any influences on what they think, feel and do. The participants

will be given some concepts from which to choose, derived from the literatures

reviewed in RP1 (Lord, 2012) as well as being allowed to add any others of

their own to the maps. As the participants construct their maps I will

encourage them to talk about what they were doing, so enabling me to get a

sense of the reflective process. In using concept mapping I am asking my

participants to root their stories in the concrete, telling me about 'what they

think and do as teachers'.   I am using ideas about the links between action,

agency and identity to allow me to make inferences about the development of

professional identity.

Story telling discussions

As before (Lord, 2013) I will use semi-structured interviews (e.g. Merton and

Kendall, 1946) where I will decide on the themes and focus of the interviews,

although not the detailed protocols, in advance. I have called these interviews

'story- telling discussions' because I start them by asking the individuals to tell

me the 'story of their career in teaching'. The interviews are designed to elicit

the relevant personal context of the respondent, as well as their personal

beliefs and ideas.

Observations of teaching and the significant event technique

In terms of observations of lessons, so far I have found that the post-lesson

discussions with teacher-participants have given me more information and

insight into the realities of teachers' lives than have the observations

themselves.   However, it may be that as I get more experienced in observing

lessons as a researcher rather than as a teacher-educator, I get better at

making the familiar unfamiliar, and at understanding how the actions involved

in 'doing teaching' impinge on the development of professional identity. I

therefore intend to build lesson observations into my data collection methods.

Following my observations of teachers teaching, I will structure discussions

using the significant event technique (SET) I developed for the pilot in the

second half of this paper. This technique is described in full on page 52

below.

Naïve questions

When I am talking to my teacher-participants after the observations, I am

intend to use a technique which I have called 'naïve questioning. In the pilot

work which I report later in this paper it became clear that the teacher-

participant had 'taken-for-granted' assumptions (which often I shared) about

the nature of being a teacher. An example arose after an observed tutorial

session where Louise, my teacher-participant, was explaining to me that it

was impossible to move the higgledy-piggledy arrangement of desks in a

media studies room to suit her particular learning objectives for the tutorial

session which she was due to deliver. My experience of working in schools

and colleges told me that this was a common, taken-for-granted assumption.

However, the more I thought about this after the tutorial, the more I thought it

was rather absurd; it certainly is not impossible to move the desks in another

teacher's room.   However, I had accepted Louise's explanation without

question. Had I used a naïve question such as "why not?", I might have been

able to identify something significant about how (say) a teacher's classroom

may be seen as their own personal territory, or about how hierarchies and

micropolitics work in schools and colleges.   If Schein (2010) is correct in

saying that taken-for-granted assumptions, which are often unconscious, grow

out of values and also determine behaviour, in a way which he suggests is

often 'non-debateable' (p.28), then using naïve questions to challenge the

unchallengeable may be of use in uncovering norms and values which are key

to teacher identity.

Medial level - methods

This cluster of factors concerns the exosystemic and situational influences on

teachers.   The research questions which can be located largely in this cluster

of factors include those related to the contextual factors mediating the

development of professional identity and teachers' negotiation of identity and

agency. The methods which are likely to be of value here include

observations and the analysis of school/college policies and policy texts.

Observations

Observations have been useful springing off points for discussions in my pilot

work.   Observations may be both structured and unstructured, formal and

informal.   I intend to observe meetings and also general situations in the

schools.   For the 'general observations', I intend to borrow some methods

from institutional ethnography.   Smith (1987) describes institutional

ethnography as:

> 'an exploration, description and analysis of such a complex of relations,
> not conceived in the abstract but from the entry point of some particular
> person or persons whose everyday world of working is organized
> thereby.'   (Smith, 1987, p.160)

The techniques used are often those of observation, because the methods of

institutional ethnography are a commitment to an investigation and explication

of how 'it' actually works, of actual practices and relationships.   (In my case,

the 'it' is the school, college or educational system in which the discourses

relating to the teacher-participants' lives are situated).

I intend to spend time sitting in staffrooms, staff workrooms and other areas of

school in order to get both the emic and etic perspective of a school. In doing

this I will be looking at people as people as meaning-makers, as I am

concerned with how people interpret their worlds.   I am expecting to see and

hear jokes, stories, 'nightmare stories' of 'bad days', barbed comments and

sexual jokes and innuendo, and possibly also serious educational discussion.

