

Transition, perspectives, and  
strategies: on the process of becoming  
a teacher in higher education

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## **Abstract**

For those who teach in higher education and draw on vocational rather than academic backgrounds, the processes of socialisation are complex, extended and highly conditioned by their 'past' professions. These professions are seen to provide both 'resources' and 'dissonances' in the transitions that constitute their progress towards becoming a teacher. Whilst a great deal has been written of these processes in older universities with high concentrations of academic staff whose careers are largely confined to higher education itself, relatively little is known of parallel processes in newer institutions that are highly connected to specific kinds of workplace.

This study addresses the way in which the current literature has under-represented the experiences and perspectives of 'late entrants' to teaching in higher education who come to work in a university from a profession that is 'outside' of higher education itself. The study uses a case study approach based on a series of semi-structured interviews to reveal and analyse the processes of socialisation for ten participants undertaking a programme of teacher training (PGCAP). It describes a certain kind of 'insider' research where closeness and rapport exist alongside asymmetries of power and forms of 'guilty knowledge'. Narrative methods are used to analyse and represent the data from differing perspectives to reveal a range of engagements, commitments and experience. These are seen to shape the socialisation process through key 'turning points' promoting movement towards a teacher identity.

The study draws on theoretical perspectives based on the work of Bernstein (2000) and Bandura (1997) in order to analyse core processes both situationally and from an individual perspective. The research raises key questions about the learning environments created for participants on this teacher training course and the wider discourses that influence such provision. It also challenges a growing assumption that the attempts by the state to control and improve teaching in higher education are incorporated into individual teaching practice.

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# Transition, perspectives, and strategies: on the process of becoming a teacher in higher education

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## Glossary

PGCAP	Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice
HEA	Higher Education Academy
CETL	Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning
ILTHE	Institute for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
HESA	Higher Education Statistical Agency
HE	Higher Education
FE	Further Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
TDA	Teacher Development Agency
NMC	Nursing and Midwifery Council



# **Chapter one: Introduction - Transition, Perspectives and Strategies: on the Process of Becoming a Teacher in Higher Education**

## **A rationale for the study**

This study is concerned with the identification and conceptualisation of the processes of becoming a teacher in one UK University. It seeks to explore the ways in which such processes might occur and the key factors which shape them. I am interested in these processes more generally but also how they are played out in an institution with a primary vocational focus and specifically in relation to a formal programme of teacher training that seeks to prepare higher education teachers for this role. The study explores the contribution of specific interventions, such as a period of teacher training, from a particular kind of 'insider' perspective. In the study, I occupy at least three roles in relation to the research participants, that of a tutor on their programme of professional development for teaching, that of a colleague within the higher education institution in which the research is situated and that of the researcher embarking on a professional journey. I see these roles as providing certain 'affordances' of everyday and privileged access, as a way of getting close enough to see some of the processes of teacher socialisation 'first hand', as well as through the eyes of the research participants themselves.

The study draws directly on aspects of my own background. My experience as a University staff developer provides an intense curiosity about how novice teachers might best acquire and transfer (Sfard, 1998) the skills of a teacher. I have witnessed and been part of the development of both a large number of teachers in higher education and health professionals, notably dentists and doctors. This experience has highlighted for me how the processes of becoming a teacher seem to involve more than the learning of a 'craft' or becoming part of a 'community of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Such professionals seem to have a different and unfamiliar set of struggles which are in some way connected with their 'main' profession. I have begun to recognise this struggle for a 'dual' identity (Castells, 1997), as a significant part of 'becoming' a teacher.

I also want to link to my background in an entirely different way. The study context, a University highly connected to workplace, is staffed by many teachers whose biographies are very like my own. They have spent time in 'other' forms of work such as nursing or finance and have negotiated non-traditional pathways into and through tertiary education. They seem in this respect to have more in common with the 'late entrants' to teaching described by Salisbury (1995) and Sikes *et al* (1985) and unlike the academics who are the central focus of research on higher education socialisation by scholars such as Henkel (2000) or Kogan (2000). They are also unlike the academics in the work of Rowland *et al* (1998), who fiercely contest attempts by the State to 'credentialise' and 'improve' teaching activity in higher education (Beck,2008). I set out therefore to examine whether these wider discourses might become combined with more localised attempts to define 'good teaching' and how these might contribute to processes of identity formation and socialisation. These areas of interest define the scope of the study and its potential contribution to an understanding of becoming a teacher in higher education.

### **The research questions**

Having established the broad direction of the study based on my own staff development experience outlined above and under-researched areas that emerge from the literature, I began to frame my areas of research interest . As I did so, I was mindful of two related concerns. First, whilst Robson (2002: 55) has noted how the 'most substantive research is undertaken by those who are deeply involved in the substantive area of study', such involvement might also constitute a barrier to good research. Delamont (2002) has written extensively of several risks in relation to over-identification with the research participants and of 'familiarity' with the research setting itself. These phenomena both constituted a potential risk to the study from the outset. Second, as Knight (2002:9) contends, research questions are powerful 'only if the person asking them can explain why the resulting descriptions might be significant for practitioners, other researchers or theory'.

I have also followed the advice offered by Miles & Huberman (1994: 25) to develop 'major' overarching questions or areas of interest, to avoid question proliferation and to ensure that emerging ideas and directions would not be closed off too quickly. My

first area of interest began as a very general one but became more researchable as I explored the key literatures and defined the scope of the study. The first research question therefore reflects the exploratory nature of the study but also its focus on participants whom I define as 'late entrants' beginning to teach in a particular kind of University. I also had a second question about the specific contribution of a teaching training programme, with which my research participants would be engaged during the period of the study. This was known as the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice or PGCAP.

The research questions which were explored during the research and which underpinned the study are therefore twofold.

1. How do 'late entrants' to university teaching experience and manage the process of becoming a teacher ?
2. What is the particular role/significance of the PGCAP in the development of a teacher in higher education?

The inclusion of the second question was to be reviewed once the study was underway. By including and phrasing it in this way, I was aware that I had privileged the PGCAP as a primary site for teacher development or socialisation. If the PGCAP was such a key site or contributor, then this would surely emerge as I explored the answers to the first question.

The inclusion of the second question was based on two considerations. First, it is underpinned by the assumption that, as most of the participants were part-time teachers in higher education, the PGCAP would be one of their main connections to the University and to higher education more generally. This view was also based on the extant research literature, which suggests that there is a lack of opportunities for part-time staff to collaborate or engage with higher education colleagues. Part-time staff are, it is said, are 'often excluded from departmental activities' (Abbas and MacLean, 2001:346). Second, my background and my tutor role within the PGCAP, which I outline below, means I was (and still am) intensely curious about how the programme is engaged with and used by participants.

## **The research process**

The thesis begins with a review of the relevant literature. In chapter two, I provide an overview of existing work that has been concerned with teacher socialisation and the development of a teacher identity. I examine the way such processes are portrayed in other sectors, notably schools, and see how this overview relates to teacher socialisation into higher education. I note how the increasing 'prescription' of the 'good teacher' (Nicoll and Harrison, 2003) provides a context for socialisation processes. In chapter two, I also seek to legitimate the approaches adopted in the study in terms of how these general and more specific literatures 'represent' teacher socialisation and the development of a teacher identity. The review highlights how particular kinds of staff, those who bring specific experiences and established identities into the socialisation process, are under-represented in those literatures.

Chapter three describes how I negotiated access to the research participants, constructed an appropriate sample and obtained individual consents. I give an account of the multiple roles I played in the research and the way in which 'privileged access' (Lofland and Lofland, 1995) to the participants as a tutor on their course generated a range of dilemmas as well as opportunities. I set out how the affordances of everyday access, a 'closeness' to the participants and forms of power may have influenced the data-gathering process. The data themselves were gathered over an academic year during three semi-structured interviews with each of the ten participants in the study sample. I undertook these interviews across an academic year in order to sample into the participants' changing experiences, perspectives and emotions.

A description of the institutional and policy contexts of the study is presented in chapter four. The chapter draws primarily on secondary sources, such as the 'Education Strategy' of 'New U' (I use this pseudonym for the main study context throughout). It is also informed by a number of observations which I undertook during the PGCAP sessions attended by the research participants. I then move on to examine the origins of the PGCAP, its current content, how it is organised and what it seeks to achieve in terms of enhancing the skills and the broader development of those who undertake it. The research participants themselves are

introduced through short cameos comprising their professional backgrounds, demographic characteristics and current teaching roles. The chapter views them in their professional groups as a baseline from which the processes of 'becoming' teachers in higher education might begin. I set the whole chapter in the context of the credentialisation of teaching in higher education and the crafting of institutional discourses around 'learning' and 'employability'. I explore how constructions of 'good teaching' might further complicate the search for a teacher identity in higher education.

I re-visit the data from the interviews described in chapter three and through a reflexive process, set out in chapters five, six and seven, differing ways of representing the overall patterns while conserving much of the narrative flow. I used forms of 'narrative analysis' (Mishler, 1986; Cortazzi, 1993) to bring out what I see as significant in the participants' interview accounts and use three differing analytic perspectives in the empirical chapters (five, six and seven) in order to enhance the validity of the study. In chapter five, the participants' narratives are used to construct 'occupational groups' to demonstrate how past experience can be powerfully projected on to teaching itself. In chapter six, I set aside the participants' backgrounds and analyse their 'talk'. This produces a typology of commitment which develops across time and in ways that are associated with the participants' backgrounds. Chapter seven uses three case studies to examine how professional backgrounds and commitment interact and shift through a number of 'turning points'. I use Denzin's (1989) notion of 'epiphany' and the broader concept of 'critical incidents' as analytical tools here.

In chapter eight I develop further the study's findings in terms of the ways in which socialisation might take place. I also consider the particular role of the teacher training course the participants undertake in those processes. Two theoretical frameworks are used to 'make sense' of the findings. The work of Bernstein (1996, 2000) and, in particular, his work on 'retrospective' identities, 'regions' and 'projected identities', is helpful in framing the discussion 'situationally'. I also draw on the work of Bandura (1997) and his concepts of 'self-efficacy' and 'agency' to explore how the socialisation of some participants is influenced by particular variations in their

experience. This appears to confer varying degrees of 'agency' and frames the discussion 'individually' – as located within or inside each individual.

The final chapter summarises the study's findings and, on the basis of these, makes recommendations regarding future practice. I start with the way in which the study has begun to influence my own practice and move on to consider the implications for the teacher training course at the heart of the study and the wider staff development community. Recommendations regarding further areas for research are also made.