I intend to pay attention to any urban legends, folklore or gossip which I hear;

the content of these forms of narrative may give me a real insight into the

lived realities of teachers' lives and into the significant factors which impact on the development of their identity.   The term 'deep hanging out' was coined by the anthropologist James Clifford (1998) to describe, in a rather disparaging way, this kind of observation– the immersion of oneself in a cultural, group or social experience on an informal level. As such, deep hanging out is a form of participatory observation in which the researcher is present in a group for extended periods of time or for relatively long informal sessions. Traditionally, 'deep hanging out' is described as an open and inductive technique, but I acknowledge that, in common with other researchers, I have my own ideas and theories and assumptions about what I will see and find; and hence my analysis needs to include reflection and reflexivity.

So far, I have not observed meetings in my pilot work.   However, observing a variety of types of meeting might yield useful data.   Observing meetings between teacher-trainees and their mentors could be illuminating in uncovering the processes involved in the development of teacher identity; departmental and staff meetings might also yield information which could be relevant to more than one of the intersecting clusters of factors from my conceptual framework.

Analysis of policy and policy enactment
The 'micro-politics of the school', to coin Stephen Ball's phrase (Ball, 2012) may be key in both in developing teacher identity and also in developing an understanding of the factors which impact on this development. Policy analysis may be done using observation, interviews and by observing lessons as well as meetings and school events.   Part of the analysis will include

document and textual analysis.　Yin (2009) suggests that collecting and reviewing documentary evidence is likely to be an essential component of any case study, but rightly warns that such evidence must be carefully used. Analysis of school/college policy documents is likely to be useful to me, but before I embark on any such analysis I will have to ensure that my rationale for the analysis is clear in relation to that particular document or set of documents.　I will also need to be aware of the overall policy contexts in which policy documents exist.　There are a number of methods of analysing policy documents; I am expecting semiotics and interpretive analysis to be of most use, but I will be open-minded until I have piloted a number of different approaches.

Macro level

This cluster of factors relates to macrosystemic, political and sociocultural influences on teacher professional identity.　Examples are government policy or attitudes towards teachers. The particular research questions which will be illuminated by such a consideration of the macro-level factors include the questions related to the meaning of professionalism within teaching, and the situated negotiation of identity and agency by teachers in situated contexts.

I have no reason to believe that individual government departments, or local authorities or academy sponsors will be any different from schools in that they are likely to have their own 'take' on policy (Braun et al., 2010) and so part of my thesis will be about interviewing individuals (such as a local authority director of operations or the director of a major academy sponsor) to

investigate how wider contexts may mediate the development of teacher

professional identity. In addition, I will study media reports and grey

literatures, which may be key to my developing an understanding of the socio-

political (macro) level of my conceptual framework.   As above, the precise

analytical techniques I will use remain to be decided.

'Integrating' methods

I have already emphasised that the framework which conceptualises the

factors involved in the mediation of identity, and the overlay which introduces

the symbiotic relationship between personal and professional identity in

teachers, demonstrate a fluid intersectionality. Inevitably therefore, the

methods which I use are likely to be appropriate to and illuminate more than

one cluster of factors in my framework.

However, in addition some of the methods which I will use will be 'integrating'

methods, which I anticipate will cut across the clusters of factors in my

framework.   There will be other examples, but one exemplar is the use of

semi-structured interviews which may illuminate a variety of factors and

processes. To briefly explain, at the medial level of my framework, it will be

key for me to understand how policies are enacted within the schools or

colleges where my teacher-participants will be working.   Semi-structured

interviews following (say) the observation of meetings are likely to be of value

in uncovering the processes involved in decision making and policy

enactment at the medial level. However, I anticipate that the data from such

interviews may also illustrate aspects of the proximal cluster of factors (for example by providing information about how personal biographical characteristics of teachers impact on their work) and of the macro level (for example by illuminating the ways that meta-narratives about education impact on discourses at local and individual levels).

Analysis

As I have outlined the methods which I intend to use above, I have noted some of the ways in which my analysis will proceed (for example through textual analysis).   However, as I consider the data as a whole, and develop my understanding of the complex and fluid intersectionality which exists between clusters of mediating factors and between personal and professional identity, I anticipate that two main analytical techniques will be of use to me.

The first of these is perhaps best viewed as an overarching analytical principle: double hermeneutic analysis.   The double hermeneutic method is one which I first used in the pilot work which is reported in the second half of this paper. The term 'double hermeneutic analysis' is used to describe the parallel production of meaning and of meaning-making within the research process.   In all research, as well as discourses which may be seen as attributable to the participant or the research focus, there are those which the researcher brings to the inquiry.   The context of that which is being researched and the context of the researcher interact and co-inform one

another as the research develops. In my research I acknowledge that it is not

possible to get direct, complete or privileged access to a participant's world,

because access is dependent on the researcher's own conceptions: these

are required to make sense of the participants' personal world through

interpretation.   Because I am concerned with trying to understand the lived

experiences of participants' lives and also with the meaning-making which

participants do in relation to those lived experiences, this double hermeneutic

analytic method is an appropriate methodological approach. The procedures

which I will engage with in producing this type of analysis are described in

detail on pages 56-58.