## **Chapter two: Literature review – constructing a teacher identity in higher education**

The work of identity construction is significantly carried out through what is presented as factual with regard to the “normal” comportment and activity of teachers; the positioning of the teacher in relation to other (more authoritative) groups; and in terms of the status of the knowledge upon which teachers are drawing. (Nicoll & Harrison, 2003:28)

### **Introduction**

The chapter begins by setting out how I see the building of a distinctive ‘teacher’ identity in higher education as a process ‘in its own right’ in relation to broader notions of socialisation and the formation of an ‘academic’ identity. I move on to provide an overview of existing work that has been concerned with teacher socialisation and the development of a teacher identity. This includes material from other sectors, particularly school-based studies (Lacey,1977; Stowell,1988). The chapter then examines the extent to which the processes identified in schools are ‘re-played’ in higher education and the way in which credentialisation (Rowland *et al*,1998) has provided a particular discourse of change. I finally legitimate the approaches adopted in this study in terms of how these general and more specific literatures represent teacher socialisation and the development of a teacher identity. The review especially seeks to highlight how particular kinds of staff, those who bring specific experiences and established identities into the socialisation process, are under-represented in those literatures.

### **Academic and teacher identities**

I want to draw an early distinction between academic and teacher identities and begin to situate these terms in the broader processes of professional socialisation. I observe later in this chapter how much of the literature, for example work by Kogan (2000) or Henkel (2000), focuses on the development of academic identities in disciplines and subject areas which characterise the older universities. In such institutions, and in a very small number of newer institutions, ‘research has a dominant place in private and public identities of academics’ (Henkel,2000:210). This is not to say that an academic identity is shaped exclusively by research. Indeed, Henkel (p.211) goes on to acknowledge that ‘for the majority of academics,

their educational roles were important' and that 'not all those who saw teaching as central to their lives were in new universities'. For the majority of academic staff, both teaching and research play a part in identity formation, particularly where there is a strong relationship between these activities (Barlow and Antonio, 2007). Having a teacher identity is part of an academic identity.

I see the socialisation of those from professional backgrounds working in certain newer universities very differently - as being about 'becoming' a teacher rather than 'becoming an academic'. This is mainly about patterns of 'activity' and of context. For example, in New U, academic staff typically spend 86% of their work time undertaking activities related to teaching and the support of their students in the year prior to the study. Conversely, only about 10% of their time was reported as being spent on research. As these statistics do not separate out part-time staff or identify those who are new to teaching, it's clear that for the research participants, teaching is their dominant work activity. I therefore see the participants initially as akin to novice teachers in schools. They are inducted through the discourses of 'teaching', undertake a period of professional training and have to come to terms with the demands of teaching itself. The chapter now turns to the way that teacher socialisation, outside of higher education, is reported.

### **Becoming a teacher – rites of passage and suspended states**

A number of studies have sought to describe and conceptualise the experiences of novice teachers in a range of settings (Lortie, 1975; Lacey, 1977; Stowell, 1988; Huberman, 1991; Salisbury, 1995 and McNamara *et al*, 2002). These accounts have generated a number of concepts and descriptions of journeys, shifting identities and transitions. The defining features of these experiences are often portrayed as ones of struggle, of crisis or a 'baptism of fire' (Hall, 1982:54), and eventual survival. They are also frequently likened to a rite of passage (Huberman, 1981), a period when a novice's commitment, values and perspectives are tested. Becoming a teacher is often viewed as a status earned by passing through an 'ordeal'.

McNamara *et al* (2002) use these anthropological terms and concepts to describe a universal journey consisting of 'separation', 'transformation' and 'return' as student



teachers enter the domain of the school and subsequently return to their university. White (1989, p. 177) also observes how novice teachers have to 'cut the ties that bind them to the ordinary world of college in order to embark upon the student teaching semester' and undertake a number of 'symbolic rituals in preparation for this embarkation'. He further notes how this included 'getting their hair cut', 'dressing in smarter clothes', 'adopting different names (Sir/Miss)' and 'parting from college peers' (p.177). White finally notes how, on their return to college, they are 'ritually reinstated in the ordinary world with accompanying changes in status rights and prerogatives' (p.177).

Other studies, notably by Corcoran (1981), Huberman (1991) and Veenman (1984) all describe dramatic and stressful early experiences of novice teachers and the development of a set of coping strategies and a 'survival kit' for the classroom. Many of these also deploy similar ceremonial or ritualistic language such as baptism of fire or trial by fire (Hall,1982; Patanicek & Isaacson,1981) or a more prosaic 'sink or swim' approach (Lortie,1975; Lawson,1992; Salisbury,1994). What binds all of these studies is the sudden and sometimes dramatic experience of the transition from 'student' to 'teacher' - the inevitably painful beginnings associated with motivating learners, gaining acceptance from peers and managing complex tasks. It is unsurprising that becoming a teacher is so frequently and powerfully likened to a religious rite of passage.

Such experiences are often set within and prompted by structured experiences such as induction processes or periods of professional training, usually a postgraduate certificate in education. These are viewed as the locus for change and socialization. In Lacey's (1977) seminal study of the first UK university teacher training department to provide substantial school experience as part of secondary teacher training, the links between the schools and a University are examined. The study was undertaken in the early 1970's and first published in 1973. The later work of Stowell (1988), which draws heavily on Lacey's work, focuses on the 'power relations involved in teacher training' and, in particular, the 'hidden pedagogy' behind the assessment of teacher competence. Stowell's work is also based on an innovation being located in one of the first teacher training colleges to become a formal part of higher education.

In each of these studies, the initial period of study and professional training of novice teachers is seen as at the heart of the socialisation process.

Both Stowell (1988) and Lacey (1977) deployed a range of theoretical perspectives to portray the socialisation process as one of adaptation, both to the early demands of teaching in schools and in their relationships with college tutors. The 'success' of participants in these programmes is attributed to their ability to survive periods of 'struggle' and 'critical phases' (Stowell,1988:2) or to strategies of 'internalized adjustment' and 'collectivising' (Lacey,1977:72). Both studies saw teacher socialisation as a process whereby novice teachers shift from novice to teacher in a series of phases or steps as they learn to 'cope' with a range of demands. These are most clearly evoked by Lacey, who refers to an initial 'honeymoon period' (p.80) at the start of the teacher training programme, when ideals have not been challenged by the reality of life in school. This is followed by periods of 'material collection', of 'crisis' and then of 'learning to get by'. Stowell similarly describes periods of being tested, learning to cope and enduring an ongoing battle with learners.

The role of the novice in these processes is, however, neither a passive nor a straightforward one. Both Lacey and Stowell stress the 'negotiated' character of the process of identity construction. Stowell (1988) finds teachers actively constructing their identities given that potential teachers work in contexts which both constrain and develop them. The difficulties that novice teachers face in their initial encounters with pupils and in developing their relationships with other teachers in the school, are seen as central in a struggle for survival. However, since these struggles are also shaped by processes of negotiation, accommodation and resistance, the context as well as the novice is changed. Lacey (1977:22) adopted a similarly interactionist perspective when he states,

Socialisation is a more complex, interactive, negotiated and provisional process. The model presented here also stresses the importance of man as a creative force, as a searcher for solutions and as possessing a considerable potential to shape the society in which he lives.

The novice teachers are thus seen in both studies as active agents in their own socialization, developing a range of strategies in order to 'cope', but also negotiating the situations in which they find themselves. In Lacey's analysis, individuals assess situations, make choices and decisions, and adopt strategies of action. They are active in the construction of their identity as teachers. The development of the professional teacher thus becomes a series of social interactions where novices are concerned as they define and re-define the situations that they find themselves in.

It is also important to understand that these transitions may not always be problematic (Alves,2001) or confined to periods of training. Flores (2006) draws attention to factors that often account for a more positive early socialisation experience, especially when there is 'a match between expectations, personality and workplace realities' (p.2022). Lacey (1977) also recognises that those novice teachers who are 'situationally sensitive' (p.90) are more likely to survive their initial socialisation experiences and reduce their risk of failure. Such students, Lacey noted, are particularly good at picking up 'cues' from staff, especially about assessment.

Other more idiosyncratic and earlier processes of socialisation may also be at work. Lortie's (1975) 'Five Towns' study based on new high school teachers in the USA, pays particular attention to induction processes. Lortie distinguishes between the relative inconsistency and 'primitive' nature of formal induction processes into teaching when 'compared with the crafts, professions and highly skilled trades...' (p.59). Socialisation may begin even further back. His (1975) study also refers to the 'apprenticeship of observation' (p.59), when examining the early socialisation of teachers. Such an apprenticeship, that of being a student, can itself be a powerful preparation for becoming a teacher. Students see teachers at work and, on occasions 'take the role' (p.61) of the teacher, at least on an empathetic level.

In other school-based studies the development of a teacher is also significantly constructed from dissonance, the contrast between pre-teaching images of themselves and the realities of life in school. However, more recent studies give less prominence to stage-like processes and more to complex and ambiguous states of 'in-betweenness'. McNamara *et al* (2002:871), for example, state how

In the same way, a number of other transitional activities, such as school placements, can be read as 'rehearsals' for the student's future teacher identity. Rites of passage are inherently dramatic because the participants not only do things, they try to show others what they are doing or have done; actions take on a 'performed-for-an-audience aspect'. This is particularly true of students on teaching practice, who have to demonstrate to tutors, class teachers, parents and pupils their ability to perform in a 'teacherly' way. Yet most students experience teaching practice as a continual shifting between positions of 'being' and 'becoming'.

In other words, novice teachers may not report a relatively straightforward journey from 'student' to 'teacher' but more discontinuous states of 'being' and 'not being' a teacher before eventually 'becoming' a teacher. Further on in their study, McNamara *et al* note how these shifts might occur within a single day as well as over longer time periods. This state of 'in-betweenness' has also been noted by Samara & Luce-Kaplar (1996:67), who describe the emergence of a teaching identity as 'something that hangs, suspended, between teaching and non-teaching experiences'. Such studies suggest that the metaphor of a 'journey' may not describe adequately the process of 'becoming' a teacher.

### **Building and maintaining a teacher identity**

Studies such as those by Lortie, Lacey and Stowell, provide useful and compelling accounts of socialisation into teaching, particularly the 'mechanisms' of socialisation. However, they tend to understate the role played by identity formation itself. In their accounts, identity is portrayed as something that novices 'take on' rather than construct for themselves. More recent work, again focusing on teachers in school, views identity construction not only as more dynamic, more active and more 'connected' to teacher behaviour – but also more fragmented than that portrayed by earlier studies.

Pollard (1980), for example, develops the idea of the 'self' as part of the interplay between institutional factors and teacher biography as key to understanding socialisation processes. Developing Pollard's work, Woods (1981) places 'identity' alongside teacher 'strategies' and 'commitments' in an attempt to get at the 'heart of school action' (p.283). Here Woods uses concepts of identity to inform an analysis

of the actions of two teachers and how they coped with particular situations. In these processes of socialisation, identity is a much more active component since

..it is in these areas of teacher biography that the individual has most choice, choosing how to distribute commitments over a range of concerns, selecting an identity from a range of roles and testing it reflexively in a continuous process of interaction with others. These choices have implications for strategies and careers. (Woods,1981:300)

In this interplay with strategies and commitments, identity itself is seen as dynamic. Woods (p.296) distinguishes, for example, between more permanent 'substantial' identities and more transient 'situated' identities which are seen to interact. Similarly, Sumara & Luce-Kaplar's perspective on identity construction (1996) has the same 'in-between' quality as the broader socialisation process referred to above. They refer to the way in which novice teachers create what they term 'fictive' identities (p.67), which develop while they learn to teach. The fictive identity blends parts of the novice's biography with images and myths that they hold of a teacher, their idea of a teacher.