The second technique is that of thematic analysis (e.g. Braun and Clarke,

2006). It has been useful in my earlier work (Lord, 2013) in helping me to

distill themes from a wide variety of complex information, and hence I intend

to use it again to analyse the data which I obtain using the methods and

approach described above. Thematic analysis typically involves searching

through data to identify any recurrent patterns and by systematically

identifying topics which recur within the data, and then, by using the

processes of decontextualisation and recontextualisation, to integrate these

themes into higher order themes: -

> A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the
> research question and represents some level of patterned response or
> meaning within the data set.   (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.82).

Details of this process which I used for RP2 (Lord, 2013) and will use again in

my thesis work are in Appendix 2.

Proposed timescale

Tasks	Date
Panel and ethical clearance	February 2014
Identification of schools and teachers; informed consent obtained	February 2014- May 2014
Data collection starts	May 2014
'Deep hanging out' in schools, meeting observations, etc.	May 2014-May 2015
Proximal level factors to be investigated via concept maps, story telling discussions, timelines, etc.	October 2014-December 2014
Lesson observations and SET discussions	January 2015- April 2015
Observations and interviews around ……….policymaking and enactment (medial level)	September 2014- June 2015
Data collection ends	June 2015
Data analysis complete	December 2015
Writing and reading	Continual Nov 2013- submission

Ethical issues
Underpinning all my research are the ethical principles set out by the British

Educational Research Association (2011) and by the University of Manchester

(2012).   Some of these are ethical issues to do with minimizing the

inconvenience to participants, obtaining informed consent, and with

participants' right to withdraw and their voluntary participation.

However, in this section I also want to consider, albeit only briefly, some more

weighty issues.   I am very aware that throughout this paper I have stated that

narrative and reflections have the potential to develop identity. I need to be

mindful therefore that taking part in this research is potentially life changing for

my participants, and I therefore have a moral and ethical responsibility

towards them which is not inconsiderable.

Much of the information I am working with is very personal, both to my teacher

participants and also to myself. Sensitive data needs to be handled

thoughtfully and sensitively – I will need to ensure that I follow the BERA and

university ethical guidelines but also take advice from non-interested but

knowledgeable parties at regular intervals about my work.   Because of the

intimacy of the subject nature, in a way which may not be manifest to

participants, the opportunity to withdraw is something which I need to make

clear at regular intervals. In addition, it may be that I ask for informed consent

in stages, than just at the beginning of the research, because of the nature of

the study.   Hence, I will need to consider very carefully how I construct my

participant information sheets and instructions to participants.

Of course, like all research, my work is political. It is important that I consider

principles such as what might happen to my work once it is available to a

wider audience, either as my thesis, in papers I may publish or through my

teaching and professional work with teacher educators and teacher trainees.

 Although in general, the impact of research in the social sciences is weak

and its contribution to policy tends to be minimal (Robson, 2002), I need to be

aware that my research potentially has power to change both policy and the

lives of teachers, and that this power must be exercised responsibly and

thoughtfully.   One of the University's underpinning ethical principles

(University of Manchester, 2012) is that there must be a likelihood that participants involved in the research (or the group that they represent) stand to benefit from the research. I have suggested that one of the ways in which my work is contributing to knowledge is through the development of effective professional development sessions which are useful for teachers in developing their agency.   The first session is planned for November 2013 with teacher educators and for January 2014 with teacher trainees.   In talking about my work, I am always cognizant of the ethical implications of so doing for the teacher-participants in the research but also for the individuals with whom I am working.

Contributions to the field

My work will contribute to the field in a number of ways; theoretically, methodologically and practically.

An understanding of the factors which mediate the development of identity in teachers, and of the complex intersectionality of these factors, is key if we are to understand teacher agency. Similarly, such an understanding is likely to be empowering, not only for individual teachers, but also for teacher educators and for policy makers.

Also at a theoretical level, there is a complex set of relationships which exist between personal identity, professional identity, agency and action. An understanding of the discourses surrounding the contested nature of these

concepts and of their situatedness in social, cultural, political, and geographical contexts will contribute to the debates about the nature of identity, professionalism, teaching and teacher education.   So far I have problematized teacher agency, identity and their development, and have illustrated the central link between identity and agency through my conceptual framework and overlay; these form the basis for my future work.   My work will also identify and deal with the difficulties of engaging in reflection, and of working with identity, the nature of which is that it changes even as we study it.