Day (2004:57) sees teacher identities as more transient than this, being viewed as 'discontinuous, fragmented and subject to change'. Day also suggests that both novice teachers and those with more experience mobilise 'occasional' identities in response to shifting contexts. In the work of Giddens (1991) this becomes a continuous process of re-constructing a sense of the self. For Giddens and others (Peshkin.1984; Biggs,1999) such processes are seen as important for maintaining self-esteem and need to draw heavily on personal biography. Referring to more general identity construction Castells (1997:6) elaborates this as a process of 'individuation' where

..the construction of identities uses building materials from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations.

Castells also links the processes of identity construction to dissonances. For Castells (1997), dissonances are derived from the way in which individuals have to

act and represent themselves across a number of identities which often cut across their broader roles. In Sumara & Luce-Kapler's study, novice teachers also experience dissonance. However, it is here, between expectation and reality, or across time, that they 'negotiate the dissonance between their pre-teaching lives and their lives as experienced teachers' (p.67).

Such dissonances may not be confined to differences between past and future identities, often extending into broader contexts. McNamara *et al* refer to new ordeals for beginning teachers, such as skills tests, and Atkinson (2004) draws attention to the way in which the 'standards discourse' (p.380) has idealised collective views of teaching. These themes of journeys, of transitions, of identity construction and of dissonance are now developed in the context of higher education prior to being drawn into the thesis itself.

### **Becoming a teacher in Higher Education**

The purpose here is to examine the extent to which the processes identified in schools and other contexts are 're-played' in higher education and the extent to which higher education contexts produce different kinds of processes. The following sections note many similarities with those set out above, particularly in relation to the socialisation effects of induction, professional training and broader processes of credentialisation. However, it also suggests that these apparent similarities may also be powerfully mediated by conditions unique to higher education. Among these are the power of the disciplines, the influence of departmental cultures and what it means to be an 'academic'.

As in schools, the processes of socialisation into teaching in higher education frequently begin with induction and associated activities such as mentoring (Cawyer *et al*,2002; Furlong and Maynard,1995). Metaphors for journeys and transitions towards becoming a teacher again occur in the literature. Hodkinson and Taylor (2002), describe how new lecturers are 'initiated' (p.256) and subsequently 'normalised' through participation in accredited programmes of teacher training. As in schools and teaching generally, these processes are seen as weak, poorly

planned and mismanaged. Trowler and Knight (1999:179) highlight in particular how there is a

growing disjuncture between new recruits to the academy and the work expected of them with assumptions made about the prior experiences of new academic staff. Many new academic staff have undergone some anticipatory socialisation but typically as researchers, not as teachers.

The research of Trowler and Knight on new academic appointees in universities highlights the extent to which much early socialisation specifically directed towards teaching is not fit for purpose. Work by Murray (2005) and Harrison & McKeon (2008) on the transitions of schoolteachers into academic posts in higher education, illustrates through specific examples, many of Trowler and Knight's observations. Murray also highlights a lack of recognition for non-traditional routes into higher education by higher education institutions. She (2005:69) refers to the ways in which schoolteachers 'enter HE with high levels of teaching experience.... [but] without doctoral level qualifications in education or other sustained experience of research'. Murray reports how all of the interviewees in her study entering HE from schools experience

..a distinct and often stressful career change. Recurring feelings on entry to HE were of being 'deskilled', of finding teaching in HE a struggle and of 'masquerading in HE'. Learning to become a teacher educator was seen overall as a slow, uncertain process, requiring the acquisition of new knowledge and understanding of both the school and HE sectors (p.73).

Such processes are perceived to leave novice teachers in higher education feeling anxious and disoriented. In a broader study of a range of academics, Cawyer *et al* (2002) highlight two primary reasons, in particular, for dissatisfaction. The first of these is uncertainty about performance expectations and the second, ongoing feelings of isolation at work. Studies by Bullis and Bach (1989) and Myers (1995) also emphasise feelings of alienation when new academics start their careers. Cawyer *et al*, in their research on mentoring programmes, note how frequently expectations of university life fail to match the realities of organisational life. In this sense, there are similar dissonances to those experienced by novice teachers in schools.

For Fanghanel (2004), who studied novice teachers in higher education, beginning lecturers continue to experience dissonances well beyond formal induction and mentoring arrangements. Such dissonances have a range of sources and, like teacher socialisation in schools, these frequently centre on professional training itself. There are however, fewer references to 'crisis' or 'ordeals' in higher education. It is more about adaptation or alignment than survival. Indeed, becoming a teacher in higher education is seen in Fanghanel's work mainly as a pedagogic enterprise - the application of generic teaching skills from a training course, into an academic's own discipline.

Participants' positioning towards the course was seen as oscillating on a continuum between alignment with and disjunction from concepts expounded in the course. Their positions contained `a mixture of adaptative and oppositional elements. Signs of alignment included the notion of feasibility, the ability to adapt practices. This was generally signalled by the ability on the part of respondents to speak positively of their experience on the course and to give examples taken from their practice. Disjunctions transpired, on the other hand, when they expressed an inability to reconstruct practices explored in the courses at local level, often on epistemological grounds, or by invoking practical or structural causes (Fanghanel,2004:584).

Fanghanel finds further dissonances between the ideas and practices of teaching on a professional education course and the ideologies and teaching practices of the novices' own academic departments. There are 'obstacles to transferability' (p.589) and a suggestion that the department may be the prime, long-term locus of practice. In this way, Fanghanel pinpoints the locus of initial socialisation between and within a professional course, the individual and a department.

The role of academic departments in the socialisation processes in universities is also explored by Becher and Trowler (2001), although they locate such processes more firmly in academic communities or, as they refer to them, in 'academic tribes'. Whilst Becher and Trowler do not refer explicitly to identity or to socialisation more generally, it is their thesis that disciplinary cultures are at the heart of both:

..the ways in which academics engage with their subject matter, and the narratives they develop about this, are important structural factors in the formulation of disciplinary cultures. Together, they represent features that



lend coherence and relative permanence to academics' social practices, values and attitudes across time and place. (p.23)

Hence, while academic disciplines and departments in universities are weaker than before (Becher and Trowler, 2001) they may still play a greater role in the formation of a teaching identity than the subjects taught by teachers. Teachers in secondary school are primarily teachers of a discipline; they do not inhabit the discipline itself.

Indeed, the work of Becher and Trowler (2001), Kogan (2000) and Henkel (2000) all suggests that the primary socialisation process in universities is within the disciplines themselves. Hence the focus is on the formation of an 'academic' identity, unlike in schools where it is a teacher identity which is being shaped. For Kogan (2000), an academic identity is strongly tied to the intellectual self-confidence of the disciplines and the subject areas to which academics belong. Henkel (2000), however, whilst seeing academic work as providing the conditions for the development of strong identities both as individuals and as part of defined communities, also recognises other sources of socialisation. Among these are the academic's 'own narrative histories, moral frameworks, individual achievements, contributions to communities and as the inheritor of roles from communities and institutions' (p.16).

Henkel also draws important distinctions between socialisation processes and identity formation in different kinds of higher education institution. Hence, academic life in an older university might be quite similar to the idealised notions of identity set out above. In such institutions, a teaching identity is held within and forms part of an academic identity. In the most of the post '92 universities<sup>1</sup>, the ex-polytechnics, individuals are contracted primarily to teach and are encouraged more to value their identity as teachers. Henkel (2000) also notes that 'while that research has a dominant place in the public and private identities of academics, we have noted that,

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'post-'92' universities applies to those institutions such as polytechnics who were re-designated as universities under the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act. This legislation removed any control over institutions of higher education by Local Education Authorities and created a unified system of funding under HEFCE and its equivalents in Scotland and Wales.

for the majority of academics, their educational roles are also important, and often essential, to their professional identities' (p.210).

In this and the previous section I emphasise that the processes of socialisation and identity formation in universities are similar to other contexts such as schools. Whilst there are fewer references to novices undertaking an 'ordeal' and having to 'survive' their early teaching in higher education, there are dissonances too. These centre on the transition into higher education from other occupations, on the challenge of applying generic teaching skills to local contexts, and in particular, on adaptation to a discipline. It is also noted that, while an academic identity and the research that underpins it, might be central in some institutions and some disciplines, other factors are at work. Individual biographies, institutional priorities and a commitment to teaching itself also contribute to socialization in higher education.

It is apparent that the development of a teacher identity, even in higher education, can be seen as a process in its own right. There have also been significant shifts in the way that a 'teaching' identity might be more strongly developed throughout higher education, a theme to which the chapter now turns.

### **The processes and impacts of credentialisation**

The development of a teacher identity in higher education may increasingly be shaped by processes and imperatives beyond academic departments, disciplines and individual universities. This stems from the extension of the development of teachers in schools and further education (FE) colleges (Salisbury, 1994), prior to 2001, to include interventions in the professional training of teachers in universities (Bailey & Robson, 2002). I use the term 'credentialisation' here to describe a process by which teaching in universities is drawn into the influence of the state through agencies such as the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). I also use the term to describe an associated process whereby a 'shared view' of teaching as a 'technical' activity may normalize and shape what it means to be a teacher in higher education. Hence, credentialisation can potentially be viewed as an active component in the socialisation process, as well as the

context in which it takes place. I set out the background to credentialisation in table 2.1 below.

**Table 2 1: The move to credentialise teaching in higher education**

Year	Event(s)
1996	The Association of University Teachers calls for the appropriate preparation of teachers in higher education
1997	The National Committee of Enquiry into Higher Education (the Dearing Report) calls for proper accredited education programmes for university teachers
1998	The Booth Report sets up the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE) as a self-regulating teaching body. Initially works alongside Staff Educational Development Agency (SEDA) Consultation Document follows which recommends a new integrated approach to the funding of improvements to teaching in higher education. Launch of the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF)
1999	ILTHE core precepts for professional practice are developed to define a set of knowledge components. Initially they are 'illustrative' of competence but become 'outcomes' that define 'good teaching' Creation of the Learning and Teaching Subject Network (LTSN). There are 24 subject centres and one generic centre Creation of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) which awards 3-year fellowships of £50,000 to 'excellent' teachers in higher education.
2003	White Paper 'The Future of Higher Education' Funding provided for the creation of Centres of Excellence in Teaching & Learning (CETLs) as 'beacons' of good teaching. Creation of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) which incorporates the ILTHE and the LTSNs

The introduction of teaching qualifications for academic staff in universities is significant in three respects. Firstly, although this training is not compulsory for all new staff, it is increasingly tied to employment conditions such as probation and promotion (Bailey and Robson, 2002). This, it might be argued, enhances the profile and status of teaching as a discrete activity. Secondly, the introduction of teaching qualifications constitutes an intervention that creates an opportunity for the socialisation of new staff into institutional and wider views of 'good teaching' (Nicoll & Harrison, 2003; Tudor, 2006). Thirdly, it may provide a forum through which a

teacher identity itself may be constructed, particularly where part-time staff, for example, are less strongly connected to departments or other organisational structures. Fanghanel (2004:585) notes how 'respondents indicated that they valued the socialization and acculturation aspects of the course, as counteracting isolation they might feel in respect of teaching within departments whose main interest was research'.

The background to and development of compulsory teaching qualifications for staff in higher education, set out in the table above, reveals some potentially significant differences to similar processes in school and college teacher training. Whilst the training of new teachers in schools has been compulsory since the early 1970s and in further education (FE) since 2001, the policy of training teachers in and for higher education has proceeded at a slower pace, with universities exercising some discretion over the form that training takes. It is also less 'centralised' than equivalent programmes for schools or FE colleges (Beck and Young,2005) and more contested (Rowland *et al*, 1998; Andresen, 2000).

What has concerned much of higher education is the premise that there is a 'craft' of teaching that can be separated from the 'academic practices' of teaching and delivered as a planned and assessed programme. Many academics, most notably Rowland *et al* (1998), reject this principle. Their thesis on teaching and research asserts that

both require a spirit of enquiry, reflection, critique and, most of all, of passion.....teaching which is not accompanied by our own enquiry, reflection and passion for a subject matter in which we are wholly engaged, becomes merely a technical service for customers...(and) is stripped of its critical and moral purposes' (p.134).

They are concerned not only with the distinction between the practice of teaching and academic practice, but also with the early proposal to identify twenty four outcomes as fundamental to the work of an HE teacher (these were revised by the HEA into a much smaller number of standards). This was accompanied by a more general concern that there has been little consensus about what constitutes 'good' teaching in higher education (Bucklow and Clark, 2000).

The ILTHE, responding to some of these pressures, developed a 'soft' methodology to 'recognise' the work of individuals through the submission of reflection on their professional activity and to accredit programmes of teacher development in higher education. Individual teachers in higher education do not have to submit to 'competences' as their peers in schools and FE have to do. Instead, they are invited to follow one of two routes to recognition by the ILTHE. One of these routes is designed for experienced teachers and the second for those who are new to teaching in higher education, who can gain recognition by completing an accredited programme. By September 2002, 121 programmes had already been accredited though these were initially mainly confined to post-92 institutions and included significant numbers of specialist programmes for those working in healthcare.

The subsequent development of the ILTHE (now the Higher Education Academy), despite the resistance described above, has been particularly marked by the development of 'standards' for teachers in higher education. These are written very generally for accreditation purposes but are potentially influential at the level of individual courses which are increasingly designed around those accreditation processes (Fanghanel, 2004). Thus new teachers in higher education are potentially shaped by these standards as they are expressed through accredited programmes. Nicoll and Harrison (2003:24) contend that

the focus on technical activity, defined as competence and reflective practice in a particular domain ... has obscured the social and discursive practices through which a very particular sort of teacher identity may be produced. At the heart of this analysis is the way in which standards of competence operate to normalise and shape what it means to be a "good teacher" in higher education.

The precise effect of the standards on teacher development in higher education, however, is unclear. Nicoll and Harrison (2003) acknowledge this uncertainty but suggest that standards become expressed in programmes of professional development and embedded in the messages tutors convey to programme participants. These norms and messages are seen to 'marginalise particular kinds of knowledge and alternative approaches' (p.32).

The centrality of professional development programmes in the socialisation of teachers in higher education is challenged by others. Land (2004) suggests that teacher development in higher education is not primarily about the technical skills of teaching, as in Rowland's analysis, or the replication of the 'good teacher'. Instead, he argues that it is primarily a complex set of interactions between academic developers and those who participate in teacher development programmes. Land's account is centrally concerned with the impacts of professional programmes on identity, but also on disciplinary cultures and 'visions of certainty' such as the efficacy of new technologies. Land also highlights how programmes of teacher development colonise academic space and 'other' those who challenge current orthodoxies.

Such processes also produce tensions in those who deliver professional programmes. Here, individual desires to enact the work of academic development practice in ways that foster authenticity and the pressure to fabricate identities in the service of an institution, produce a range of effects. According to McKenzie *et al* (2007:47)

The tension between fabrication and authenticity gives rise to feelings of inner conflict and alienation. It becomes difficult to determine our priorities, to know what is valued and why we are acting. We become ontologically insecure, experiencing a heavy sense of inauthenticity.

Programmes of teacher development in higher education are generally premised on one or more established models or traditions of professional development. Pill (2005, p.176) identifies the 'reflective practitioner', 'action research', 'novice to expert' and 'metacognitive approaches', with the choice of model depending upon 'the extent to which the key drivers for change were internal or external' (p.185).

Whilst Pill is not explicit about what these drivers are and thus why one tradition is preferred over another, common themes and tensions emerge. These centre on the ways in which theory informs practice and the lack of any coherent or robust body of knowledge to inform teaching in higher education. There is a lack of shared understanding of what the core concept of reflection really means and the difference between changes in practice and changes within the individual. The uneasy relationship between the practice of teaching and the body of knowledge that informs

that teaching and the 'preferred' model of development are likely to have significant implications for the ways in which programme teams construct a learning environment for those on a teacher development programme.

In a study of learning environments for new teachers in higher education Fanghanel (2004) distinguishes between two learning environments: the course or programme environment and activities in the lecturer's practice. In the first of these the predominant 'mode' of activity takes a constructivist view of learning with a focus on student-centred methods, activity, collaborative approaches and personal development (McGuinness, 1997). Fanghanel describes how these characteristics become a primary source of dissonance when the course participants attempt to transfer these techniques and approaches to their own practice. They also report how there is resistance to such techniques and approaches from colleagues and students, as well as 'structural' problems such as lack of time and assessment regimes (p.586).

The meaning and consequences of the credentialisation of teaching in higher education are thus still far from clear. It is evident that the state has gained more control over these processes through the activities of the HEA and its delineation of standards. These in turn have been interpreted and incorporated into programmes of professional training, creating a range of tensions and dissonances. Such tensions arise from the appropriateness of the standards themselves, but also from their 'application' in local teaching contexts and from differences between the individual teacher and institutional demands. There is also a wider set of concerns regarding the detachment of teaching 'craft' from academic practice. The impact of these processes and tensions on socialisation itself is much harder to discern. It seems probable that this may still vary according to setting, discipline and personal history, but in ways that are increasingly mediated through the professional programmes centred on training people to 'become' teachers.

### **The representation of teacher socialisation and identity formation**

In previous sections, the processes and complexities of socialisation and identity formation in a range of settings are described and compared. As observed, there are

many similarities across these contexts, at least at a metaphorical level, with references, for example, to 'rites of passage', 'ordeals' and 'rituals'. Novice teachers in higher education are seen to encounter many of the same experiences and emotions of new teachers in schools and colleges, though these are often seen to be more about 'adaptation' than 'survival'. In terms of socialisation and identity formation, teachers in all sectors seem to struggle with dissonances though these vary in their form.

In schools, novice teachers struggle to reconcile idealised images of teaching with the realities of the classroom, while in higher education, such dissonances are often located between individual teachers, their departments and 'generic' views of teaching. Whilst there are broad similarities between all education sectors in terms of credentialisation, its pace, form and effects in higher education are complex and potentially different across contrasting institutions and subjects. However, it seems probable that the introduction of teaching qualifications for teachers in higher education may have become an 'active component' in their socialisation, especially where departmental influences are weak.

In further education work by Salisbury (1994) on the socialisation of 'late entrants' into college teaching, reported similar experiences to those reported in this study, particularly in terms of motives and the role of prior experience in becoming a teacher. Salisbury reports how the 'occupational life chances of those undertaking a professional teaching qualification could be transformed' (p.126) in the drive for professionalism in the sector. The study also reports initial periods of 'struggle' and 'coping' (p.128) and how the study participants 'claimed that throughout their teaching they drew upon relevant industrial and occupational experiences'. These accounts were further enhanced by Jephcote *et al* (2008,2009). These later studies however, were small in number and conducted at a time when working conditions and professional regimes in FE were diverging from those in higher education.

Therefore, in addressing the greater variety of institutional forms, a much broader curriculum and more diverse roles, research into socialisation and identity formation in higher education continues to raise significant questions. For example, whilst the work of Kogan, Henkel and others has revealed a great deal about identity formation



and socialisation in older universities, relatively little is known about similar processes in much newer institutions. Where socialisation is explored and newer institutions are included, as in Becher's and Trowler's (2001) work on 'academic tribes', the focus is invariably on 'disciplinary' or academic socialisation. Hence, although Becher and Trowler's work does acknowledge that the routes into higher education are now more varied, the power of the disciplines, and in particular their ideologies, is viewed as 'conditioning' the 'power of individuals' (p.48). In this analysis, personal biographies generally, and past occupations specifically, are barely considered.

There are exceptions, particularly a range of studies which have look at the transitions of schoolteachers into higher education, notably by Murray (2005) and Potts (1997). In Murray's analysis, cited above, a lack of recognition of non-traditional routes into higher education by certain universities leads to highly stressful and challenging transitions for the study group concerned. The assumption that a group who have made an apparently small shift of occupation would find the transition straightforward, was proved wrong. The teacher educators interviewed by Potts brought to their [HE] college 'the influence of their past careers [in schools which] did not disappear' (p.224). Potts reports further how many of the new staff in his study 'accepted the values of the college [...] but did not always take on the role identity demanded by the college' (p.224).

I regard the socialisation experiences of other groups of staff, who enter higher education with vocational backgrounds outside of school teaching, as under-researched. Those who teach journalism or business studies, for example, have not had their socialisation into teaching in higher education examined. There are studies of the socialisation of higher-level nurses into nursing education in the USA (Uttley-Smith, 2007) but this concerns students and not their teachers. Teacher socialisation of those with vocational backgrounds is indirectly referred to in Fanghanel's (2005) study, cited above, but such individuals are not actively distinguished from those with academic backgrounds. Hence, the way in which socialisation might be experienced differently according to background is not explored.

Whilst these literatures build a reasonably convincing case that teacher socialisation in higher education is changing and may have parallels in other sectors, the consequences of those processes for some groups remain unclear. The experiences of those with certain vocational backgrounds is similarly unexplored. The literatures generally ignore or understate the biographies of those who become teachers specifically in higher education. For example, while Henkel (2000) refers to a 'distinctive individual, the subject of a unique narrative history' (p.16), the roles of that history generally and of past occupations in the processes of socialisation, are not explicit. Socialisation into teaching in higher education becomes situated in the interplay of disciplinary cultures, organisational structures and the wider contexts in which universities are located. The role of the individual and what they bring into the socialisation process is often lost.

I view this under-representation of certain groups in higher education and the lack of attention to occupational biography as problematic. I see the work of Murray (2005) as important here in challenging the notion that socialisation into higher education is essentially about 'being' in higher education itself. Work by Becher & Trowler (2001) also generally downplays the role of individual agency in constructing identity, and views the power of 'structural elements' in the disciplines as very powerful. I argue that teachers of vocational disciplines in higher education may have differing relationships with their own field of practice, especially where this is outside higher education itself.