Turning to methodological and practical contributions, I am keen in my work to develop new ways to work with teachers to gain an authentic understanding of the lived realities of 'being a teacher'. Already I am finding that the innovative use of concept maps, time lines and reflexive techniques are contributing to my understanding of teacher identity. I am not surprised that the methodology which I am using, in conjunction with reflection and with an emphasis on practice, is inextricably linked to the development of identity in teachers.   In fact I believe that this relationship will support the conceptual coherence and authority of my work, and a fuller understanding of this relationship will inform both the theoretical work which is key to an understanding of teacher identity, and the practical suggestions which I will make about designing and delivering useful professional development (PD) work for and with teachers.

Purposeful, grounded PD work with a sound methodological and theoretical basis is likely to lead to change; hence, the PD work which is likely to develop out of my research must engage with my key questions and with relevant discourses. However, it is so far my experience that PD work which purports to consider teacher agency, actions and identity in school and colleges is often oversimplified. Fraser and her colleagues demonstrated this oversimplification and a concomitant lack of transformative teacher learning in some of the PD which has been offered to Scottish teachers over the last decade (Fraser et al., 2007). One of my intended outcomes is to be able to develop meaningful professional development programmes which are rooted in sound theory and which are useful in effecting purposeful change.

PART 2: Pilot study- lesson observation and reflection

Introduction

Aims

The aim of this pilot study is to investigate what early career teachers do and how the factors which mediate the development of their professional identity may be illuminated by their practice – what they do – as well as by what they say. In order to develop my work on espoused identity in early career teachers, I am investigating identity in action – how and what teachers 'do' in the classroom, and hence how they develop their professional identities.

In other words, how does identity negotiation play out in the context of lessons?

In addition, I will examine any links between espoused identity and identity in practice, to see if any such links throw open an arena for investigation.

Research questions

What can be learned about the factors which influence early-career teachers' professional identity from observations of their practice and subsequent discussions about their agency?

What is the relationship between 'espoused identity' and 'practice' in early career teachers?

Does the nature of the research act, focused as it is on narrative, enable varying and different narratives of identity to be articulated? If so, is there coherence, dissonance or both between these articulations?

Background, literature and rationale

In my pilot work which I reported in RP2 (Lord, 2013) I asked teachers to talk to me about the factors which they felt and thought were relevant to their doings and beings as teachers.   I used a narrative methodology incorporating a number of narrative elicitation techniques and subsequently an iterative process of thematic analysis to identify themes which the participants had suggested were particularly relevant. This pilot study focused particularly on espoused identity. In RP3 I wanted to extend this work to include identity in practice.

The aim of my work is to reveal illuminating and explanatory links between espoused identity and identity in practice, which will tell me about how professional identity develops and change in teachers in their early careers.

In my pilot work for RP2 I suspected that there was little point in asking teachers to 'tell me about your identity as a teacher' and so I operationalised the task by asking my participants to tell me about 'Me as a teacher – what I think, feel and do'.   However, I knew that the dissonance between what we

say and what we do has long been acknowledged – the phrase 'do as I do not

do as I say' may have biblical origins (Bruce, 2010)- and so what the teacher-

participants told me they did was likely to be different from what they *in fact*

did.   The differences between declared and performed identity have also

been debated in relation to reflecting on one's practice, most notably by

Argyris and Schon (1974).   They discuss the distinction between declared (or

espoused theories) and 'theories-in-use'. Theories-in-use govern actual

behaviour and tend to be tacit structures.   According to Argyris and Schön

(1974), their relation to action

> 'is like the relation of grammar-in-use to speech; they contain
> assumptions about self, others and environment' (1974, p.30).

The words we use to convey what we do (or sometimes what we would *like*

others to think we do), are our 'espoused' theories.

I have also employed Judith Butler's work on performativity in relation to

gender here.   In 'Gender Trouble" she says…

> ... identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that
> are said to be its results.   (Butler, 1999, p.25)

In Butler's terms, identity is a key set of processes which link to teachers'

agency, and I would argue, to their self-efficacy and professional identity.

In the pilot for this paper therefore, I was keen to investigate how the

development of agency and identity played out in the context of lessons, and

also to investigate any links between espoused identity and identity in

practice.

Methods and methodology

This was a small in-depth study, focusing on one participant – a teacher who I had already worked with on espoused identity for RP2 (Lord, 2013).

Following on from my work on narrative elicitation techniques which I developed in RP2 I worked with an adaptation of another ethnographic technique: the critical incident technique (CIT), commonly used in nursing research (e.g. Schluter et al., 2007) and also in various health and safety settings.   The CIT is described by Flanagan (1954) as a set of procedures for collecting observations of human behaviour. It is a reflective technique, which focuses on what Flanagan calls 'critical incidents' and which is used in retrospect to study the recollections that an individual has of significant incidents that occurred which are relevant in some way to the topic under consideration. Flanagan (1954) defines an incident as

> 'any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act' (p.327).

However, I made some modifications to Flanagan's original conceptualisation of CIT.   The developed methodology is termed 'SET' (significant event technique).

The first change was the name change: I used the term 'significant events' rather than 'critical incidents'. The words 'significant events' carry connotations of meaningfulness and allow for small events to be included, as

opposed to the connotations of danger that are carried by the words 'critical incidents' (Norman et al., 1992).

Secondly, the modified SET involves two individuals' reflections on the lesson and in identifying any significant events.   CIT typically only includes one individual's reflections. In SET, the teacher-participant and the observer both identify what they consider to be significant events in the lesson.   First, the teacher-participant identifies any events from the lesson which they thought were particularly noteworthy in terms of the teaching and learning, or which were particularly unusual. Secondly, the other observer also identifies any which appear to be significant.

There are various criteria for identifying revelatory or critical incidents, (e.g. as suggested by the American Institutes for Research, 1998; as cited by Rous and McCormick, 2006) and I may use these in future work, depending on the results of my pilot study. However, for the moment, I have decided to rely on my own expertise and the experience of the teacher-participant to identify what may be significant events in lessons or tutorials.

The final advantage of the SET for my work is that it is more reflexive than the original CIT. Given that there is an oral culture that is found in teaching and teaching practice (Carter, 1993), and given the focus on narrative in my work that I have already explained (Lord, 2013) I have developed the SET using an interactional-relational approach (e.g. Chirban, 1996) which includes self-

awareness and authenticity. Reflection and reflexivity are achieved by asking

the teacher-participant to describe and comment on the identified significant

events in terms of affect, beliefs and cognitions (the ABC model). This idea is

borrowed from McGuire (1969) who identified the components of an attitude

as being affect, beliefs and cognitions.   In addition, the ABC approach can be

helpful deconstructing happenings in education in a reflective way; for

example, as used by Welch (1999) in his work with in-service teachers.

Prompts which I developed from Welch's work were used in order to

encourage this structured reflection (see Appendix 1 for details).

In addition, I followed the protocol suggested by Schluter et al. (2007) and in

order to avoid bias I tried to question, in a gentle way, every comment made

by the participant. This was in order to ensure that my own bias and 'expert'

position did not appropriate the ideas and thoughts and feelings of the

participating teacher. The theory was that detailed questioning of each piece

of information should prevent me from making assumptions about the data.

As I will show later on, this was in fact not the case; my own assumptions

were very evident throughout the process. I discuss this further on page 65.

I felt as though my prior knowledge and experience, when managed

appropriately and reflexively, should have facilitated my understanding of

participant accounts and strengthened my arguments – and this is indeed

what happened.   Thus, I do not see my expert status as a limitation of the

situation as long as any bias can reduced as far as possible. Rather, I am trying to use my expertise to the maximum potential.

Using the SET, I observed my teacher-participant teaching one lesson and delivering one tutorial session. I made notes throughout the sessions and identified what I considered may have been significant events. After the teaching sessions, I used reflective interviews in which I asked my participant to comment on any events which were significant in terms of the teaching or learning, or which were unusual.

Analysis and Findings

In developing the analysis I used the ideas of Marie Radford (1999) who suggests the use of two levels of analysis – firstly, interpretation, which takes place using the individual transcripts. The transcripts can be found in appendices 4 and 5. The transcripta are read and reread to categorise incidents as subject content (technical) or interactional. Following this analysis, thematic analysis identifies themes and subthemes, analysing the events, contexts and circumstances.

The second level of analysis involves a horizontal reading of the transcripts, so that segments of text can be grouped between the transcripts. In this way, differences and similarities between transcripts can be identified and overarching themes and subthemes can be developed. Repeated reading of the transcripts will ensure that I remain close to the text to 'preserve the temporality and contextuality of the situations' (Benner, 1994).

When I was looking for themes and consistencies in the transcripts, as well as considering the cogent and coherent content, I focused on inconsistencies and contradictory statements. I see here a parallel with Freud's idea that mistakes and slips (as well as humour and dreams) can be windows on the mind (Freud and Bell, 2003). According to Jim Reason, Freud termed such things 'the refuse of the phenomenal world' (Reason, 2000, p.610). Following in this tradition, it is important that I do not ignore contradictory or unexpected information which may lead to a deeper level of interpretation, as anomalies are analyzed for meaning within the context and circumstances.