The work of Bernstein (2000) highlights how those who have worked in vocational areas remain strongly connected to these fields. Bernstein notes how in relation to socialisation and to the direction of higher education more generally

Identities are what they are, and what they will become, as a consequence of the projection of knowledge as a practice in some context. The future of the context will regulate identity and the volatility of the context will control the nature of the regionalisation and thus the projected identity (p.189)

Thus, in Bernstein's terms, areas such as business studies or nursing increasingly shape both individual identities and higher education institutions themselves, especially where such areas are well represented. In his earlier work, Bernstein

(1971:56) also draws a distinction between academic socialisation, which is concerned with 'subject loyalty', and those who are socialised by the 'requirements of practice' (Bernstein,2000:55). I return to the work of Bernstein's work on 'singulars', 'regions' and 'projected identities' in chapter eight of the thesis.

## **Summary**

I have sought to provide an overview of existing work that has been concerned with teacher socialisation and the development of a teacher identity and how these processes are portrayed in other sectors, notably schools. The chapter has explored how this overview relates to teacher socialisation into higher education and the extent to which the increasing 'prescription' of the 'good teacher' (Nicoll and Harrison, 2003) provided a context for socialisation processes. I have also attempted to legitimate the approaches adopted in the study in terms of how these general and more specific literatures 'represent' teacher socialisation and the development of a teacher identity. The review has highlighted how particular kinds of staff, those who bring specific experiences and established identities into the socialisation process, are under-represented in those literatures.

I turn now to the methodological aspects of the thesis, setting out in particular how 'privileged access' to a group of potential participants and multiple roles in the field shaped the study. The ethical consequences of such access and roles are carefully examined, including the way that forms of power were recognised in the data-gathering process. I re-visit the strong connection between my own biography and the research process, anticipated in the introduction, and set out how the analytical approaches used were reflexively changed in ways that were sensitive to the data.

## **Chapter three: Methods – a reflexive account of a qualitative study**

### **Introduction**

All scholarly or 'scientific' work must be written and read in accordance with some generic principles. There is no style-less or organisation-less writing. The 'facts' of the case do not imprint themselves. Our experience of the world, both physical and cultural, is always mediated by conventions of enquiry, and that experience is equally mediated by conventions of writing'. (Atkinson, 1990:9)

This chapter has three main aims. The first is to consider the ways in which the multiple roles of the researcher, as a tutor, as assessor, and as investigator, may have impacted on the study's findings. The chapter reports, in particular, on how the positioning of the researcher had specific ethical, methodological and emotional dimensions with a range of potential impacts. The second aim is to describe, justify and evaluate the methods used in the process of generating and analysing data in relation to the research questions. This will include an account of the background to the initial study and the way its original aims, and therefore its methods, were shaped by an early change of study context. The third aim is to situate the study in terms of the approaches adopted by other studies. Of particular interest are those inquiries where the interplay of rapport, personal relations, diverse roles and occupational biography are considered.

Underpinning all of these purposes, is the development of an account that is appropriately self-revelatory and which portrays the activity of a reflexive and ethical researcher. Archer (2003:103) refers to the notion of reflexivity as an 'internal dialogue' as researchers go about 'questioning ourselves, clarifying our beliefs and inclinations, diagnosing our situations, deliberating our concerns....'. Hence, while it includes an ongoing description of researcher responsiveness and openness about problems encountered and resolved, it also seeks to affirm the way that research processes themselves can feed back into the conduct of the study itself.

The chapter begins with an account of my multiple roles in the field, and the way in which 'privileged access' to a group of participants in a programme of professional development has been accompanied by a range of relationships and dilemmas. I saw these as constituting a particular kind of 'insider' research where a number of roles might be simultaneously at work in the research process. In these relationships the notions of familiarity (Delamont, 2002) and guilty knowledge (Becker, 1963) are also drawn upon to frame the discussion. A section on 'ethics' is used to bridge my position as the researcher and the ways in which the research itself was conducted.

The chapter moves on to describe and justify the methodology adopted and the way I accessed the field. I describe the criteria used to construct a sample of ten research participants from a group who were embarking on their teacher training within the study university. I set out the processes of data-gathering and data analysis, describing how, over one academic year, three semi-structured interviews were undertaken with each of the ten participants in my sample in order to sample 'temporally', their changing experiences, perspectives and emotions. I move on to justify how I shifted from a 'thematic' analysis using 'open coding' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) to view and interpret the participants' accounts 'narratively'. I describe finally the use of narrative analysis outlined by Mishler (1986), Cortazzi (1993) and Webster & Mertova (2007) to make sense of the participants' interview accounts.

### **Power, closeness and rapport – multiple relations in the field**

For the duration of the study, I occupied at least two roles in relation to the research participants, being, simultaneously, a tutor on their programme of professional development, the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) and a researcher. Whilst this status has provided a kind of 'privileged access' to the group, it also posed a range of ethical and methodological dilemmas. The possession of a range of 'formal' roles, as tutor, assessor, researcher, as well as more 'informal' ones, such as 'colleague', has created a complex web of relationships, particularly in the field. In this section, I position myself as the researcher in this 'social setting' (Coffey, 1999) and explore the emotions, relationships, understandings and actions that underpin this experience.

At the centre of this positioning was an attempt to separate the researcher role from the 'other' roles and the way in which these roles may shift over time (Ball,1990). As evident in other studies of socialisation, notably by Coffey (1993) and Salisbury (1994), such multiple roles in the research process can produce different effects on the researcher and the researched. For example, in Coffey's study of the socialisation of trainee accountants, she refers to feelings of unease around both a profusion of roles and those that she thought might be 'missing'.

Salisbury, in a study of the socialisation of teachers in further education (FE), also identified a number of roles in the field. Salisbury (1994:43) suggested how 'being a sociologist, being female, being an observer etc...were all bases of irritation for various actors' in the field'. The discussions by both Coffey and Salisbury contained two important 'cautionary tales'. The first is the way in which the context of research affected the researcher and how the researcher affected the context. Second, and more specifically, their discussions underscore how an awareness of multiple roles allowed them to see and try to take account of their potential effects.

Whilst such an awareness might be generally helpful, it has also had to be re-located into a particular set of roles and a different context. In common with other studies (Cartwright,1997; Crang,2003), the formal and informal roles alluded to earlier contained a number of potential threats to the integrity of the research. Prominent among these was the potential for the eventual research participants to see me primarily as their teacher and assessor, influencing their participation and responses. As Miles and Huberman (1994:265) suggest, 'informants typically switch into an onstage role ...and craft their responses to be amenable to the researcher and to protect their self interests'. Karnieli – Miller *et al* (2009) broaden out these concerns into a typology of research relations which embody differing power differentials. Whilst placing my research within such a typology may not be helpful, it is a reminder that potential differences in power needed to be taken account of and grounded in the research practice itself. The researcher might, in other words, have to go further than living with these differences and trying to understand their impacts. There are a great many publications on 'researcher effects' including those by Cuzick (1976) and Elwood and Martin (2000) which Delamont (2002) rehearses in her work on fieldwork in educational settings.

The sense of needing to balance potential opposites, such as rapport and power has brought with it the need to be seen as a researcher and 'to feel like' a researcher. This is, after all, 'late career' research for me, a last chance to 'become' an academic. This is akin to Lofland and Lofland's (1995:11) assertion that you must care about what and how you research 'independent of social science'. This is, in other words, where concerns of personal history and more general professional interest, intersect. However, neither the reduction in power differences nor the establishment of a distinctive researcher role, got off to a good start. The processes of gaining access to the research participants, introducing the research itself and recruiting participants, became entangled in the broader processes of PGCAP planning and delivery. For example, access to the participants on the PGCAP was initially gained by me being asked by the programme leader to 'donate' some teaching hours to the PGCAP programme. Lofland and Lofland (1995) note how gatekeepers are interested in what will help or harm them.

Additionally, the leader of the PGCAP also wanted to 'flag' the research to senior managers and to the programme's external examiner. Questions were also gently raised about the extent to which the research might usefully 'evaluate' the PGCAP programme. Furthermore, the research study itself was introduced in a short session within a long series of induction activities designed to introduce the PGCAP programme. The discourse of those days was centred on institutional views about 'teaching', 'learning', 'students' and what it means to be a teacher 'here'. In some ways, this played into the research, but it also delayed for me a sense of 'becoming' a researcher and portrayed the research presentation as a 'calculated' activity (Adler, 1985). The potential participants may have wondered how much choice they really had about participation in the research. Would it help with their course-work? What might non-participation mean?

These differing roles have presented other challenges to the integrity of the research. Among these is a 'closeness' to the research participants based on a common status as teachers in the same or partner institutions. Ultimately, they were my colleagues as well as students. This 'closeness' also derived from additional similarities between myself and the researched. Occupational biographies, recounted in the first interviews - time spent in other forms of work, entering higher

education from and 'with' that work, non-traditional pathways through tertiary education – meant there was much common experience. Some participants, with trajectories like my own, could easily have become personal friends. This also meant that rapport was quickly established and easily maintained. There was no initial need, as in Salisbury's (1994:45) study, to 'front and emphasise my teacher role' to gain a rapport – it was there from the start.

There are both ethical and methodological dimensions to the building of rapport. Salisbury (1994), in the study referred to earlier, recounted the 'discomfort' (p.45) that accompanied attempts to 'front' a teacher role and how this might have given the participants in the study 'a false sense of security'. The contribution of rapport in the building of research relationships has also been explored by Jacob (2008) in the context of research interviews into suicides. In this work, rapport is seen as central to the sharing and recounting of 'memories of loved ones' in order to 'understand the world from the participants' perspective' (p.8). Here, rapport is seen as a pre-condition to building trust in the recollection of sensitive and painful experiences. I saw these studies, where rapport was built through shared experience and encouraging participants to disclose shared experiences, as influential in building my own researcher role.

Yet rapport and a more general 'closeness' also carried risks. Delamont (2002) has written extensively of several risks in relation to over-identification with research participants and of 'familiarity' with the research setting itself. As Coffey (1999:23) states, 'a researcher who is no longer able to stand back from the esoteric knowledge they have acquired, and whose perspective becomes indistinguishable from that of the host culture, may face analytic problems'. I was also sensitive to Hodkinson's (2005:13) notion of being an 'insider' where researchers 'find themselves positioned especially close to those they study', which may often mean 'being like' the respondents in terms of lifestyle or other characteristics. When viewed in this way, this study constituted a particular kind of 'insider' inquiry.

Closeness and shared experiences are also often mediated through 'asymmetries of power' (Kvale, 1996:126). One of those asymmetries I recognised early on was 'expert knowledge', where I brought thirty years of teaching experience to each



encounter. In a PGCAP workshop setting this experience was a resource to be drawn upon, but in an interview situation it could have a number of different effects. For example, I may find it easy to anticipate and re-frame a participant's answers through that knowledge. What follows is an example of this very situation. Hoping to clarify and develop an answer, I used 'expert knowledge' in the follow-up question:

Researcher: 'Are there other aspects of Curriculum 2008 [a curriculum initiative]....that you engage with or react to? For example, the teaching philosophy that I think underpins Curriculum 2008 - does that mean much to you? Does that bring out a reaction in you?