One of the revelations from the post hoc discussions and early analysis of the discussion following the first lesson delivered by Louise was that the conversation we had had was in fact being used as a form of narrative reflection by Louise. This happened spontaneously, and I suggest, because of the investigative framework which I had used for the discussions.

I was very excited by this insight, and it led me to consider developing another form of analysis, to extend the analyses I had initially planned. I therefore changed the basis of the analysis for the discussion which was had after the second observed lesson. I decided that I needed to consider my own and the teacher-participant's reflection and reflexivity in the post-observation discussions, as well as the attitudes, behaviours and cognitions and the

teacher-participant's views on the SETs which I had analysed after the first observation.

In developing this new form of analysis I drew heavily on the work of Smith and Osborn (2003) on Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).   IPA is concerned with trying to understand the lived experiences of participants' lives and also with the meaning making which participants do in relation to those lived experiences, and so is an appropriate methodological approach for research questions such as mine which focuses on meaning making and the gritty realities of teachers' lives. Importantly, IPA acknowledges that it is not possible to get direct, complete or privileged access to a participant's world. This is because access is dependent on the researcher's own conceptions, in that these are required to make sense of the participants' personal world through interpretation.   So hermeneutics, or theory of interpretation, is key to my analysis. Hannah Arendt's work on storytelling may be helpful in explaining why.   She says: -

> 'It is true that storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it, that it brings about consent and reconciliation with things as they really are…'   (Arendt, 1968, p.105).

I believe that Arendt is suggesting that when we tell stories, we present our audiences with the chance to interpret the narrative in their own way.   In other words, our analysis of the narrative has its own reality and its own meaning, and as such, has the potential to impact on our identity as we construct the

analysis.   This idea is the basis for the double hermeneutic analysis which I developed and used in my analysis of the second observation/discussion.

The term 'double hermeneutic' refers to the parallel processes of production of meaning and meaning-making in the analysis. The double hermeneutic refers both to the context of what is being researched and also to the context of the researcher.   These two contexts interact dialogically in that they both inform and are continually and mutually informed. For Smith and Osborn, double hermeneutic analysis is about 'checking one's own sense making against what is actually said' (Smith and Osborn, 2003, p72).

Specifically, in my case, firstly the teacher-participant's analysis and reflection of the SETs was considered, and then my own reflection on the production and analysis of the SET was produced and analysed. This second part – the 'double' of the double hermeneutic- was done in two stages. Firstly, my reflections on the lesson and on the discussion which the teacher-participant and I had on the lesson at the time and immediately afterwards were considered. Subsequently, with the benefit of distance and hence possibly a higher degree of reflexivity, the teacher-participant's data, reflections and my own initial reflective comments were analysed.

Findings from the initial analysis of the lesson based discussion

Following the post-lesson discussion a thematic analysis was performed on the data. (See Appendix 2 for details)   As with my earlier work (Lord, 2012) I

transcribed the data myself, in order to maintain a key closeness to the data. There were then four analytic iterations in order to develop and crystallize the themes. The same process was used as in my RP2 paper (see Lord, 2012 and appendices 2 and 3 for details). The results of the thematic analysis showed that, perhaps unsurprisingly, the themes which had been clearly espoused and articulated through the narrative elicitation tasks which my participants completed and which I reported in RP2 were not as evident in a lesson observation or in a post lesson discussion of significant events. However, other relevant themes did come out which were of interest and of significance to my framework, but which were related not only to the proximal level but also to the medial and macro- levels of my framework. The themes also highlighted the dynamic intersectionality of the framework, as we will see. I grouped the themes from this lesson and discussion into two sections; both originate from the iterations in the thematic analysis; however, the second group relate quite specifically to reflexion and reflexivity. The themes are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Themes developed from thematic analysis of lesson observation discussion

Theme number	Theme	Indicative example
1	Focus on learning of students	*And I can't remember what she said, but it was a small question, but I think it had a big impact on the way she then answered the question.*
2	Teacher aims	*Yes, she was very weak, um, she is dropping psychology after this year, she is a very practical student, but little things with her, just getting her to pass at the moment, is my, is my aim*
3	Specific teaching/learning/student management strategies	*cos I'd told them about that question time and time again, we've done it, they've done loads and loads of examples…*
4	Student independence	*…that you don't always have to give them the answers, that you can leave them*
5	Insight into own	*but now, I think more than when I was an NQT,*

	professional development	*cos I just wanted them to know what I wanted them to know*
	Analysis of reflection and reflexivity	
	Reflection before action	*…then I thought the other day that I had asked them something and I didn't really get the desired effect,*
	Evidence of reflection in action	*…they need longer, and I knew that when they looked at their descriptions they wouldn't have them, so I managed to go to the odd few and say but how…*
	Evidence of reflection after action	*Oh I always think oh gosh that time's gone really quickly, and, would I have written that in that time, but, and again, that's why I said to them, and again that's why I said to them I said, it IS difficult, so I don't say to them oh it's dead easy, come on you should be doing it, I say it IS difficult, but, that's what's going to happen in the exam. So, you're going to have to get used to it.*