The participant then picked up on the term 'teaching philosophy' and continued, moving the response away from the purpose of the original question. In other interviews, there were more positive researcher effects. For example, 'similar' classroom events were recalled to affirm that 'everyone has bad sessions'; how good it is 'when students are really responsive' or, in one case, agreeing (somewhat dishonestly) that 'complete control and even silence can sometimes be an effective teaching strategy, even in higher education'. There were strong ethical as well as methodological dimensions to these exchanges. It is to the ethics of the study that the chapter now turns.

## **Ethical matters**

Any study exploring the early experiences of a group of novice teachers as they undertake a period of professional training and which, for many, is bound up with a probationary period, would need to be ethically sensitive. Participants might wonder, for example, if the experiences they have shared in the study might be shared beyond the study and influence tutors' judgements. Failing the PGCAP means an extension to their probation. In the study, I was someone who would teach the research participants but who would also assess them formatively and summatively.

It was possible, for example, that a research interview on their first teaching encounters might follow closely on from a teaching observation carried out by me as a practice assessor. In this sense, I might have been in a position to possess a form of 'guilty knowledge' (Becker, 1963). As a tutor I would know of their struggles in the classroom as the participants shared their mistakes, shortcomings and failures as

teachers. Evetts (2003: 400) refers to this as the 'burden of professional practice'. However, I also had to stop this 'crossing over' into the research unless it was revealed by the interviewees themselves. I had to work hard not to 'connect' what I had seen as a tutor and what I had heard as a researcher.

Such research might also be viewed as intrusive and opportunist. Although each PGCAP participant in the 2008-9 cohort received a verbal presentation on the aims of the study and what their participation would involve, the PGCAP cohort could be viewed as a 'captive' population. Also, whilst no coercion or reward for participation was offered, it was suggested that their own development as reflective teachers might benefit from an opportunity to share experiences and gain some additional insight into their own development. I 'sold' their involvement, but it was made clear, that it was a struggle to justify the research as being in their interests as well.

**Extract from research diary (11/9/08)**

*'Today, I marketed the project to new recruits to the PGCAP and felt somewhat uneasy. I felt that I had been too persuasive, too instrumental and I had nothing to offer them. I'm not entirely sure that my sample volunteered out of curiosity or altruism. Perhaps they had other motives?'*

To address these issues I took a number of steps. Every participant in the PGCAP was also given an information sheet and an introductory letter. These expanded on the aims and approaches of the study and the participants' own potential commitment to it. The cohort was informed verbally, and in writing, that the research had ethical approval from the ethics committee of the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University (*SREC reference number: SREC\229*) and that the Research Ethics Committee of the institution where the research was to be carried out had also approved the research. The submission for ethical approval followed the 'good practice' guidelines for seeking ethical approval published by the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. Confidentiality and anonymity in the research process was again outlined verbally and in writing, with descriptions of what would be done with the data and the absence of any identifiers in the reporting. It was stressed that participants could leave the study at any time. (Appendices one to three contain the information sheet/introductory letter/consent form prepared for the introductory meeting with the PGCAP group).

The names of the research participants were not revealed to other participants in the PGCAP, to its programme director or to the other volunteers (though, as I discuss later in this chapter, the participants broke these confidences with each other). I asked each participant to give their written informed consent on a proforma, which explained briefly what would be required of them (see appendix three) and each individual was also assured that their own names would not be used in any written or published material apart from the doctorate itself. All participants were allocated a pseudonym (listed in a later section).

I gave verbal assurances that they would have access to the thesis should they wish. All interviews were conducted in complete privacy, at pre-arranged times and at locations convenient to the participants. The interview transcripts were sent to each of the participants so that they could verify the content of their interviews. However, there were limits to the extent to which I could protect these identities. Williams (2009: 215) refers to 'research transgressions' when describing how 'research subjects compromise the protection of their own identity'. I saw two examples of this. First, some of the research participants chose to use their interview transcripts in their teaching portfolios, submitted as part of their assessment, as examples of reflective dialogue. I had not foreseen this form of 'ownership' and these came to be assessed by me and other colleagues. Other research participants revealed their identities to one another, voluntarily compromising their anonymity in a second way.

Of course, following an ethical code does not fully equate with ethical behaviour, which is a significantly broader and deeper issue. According to (Kvale, 1996:117), it 'involves the person of the researcher'. This is generally the position taken by Pring (2000) and others, such as Cohen *et al* (2000). Williams (2009), in a study of ethical risk in research conducted by educational developers, foregrounds the character of the researcher him- or herself. Like Pring and Kvale, he locates research ethics in the character of the researcher. This can be addressed through a reflexive stance but also by being mindful of the particular context of the research. Williams highlights what are termed 'ethical aporias' in the contexts encountered by educational development practitioners. These have proved useful in guiding the ethical practice in this study. The first of these, 'identity transgressions', was referred to above but Williams also identifies others, notably those of 'multiple practitioner roles' and the

'confessional space'. I was mindful and active in the face of these contextual challenges in ways that are set out in the following sections.

My study produced a great deal of sensitive data through the three semi-structured interviews with each of the ten participants. Participants spoke freely of their problematic encounters with students and relationships with colleagues. Kvale (1996:109) describes any interview inquiry as a 'moral enterprise' and highlights how ethically challenging an interview situation can be. The study broadly followed the guidelines suggested by Kvale, beginning with the informed and written consent, described above, of those who volunteered to take part. I accompanied this with a verbal description of the interview process itself and sought to highlight how, in a study of this kind, the interviews themselves were likely to be unpredictable in terms of what might be covered. Potential participants were invited to consider the way in which such conversations might become overly 'confessional' or 'therapeutic', for example. Finally, potential participants were assured verbally that whilst the study was being supported by the PGCAP programme director, its findings would be reported back to the programme director of the PGCAP and to the wider institution only as an executive summary.

## **Background to the study**

Originally, the study was conceived as an evaluation of a programme which was very similar to the PGCAP programme but located in a Dental School in a 'Russell Group' university. However, my professional move to a very different institution, an ex-polytechnic, in a different part of the country, necessitated a re-positioning of the study with a new sample. The research questions and part of the context, a programme of professional development, remained the same. In the original design, the focus of the study had largely related to a well-established debate (Rowland,2002) about the generic nature of programmes such as the PGCAP and the way in which they 'ignored' the disciplines from which new teaching staff were drawn.

The shift of institution and a change to a more 'mixed' sample, provided an opportunity to re-think the study and to broaden its scope and aims. Rather than

being focused on the extent to which generic approaches to teacher development were effective, the study now had an opportunity to look at a number of distinctive occupational cultures and how these might affect the processes of 'becoming' a teacher. Whilst some attention to pedagogy might need to be retained, the search for authenticity began to focus more on identity and differing pathways into teaching in higher education.

## **Methodology**

The nature of the study and its focus on the processes of socialisation of teachers in higher education are expressed in the form of two related research questions. These are:

1. How do 'late entrants' to university teaching experience and manage the process of becoming a teacher?
2. What is the particular role/significance of the PGCAP in the development of a teacher in higher education?

The study has sought to answer questions about the early experiences, motivations and emotional responses of a group of teachers who are broadly new to teaching in a vocational or 'workplace' university and one of its partner institutions. The participants in the research were or are also participants in a programme, a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP), which is designed to support new staff as well as those who are extending an existing role into teaching.

Such questions, focused as they are on a range of 'social phenomena' (Bryman, 2004:27), lent themselves very readily to a range of approaches within the qualitative tradition. In turn, within that tradition, a variety of orientations or sets of methods are appropriate. I was drawn initially to an ethnographic approach. Hammersley & Atkinson (1995:1) state how ethnography 'in its most characteristic form ...involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions..' However, although Hammersley & Atkinson concede that the 'boundaries around ethnography are unclear' (p.2), I was not in a position to conduct

such a study that would be true to such a tradition. I was not able, pragmatically, to participate in this way and, if I had, it may have called into question my role as a tutor with other course participants.

Hence, in order to answer the research questions posed in a credible, valid and reflexive way, I adopted a case-based approach as a means of gathering and subsequently analysing the data. In recruiting several participants, it was from the outset a set of case studies with temporal sampling across one academic year. At the heart of this approach are a series of semi-structured interviews with a number of participants in a programme of professional development which is designed to enhance the teaching skills and pedagogic understanding of a number of novice teachers in higher education. The role of these interviews has been to elicit from the research participants those experiences, actions and emotions that in their own terms have had most influence on them during the study period.

Whilst some of these phenomena might be captured through established ethnographic approaches, such as observation, the experience of becoming a teacher, constitutes a set of social actions of a particular kind. Atkinson & Coffey (2001) suggest that portraying interviews as 'a poor substitute for the observation of action' ignores the way in which interviews themselves, in generating narratives and accounts, 'are forms of social action in their own right' (p.810). Such a rationale is reinforced by Kvale (1996:1), who states

If you want to know how people understand their world and their life, why not talk with them? In an interview conversation, the researcher listens to what people themselves tell about their lived world, hears them express their views and opinions in their own words, learns about their views on their work situation and family life, their dreams and hopes.

The practical, ethical and methodological development of the interviews used in the study, are described below.

## **The research process – a reflexive account**

### **Gaining access and entering the field**

On arriving in the new institution in April 2008, early contact was made with key 'gatekeepers' to the PGCAP. This was not a difficult challenge, unlike Atkinson's (1990) humorous description of Whyte's attempts to gain access to the 'Cornerville' district, but formed part of an institutional induction where I made myself known to the PGCAP programme leader. As Lofland and Lofland (1995:37) point out, 'entry to a setting is greatly expedited if you have 'connections'. Prior to the beginning of the PGCAP in July 2008, I approached the programme leader, in person and in writing, for permission for the study to access the group both within the timetabled sessions and at other times. This permission was granted unconditionally although, as described earlier, attempts to appropriate the research as an evaluation of the PGCAP, had to be resisted.

Whilst access to a cohort of participants in the next PGCAP programme had been negotiated in principle, the intention of constructing and accessing a sample of those participants prior to the start of programme proved impossible. The original purpose here was to conduct 'baseline' interviews to establish what the individual pathways into teaching had been and also to elicit expectations and motives around entry to teaching in higher education, prior to the start of teaching. It was hoped that this would produce very 'clean' accounts unaffected by teaching or programme activity itself. The programme director, right up to the first PGCAP session in mid-September, had no clear or complete idea of who the participants would be. Hence, the first 'baseline' interviews, conducted in late September, were probably affected by the initial encounters with the PGCAP and their earliest teaching experiences.

The start of the study therefore broadly coincided with the start of that programme in September 2008 when the first session, a two-day induction, brought together the programme participants. The whole group of programme participants consisted of twenty six full - and part-time staff drawn from the university's health, education and business studies faculties, as well as staff from the university's partner provider of Osteopathy training. As such, it was a fairly 'typical' mix of programme participants

with a number of support staff and research-based appointments completing the group. The nature of the PGCAP programme, as well as the institutional context, are more fully described in the next chapter.