Taking the first five themes first, the first theme I have called 'Focus on learning of students'. This theme reflects the interaction between the teacher-participant and the student or students in relation to learning, and includes consideration of the way in which students do (or do not) learn. The second theme reflects the fact that the aims of the teacher were often expressed very clearly – and sometimes were at odds with the aims of the student. The third theme focuses on the specific teaching/learning/student management strategies of the teacher either in that lesson or more generally. These three could be combined into a meta-level theme concerning discourses relating to teaching and learning.   The final two themes are more personal to the individuals concerned.   The first concerns student independence. I suggest that this theme perhaps is peculiar to the sixth form college/FE sector.   In this sector a good proportion of the students are in the 16-19 year old category and one of the (often unwritten) jobs of a teacher of young people aged 16-19

is to encourage the development of independence in the young adults with whom they work.

The final theme is also a personal theme, but this time related to the teacher-participant, in that it is about their own professional development and the insight that they have in this regard. The identification of this theme was my first real empirical indication that narrative, reflection and reflexivity were key in the development of professional identity.

As I considered these themes, it is clear that they fit into my conceptual framework, but not in a simple way. The more I considered this, the more I realised that this is because the themes are about processes and discourses rather than about factors; the framework focuses on factors within a number of intersecting discourses. Although I did include the role of processes in my framework, these results suggested to me that in my conceptual work I needed to develop a sharper focus on the processes relating to the development and relatedness of personal and professional identity. This is of course what I have discussed in the first part of this paper, where I have started to develop a conceptual overlay for my original conceptual framework (figure 2).

As well as the themes which concerned Louise's discussions of and reflections on her own professional development and her teaching, a key and related finding in the results from this first analysis was that Louise was using the post-lesson discussion of the significant events in the lesson as a

springboard for her own reflections on the lesson. There was evidence of

reflection both 'in' and 'on' action, a distinction which is made by Donald

Schön (1983). Also evident in Louise's post-lesson discussion was the fact

that often she was reflecting before she acts; in other words, there is evidence

of previous reflection having an effect on practice. This insight led me to

analyse the discussion which followed the second observed session in a

different way, using the double hermeneutic analytic technique.

Findings from the double hermeneutic analysis of the tutorial observation discussion

For this observation/discussion, firstly, a thematic analysis was performed and

secondly, I considered the double hermeneutic.   Hence, two sets of themes

came out of this analysis.   The first set was as follows:

Table 2: Themes from the thematic analysis of tutorial discussion

Theme	Indicative quote
College policies and directions and expectations- including a mismatch	*Yeh, yeh, and I think we are, you know, obliged to, …well. I say that, but ..I think we're obliged to do it, through sort of government standards and one thing and another* *Yeh, yeh, and they're very big on that here, about having that extra support,*
Teaching and behaviour management techniques	*So I just touched her on her shoulder and said 'Come on Ali, you can do it'.*
Gender/age issues	*And he's taken quite well to his music teacher, which is a man, which we're quite worried about*
Empathy with students	*Yeah, cos they get, they're seeing it as all these extra things they've got to do, they're not being motivated to develop their personal statement.*
Spontaneous reflection on practice	*It was difficult, difficult, and I'm not pleased with the way that it went, cos I wanted him to do the stuff, I wanted him to.*
Reflection on practice before teaching	*...is what I wanted to get out of today really, so…*

	Sometimes I try it with more difficult students, if they won't respond, just take a different, er…

It is interesting that in the discussions on this tutorial session, the themes which emerged were very different from the themes which I identified after the observation/discussion relating to the first lesson.   The same emphasis on reflective practice is evident, but there was a much heavier emphasis on college policies and procedures and on the enactment of policies in a college setting and the discourses surrounding this enactment.   This is interesting, as I might have expected the emphasis on performativity to come out more in discussions about the actual lessons, rather than about a tutorial session. However, the emphasis on UCAS and progression was what drove this theme.   There were again themes to do with teaching methods and techniques, which were to be expected, as was the focus on empathy with students; something which would be expected in a tutorial discussion where the dominant discourses are about caring and support.   Two of the factors which would fit into the proximal cluster of my conceptual framework, gender and age, were found in the thematic analysis, although again, it was processes and discourses around those factors which were evident, rather than a simple statement of the significance of those factors.