### **Recruiting and sampling**

The participants in the study were recruited through the PGCAP programme using the processes described in the previous section. Recruiting from the programme was an obvious choice since this is where staff who were new to the university or to a teaching role were concentrated. Such staff are generally compelled to undertake the PGCAP programme as it is one of their contractual obligations. In this sense, the first stage of building the study sample was 'purposive' and 'strategic' (Silverman, 2005:129) in that the PGCAP group would be where the 'processes being studied are most likely to occur' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:370). Very few new staff 'avoid' the programme and participation in the PGCAP sets some 'useful boundaries' as to who could participate in the research (Miles & Huberman, 1994:7)

The use of several cases was not in itself a sampling strategy as described by Miles & Huberman (1994), but a way of increasing confidence in the findings. There was no deliberate construction of a continuum, a 'set' of contrasting cases or an iterative building of a sample. All of the participants in the PGCAP met the criteria for the study and no one was excluded. There were two criteria. First, they had to be new or relatively new to teaching. Second, they had to undertake some teaching during the study period. I set no minimum level of teaching activity. I decided to focus on ten participants who met these criteria and who, across the sample, were mixed in terms of background variables such as age and gender. These cases were then sampled temporally at points during the 'life' of the PGCAP between September 2008 and May 2009. These points were selected as 'snapshots' with the 'spacing' being both pragmatic and positioned to allow experience and views to accrue.

The general balance of the sample in terms of age, gender and professional background is set out in the table below. A detailed profile of each research participant is provided in chapter four.



**Table 3:1 Overview of the recruited sample**

	Pseudonym	Age	Vocational area/workplace
1	Peter	41	Senior Lecturer in Education/university
2	Linda	32	Librarian/university
3	Abigail	49	Careers Adviser/university
4	John	61	Lecturer in Business Studies/university
5	Juliet	45	Sports Development Officer/university
6	Clare	54	Library Manager/university
7	Katrina	47	Lecturer in Nursing/university
8	Craig	36	Lecturer in Osteopathy/partner institution
9	James	42	Lecturer in Osteopathy/partner institution
10	Jane	26	Lecturer in Osteopathy/partner institution

The sample of PGCAP participants who chose to take part in the study also contained a number of teachers who were clearly not strictly novices. Many of them had some teaching experience already, though this was invariably limited. This seemed like an oversight on my part at first as I had not clarified what I saw as a 'novice' for the purposes of the study but eventually the recall of existing teaching experience enriched the study greatly. Building the sample itself however, proved unpredictable. Whilst each participant in the PGCAP cohort met the criteria for inclusion in the study, the participants who volunteered determined the size and composition of the sample. I noted how a larger set of cases 'covering' more of the cohort or 'better' participants might produce different results.

**Extract from research diary, 27/9/08**

*I felt uneasy about how I might have missed more interesting or revealing cases. Although each of these cases potentially added confidence to the findings, the size and composition of the eventual sample felt 'incomplete'. . However, I resolved not to increase the sample size.*

**Data gathering – designing the interview process**

This section describes the development of the interview process and the ways in which that process was reflexively shaped. An early decision in the design process is the degree of 'structuring' (Wengraf, 2001: 60) inherent in the questions and in the interventions of the interviewer. There are no fixed rules or conditions to guide these decisions. Wengraf suggests that such decisions can be guided by stages in the development of theory-building, but as this study had no overt theoretical goal, other advice had to be sought.

Kvale (1996) provided two useful metaphors to describe the purposes of interviews. The first of these is that of the 'miner' (p.3). In this metaphor 'knowledge is understood as buried metal and the interviewer is a miner who unearths the valuable metal'. The second is that of a 'traveller' (p.4) where the interviewer 'wanders through the landscape and enters into conversations with the people encountered'. Whilst neither metaphor fully described the interview process itself, the second came closer to capturing the need for the study to obtain good descriptions of both critical events and broader, more complex views (Webster & Mertova,2007). I recognised that the study would not and indeed, could not, report an 'independent' reality (Atkinson, 1990:7).

It seemed reasonable, given that the role of the PGCAP programme in the processes of becoming a teacher in higher formed a part of the initial research question, to frame the interview process around that programme. That is, to complete the data-gathering in one academic year. It is acknowledged that such processes of socialisation would be of a much longer duration, but that the initial impact of the programme would be most clearly evident early on. The risk of 'sample attrition' also had to be considered (Bryman 2004:48). The temporal nature of such

an approach is similarly important, since whilst it is not strictly a longitudinal study, it does look at a collection of cases participating in a programme at the same time. It looks at change and at some collective experiences during the PGCAP itself.

Such processes of change and development require some way of capturing the ongoing accounts of the participants through interviews that could, in a valid way, capture the experiences and emotions themselves. I also had to recognise the demands of interviewing ten participants at frequent intervals. It seemed desirable to begin with a 'baseline' interview to establish prior experience and individual pathways into teaching in higher education prior to the PGCAP starting. However, this proved very difficult as the programme director did not possess the cohort's details until the PGCAP itself started. These baseline interviews were thus conducted as soon as the induction onto the PGCAP was over. The balance between effectively 'sampling' their experiences in a series of interviews and the resource demands of frequent interviews had to be settled. I therefore decided on two further interviews to take place in December 2008 and April 2009. This would allow for their experiences and views to 'accrue'.

Much of the design of these interviews took account of Kvale's 'traveller' metaphor, producing 'lightly' structured schedules with a small number of pre-determined questions and an intention that they be used 'reflexively'. With hindsight, the design did not recognise that the respondents' accounts might be better structured and interpreted 'narratively'. Too much early focus was placed on forms of response and future analysis that saw the interviews as conversations rather than as narratives. Citing Carr (1986), Webster and Mertova (2007:2) argue that

action, life and historical existence are themselves structured narratively, and the concept of narrative is our way of experiencing, acting and living, both as individuals and as communities, and that narrative is our way of dealing with time.

Hence, each interview, was more focused on certain phenomena at specific points, rather than telling the 'whole story'. The questions themselves and the ensuing follow-up questions, were often centred on constructing data amenable to analysis through temporal and case-based comparison rather than obtaining lively and

unexpected answers. The initial planned questions were also deemed to provide some 'stability' across a relatively large number of interviews and to match my developing interview skills.

Considerable care was taken in the design of the questions themselves with a mix of descriptive, 'grand tour' (Spradley, 1979:60) and 'contrast' questions being asked in order to derive useful and meaningful responses (see appendix four). For example, in interview three I asked each participant "how is your role as a teacher different from your role as a...(their other profession)?" Some questions, such as their views on the contribution of the PGCAP to their development, were repeated to observe how views might shift within and across the individual research participants. Kvale (1996:129) also encourages interviewers to think 'thematically' and 'dynamically' when designing interview questions, attempting to simultaneously reflect core themes within the study and create a good interview dynamic. The extent to which the study's interview questions responded to these criteria is considered below.

### **In the field - 'constructing' the data**

The interviews were, with the participant's consent, recorded and transcribed. The interviews took place in the participants' workplace or when they attended the PGCAP sessions. Each question was designed to elicit an open and unstructured response and was carefully derived from the initial overarching research questions framing the study. Prior to every interview, the participants were informed of the purposes of the study and how the ensuing interview fitted into the overall design. The research participants were asked if they had any questions and reminded of their right to access tapes, transcripts and any accompanying notes. The beginning of each interview took account of Kvale's (1996:128) observation that

The first minutes of interview are decisive. The subjects will want to have a grasp of the interviewer before they allow themselves to talk freely, exposing their experiences and feelings to a stranger. A good contact is made by attentive listening, with the interviewer showing interest, understanding and respect for what the subject says; at the same time, the interviewer is at ease and is clear about what he or she wants to know.

The study recognised from the start that there were potentially significant differences in the power of the interviewer and the interviewees. As Wengraf (1994:111) notes, 'power is most often on the side of the interviewer' so this study required particular care in the design and conduct of the interviews since I was, (and still am) a tutor on the PGCAP programme. Briggs (2002:912) reminds interviewers 'how deeply the power relations that emerge in interviews are embedded in the data they produce' but avoids offering guidance on the control of power in the interview setting itself. Rather, he suggests that for interviewees to become 'powerful' they must have 'rights to determine where, when, how, and by whom it will be used in other settings' (p.916). Mindful of these issues, I discussed the possible effects of this relationship, in both directions, prior to the first interviews and reminded each participant that their words would only be used in a published form with their consent. The potential effects of this relationship are also more fully discussed in the final section of this chapter.

Each encounter was approximately an hour in length and participants were encouraged to seek clarification of the questions where necessary. The first interviews were quite challenging in terms of trying to listen attentively to participants' responses in order to understand them, to ensure that the time was well managed and to ensure that the responses were relevant. Wengraf (2001:194) refers to this skill as 'double listening'. It is not easily acquired, especially as the appropriate levels of generality or specificity needed in the responses is not always clear at the start. The open and broad style of questioning adopted by the study predictably led to some very extended and detailed answers.

Whilst these were often very rich accounts, the research participants would sometimes lose their thread and require a prompt or reminder. The reluctance to intervene, to steer the interview too strongly or to push for a 'better' answer (Wengraf, 2001:199), led to some very peripheral responses. Learning from the initial interviews meant that later encounters contained more probes, prompts and, where necessary, more thinking time. Later interviews also praised particular responses and deployed more robust observations on answers which seemed at the time to lack depth (Patten, 1990:329).

In general, my interviewing skills improved as the study progressed. I noted reflexively, how more active participation in the interview process generated clearer and more relevant responses. However, reflexivity is not just about 'technique'. The phrasing of questions was also modified. For example, a question for interview three was changed from 'how do you see your role as a teacher' to 'how is the role of a teacher different from your other professional role?'. This use of 'contrast' questions is advocated by Spradley (1979), as a way of revealing meanings, rather than simply recalling events.

### **Analysing and 'sense-making'**

What follows is an account of how the study shifted and developed its analytic perspectives and methods. As stated earlier, the study began as an inquiry based on the study of a number of cases, ten research participants undertaking a programme of professional development, and the ways in which they might be socialised into a teaching role in higher education. It did not privilege any tradition of qualitative research (Bryman,2004) or any specific type of qualitative research (Miles and Huberman,1994). It adopted a broadly case-based method using semi - structured interviews to generate data in which regularities or patterns would be sought. Such patterns were seen as embedded in the processes of socialisation themselves rather than in cultural or ideological structures.

The analysis of the interview data thus began with a process of data reduction. As Miles and Huberman (1994) point out, the processes of data reduction start early and continue throughout the analytical process. Whilst there are a range of ways of reducing data, the study focused on the coding of data after transcription. Kvale (1996:165) reminds those who have spoken words to transform into written text that 'transcripts are not copies or representations of some original reality, they are interpretive constructions that are useful tools for given purposes.'