Finally, reflection was yet again a key theme, both reflection on practice and also reflection before practice.   This emphasis is developed in the double hermeneutic analysis, shown in Table 3 (below). The themes which were

identified by the double hermeneutic analysis concern my own meaning-

making, both during the post-tutorial discussion and then on reflection in the

days and weeks after the discussion.   In table 3 the indicative content shows

the thoughts which I had which relate to the double hermeneutic analysis -

the checking of my own '…sense making against what is actually said' (Smith

and Osborn, 2003, p.72).

Table 3: Second set of themes relating to the double hermeneutic analysis

Theme	Indicative content (my own thoughts, rather than words spoken)
My own politics and my questions over the performativity agenda	*Attendance and chasing up - is L hooking into the metrics agenda.* *So, it is keying into the performativity agenda for these kids as well as for L, then tempering this with the caring agenda. NB here, I have identified these agendas because they suit my purpose – a meta level TFG (taken for granted) set of assumptions.*
Role conflict and my own identity	*…in a way I am here trying to stand beside L and to agree with her, validate her narrative, give her an anchoring point. And maybe, my next thought to validate MY past experience as a teacher too – in a kind of mutual way…*
Interviewing practice	*Why didn't I challenge this? I didn't ask about 'we'. Does it mean somewhere further up the line, or a peer. Or who? And I didn't ask about why worried. Again, 'why' as a NQ (naïve question) would have been useful.* *Looking at this afterwards I feel as if I was doing far too much talking*
Word choice – semiotics and semantics	*I didn't ask 'what issues'? This word 'issues' carries a lot with it. Another potential NQ opportunity. It's a word like 'stuff'.* *So, again use of this complex word 'issues'. Means everything and nothing.* *Again ..this word 'issues'. I wonder what it means. In teacher talk, I know, I think….* http://www.robertfulford.com/Euphemisms2.html *It's about problems, it's a teacher euphemism, and it may be a 'kinder' word than problem. Or is it that 'problem' means it is there to be solved? We tend to use it for personal things*

	(now I am using 'things'!) not for academic things.
Intersubjectivity (common sense shared meanings)	*Shared understanding*
	I'm not surprised that tutorial is not taken seriously because this is my own experience – my own taken for granted assumptions about the nature on tutorials in 6FC (Sixth Form colleges). Intersubjectivity here. But really the question should be, why?

Much of this analysis concerns my own reflexivity, and an awareness of my own position as both teacher and researcher. However, there is a limit to how much of this reflexive analysis can be done; at some point it has to stop, otherwise the analysis is in danger of falling into a recursive loop worthy of an Escherian stairwell.

What is clear from the analysis and the themes in tables 2 and 3 above is that there is a large element of intersubjectivity evident in the discussions, and that therefore I need to develop the tools that I am using with my teacher-participants to ensure that the shared and taken-for-granted assumptions which are a feature of the discussions are identified and questioned. They may be key to an understanding of the processes involved in identity development.   In addition, one of the themes concerns my role as an education professional and as researcher. The two cannot be separated, and in fact their closeness does give me an advantage in understanding the processes of identity development, but only if I am reflexive in my practice.

In addition, I have decided that in future interviews, I am going to make use of a technique I am developing, called naïve questioning' which questions the

taken-for-granted and shared assumptions between myself and Louise and also which exists between staff in education generally as well as in specific in schools and colleges.   I discussed my intended use of such a technique in the thesis plan which is the first part of this paper.

In my consideration of the process of discussion here, I have also been critical of my own interviewing skills. Some of the weaknesses which I have detected are to do with this role blurring, others are related to lack of experience in this kind of phenomenological research field.   I have certainly learned from this process, and I am aware that I must be careful not to repeat the same mistakes.

One of the themes which I have identified I have called semiotics. In my reflective analysis, I have been starting to question the often quite complex meanings which words such as 'issues', 'engaged', and 'things' carry with them in an educational context.   This, together with the focus on the narrative/reflective link and its impact on identity, is something which is clearly key in the development of professional identity in teachers, and which I will engage with further in later work.

Conclusions

My research questions focused on the links between espoused identity and identity in practice, and between personal and professional identity. A related

question concerned the use of narrative and reflection in terms of methodology and as tools relating to teacher professional development. In this pilot I have looked at data and literatures relating to these questions, and identified the key role of reflection and of narrative in developing teacher identity. The complexities of teachers' lives and of teaching relate both to the situated nature of teachers and teaching and to the links between personal and professional identity. A theme which has run though all my work since RP1 is that of a fluid intersectionality between the factors mediating the development of professional identity, and this is emphasised again in this pilot.

Tentative conclusions suggest that the complex relationship between espoused identity and identity in practice, and between personal and professional identity, may be mediated in part through reflection and narrative.

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