Following careful transcription and noting the representational nature of the transcripts, data was initially coded after careful reading and re-reading of the transcripts. A system of coding was adopted in order to reduce and interpret the data. The broad nature of and justification for this approach is set out by Coffey and Atkinson (1996:26)

Many analyses of qualitative data begin with the identification of key themes and patterns. This in turn, often depends on processes of coding data. The segmenting and coding of data are often taken-for-granted parts of the qualitative research process. All researchers need to be able to organise, manage, and retrieve the most meaningful bits of our data. The usual way of going about this is by assigning tags or labels to data based on our concepts. Essentially, what we are doing in these instances is condensing the bulk of our data sets into analyzable units by creating categories with and from our data. This process is usually referred to as coding...

The system of coding adopted was that of 'open' coding. Strauss and Corbin (1998:101) define this as 'the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data'. The process involved carefully examining the data for words, phrases and larger chunks of text which seemed to be referring to the same kind of phenomena. Whilst ascribing a number of codes proved relatively straightforward, these were difficult to re-order into meaningful categories. This essentially 'grounded' approach - what Miles & Huberman (1994:62) term as 'feeling their way' towards a set of relationships or patterns - proved inconclusive with both the whole data set and with the transcripts organised into professional groups.

An alternative approach involved the analysis of the data using a 'general accounting scheme' of the type suggested by Lofland (1971). Such a scheme allows the researcher to organise their 'first level' codes into groups and, potentially, the building of content-driven categories as a next step. As with the initial coding, this proved relatively straightforward to do, although the distinction, for example, between an 'act' and an 'activity', was not always clear when applying these groupings to 'real' data. However, as in the first attempt to move the initial codes into broader categories, the process seemed to fragment the codes and the accounts given by the participants and to produce a very 'flat' picture.

The way in which the coding process fragmented the data seemed to centre on the codes being 'insensitive' (Bryman, 2004:412) to the temporal sequences of events and emotions described by the research participants. Their accounts, whilst not recalled 'as' stories or narratives, were in fact told 'narratively'. That is, they perceived their experiences 'in terms of continuity and process' (Bryman,2004:412)

and related their understanding of what had happened to them through these accounts. Mishler (1986:5) suggests that a sense of chronology is not the only thing that is lost when interview responses are coded. Mishler (1986:42) states

Codes are generally defined in context-free, sequence-free terms [...] in the service of developing agreements establish conventions for determining the boundaries of each code, and for handling ambiguous events. Conventions can become too foolproof with everything fitted neatly into a set of categories...although a good deal of uncertainty often accompanies coding, even though agreement exists, once coding is accomplished, feelings of uncertainty about possibly miscalled behaviour begins to subside.

The failure of the processes of pattern coding (Miles and Huberman, 1994) led to a re-design of the analytical tools being used. I chose to adopt a more narrative approach to the analysis for its ability to connect with what participants actually said and capacity to capture the 'whole picture'. I develop these points further below. The emergence of this alternative approach meant potentially re-thinking the structure of the thesis as well as a adopting an alternative form of analysis.

Whilst the data had not been purposely generated as narratives, a re-reading of the transcripts and a re-listening to the audio files suggested that the ethnographic style adopted in the interviews had produced accounts which were amenable to forms of narrative analysis. The research participants, while not being prompted explicitly to recall 'stories', produced accounts that contained all of the elements of a narrative. Kvale (1996:200) suggests that these are a 'temporal sequence', a 'social dimension' (someone telling something to someone) and a 'meaning' (a point). The appropriateness of this new approach was also strengthened by Cortazzi's (1993:5) claim that the study of teachers' narratives is 'central to the study of teachers' thinking, culture and behaviour' and that narratives are especially well suited to portraying the complexities and subtleties of teachers' professional lives.

The adoption of a 'narrative approach' (Webster & Mertova, 2007:3) also enabled me to build on the coding activity already undertaken. During the coding, certain commonalities and potential patterns began to emerge. Among these was the potential for participants' professional backgrounds to influence their view of students, teaching and the way they recounted their experiences. Additionally, it was



noted that while some participants were very committed to acquiring the skills of a teacher, others were not. Finally, a range of participants also experienced a series of 'critical incidents' that began to shift their perspectives on students and their own role in their development. There were things 'going on' in the data, but the picture was very unclear.

The adoption of a 'narrative approach' to the analysis of the transcripts immediately felt as though it was capturing the 'whole picture', a gestalt, rather than certain phenomena at specific points. It respected the flow and continuities in the participants' accounts and connected with the observations made in the previous paragraph. However, once a decision had been made to view interview data as narratives, the precise form of the analysis itself was not immediately obvious. Cortazzi (1993), for example, outlines four alternative formal approaches. Coffey and Atkinson (1996:57) highlight how narratives can be analysed 'formally' but might also take account of the form and functions inherent in the narratives themselves. They suggest

...a slightly less systematic and structured approach to narrative analysis, deriving more context-dependent infrastructure and focus to explain the effect of the story or tale. This emphasises the idea that individual narratives are situated within particular interactions and within specific social, cultural and institutional discourses.

This seemed to be consistent with the ways in which many of the participants' accounts connected with their backgrounds throughout the study period. It became apparent that there were institutional, pedagogic and professional discourses present in the narratives and that there might be relationships between these and the processes of socialisation.

Analysis of the interviews takes on a number of forms in the three chapters that follow. In the first of these (chapter five), I looked for events or experiences which seemed to be influential in developing new understandings of what it might mean to become a teacher in higher education. I was searching, in other words, for actual or potential 'change experiences'. These did not have to be critical in terms of being traumatic or even challenging, but events to which the participants drew my

attention. As Webster & Mertova (2007:74) note, 'an event that is less than critical can still have an impact on a person's performance and functioning'. I then carefully examined and re-examined the events I identified for each individual, looking for commonalities and differences in participants' behaviours, emotions and experience. These are displayed through a series of short narrative extracts, each composed of the voices of one or two of the participants describing a set of events, experiences or feelings which are displayed together to 'typify' the group as a whole at each of the three interview points. This took on the form of a story 're-told'. Kvale (1996:199) develops this idea further

narrative analysis of what was said leads to a new story to be told, a story developing the original themes of the interview. The analysis may also be a condensation or a re-construction of the many tales told by the subjects into a richer, more condensed and coherent story than the scattered stories of the separate interviewees.

In the second of these chapters, the analysis moves to examine the data in a different way. Here, the focus is on the talk used by participants, therefore setting aside background factors like their main professional or university role. Whilst Adelman (1981:3) highlights the problem of familiarity in talk, he also sets out a comprehensive case for using it as a way of revealing 'social function', as a 'realisation of intentionality' and 'exemplifying different social perspectives'. Mishler (1986:35) also sees interviews primarily as 'speech events' both in their conduct and as a means of analysis. I did not adopt a formal coding scheme such as 'conversational analysis' (Labov, 1981) but followed the approach adopted by Woods (1981) during fieldwork in schools. Like Woods, I looked for regularities in the talk which developed into categories and then into a typology. To do this, I viewed the transcripts as 'objective data' for coding purposes. The issues around the use of talk and the details of the analysis itself, are set out in chapter six.

In the final empirical chapter, three case studies are used. The cases selected are both typical and unusual (Stake, 1995) in the way that they draw on particular events, emotions and behaviours. They are critical cases for their capacity to reveal both the role of professions, the types set out above and how these might become merged into authentic and complex accounts. They will also be used to examine the

ways in which people might shift between their professional identity and that of a teacher. The analysis in these cases deploys the concepts of 'epiphany' (Denzin, 1989) and 'critical incidents' (Tripp, 1993; Flanagan, 1954) to do this.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the chapter returns to the struggles I experienced and the significance of these in the research process. In particular, working with 'privileged access' to the participants and the multiple roles I had played are highlighted as factors which may have affected the data. In terms of privileged access, it was felt that while the participants were not openly coerced, the status afforded by the tutor role might have influenced some potential subjects. They may have wondered how much choice they really had about participation in the research. Would it help with their course-work? What might non-participation mean? The presentation of the research and the invitation to join it was unannounced and felt 'calculated' and intrusive. Yet, the participants were probably not passive either. They may also have calculated an advantage to themselves, unseen to the researcher.

The challenge of keeping things separate in the research itself was much harder. Being a researcher alongside other roles – tutor, assessor and colleague - was challenging. This was particularly the case in the interviews where the rapport (unearned) between colleagues, but also the knowledge of the researcher about those researched, were in constant tension. Interviews bestow power on the interviewer in any case, but here the participants had to trust that 'shared' problem encounters with students or staff were seen as research material and not 'as' pedagogic problems. The participants knew the researcher had seen some of these problems first-hand and had to trust that these would be 'used' productively or ethically in the research.

Yet the participants were 'active' in these encounters, too. For example, where the interviews invited the discussion of classroom problems, there was also potential for collusion. The interview might deliberately focus on problem-student encounters which could be steered away by the participants from discussion and exploration into 'problem-solving'. There was scope for the sharing of experiences and these could

(and did) become an opportunity for the researcher to demonstrate superior knowledge and for the participant to acquire a 'tip' or 'trick'. These dialogues were often highly productive as the 'researcher' and 'tutor' roles receded, but could subvert lines of inquiry too. This made being seen as a researcher much harder.

In the chapter which follows readers are introduced to the social and physical contexts of the study. The chapter draws primarily on secondary sources, such as the 'Education Strategy' of 'New U' but is also informed by a number of observations which I undertook during the PGCAP sessions attended by the research participants. The origins, content and organisation of the PGCAP is also presented, along with what it seeks to achieve in terms of enhancing the skills and the broader development of those who undertake it. The research participants themselves are introduced through short cameos comprising of their professional backgrounds, demographic characteristics and current teaching roles. The chapter views them in their professional groups as a baseline from which the processes of 'becoming' teachers in higher education might begin. The chapter is set in the context of the credentialisation of teaching in higher education and the crafting of institutional and wider discourses around 'learning', 'good teaching' and 'employability'.

## **Chapter four: The study context – teacher socialisation in ‘workplace’ higher education**

Individual agents and individual actions cannot be identified in isolation from the context and traditions in which they are embedded and can be comprehended. MacIntyre (1981:206)

### **Introduction**

In the last chapter the methodological approaches and methods were set out. The chapter also described how, through accessing key gatekeepers and a new cohort of participants in a programme of professional development (the PGCAP), a purposive sample of teachers new to higher education was built. This chapter seeks to describe each individual ‘case’ within that sample and to locate them in the broader context of the study. That context is seen as consisting of the research participants’ own institutional/professional setting, the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) programme in which they were participating, and key aspects of their occupational backgrounds.

The chapter is organised around these purposes. It deals firstly with the institutional context, the main university (there is a partner institution which trains Osteopaths which I describe in a later section). It will then move on to examine the origins of the PGCAP, its current content, how it is organised and what it seeks to achieve in terms of enhancing the skills and the broader development of those who undertake it. The chapter also introduces the research participants themselves, describing them in terms of their professional backgrounds, demographic characteristics and current teaching roles. It views them in their professional groups as a starting point from which the processes of ‘becoming’ teachers in higher education might begin. The chapter draws on secondary sources such as the university’s ‘Education Strategy’ (2008) but is also informed by a number of observations that were made during the PGCAP sessions attended by the research participants.

### **‘New U’ – a description**

The University is an ex-polytechnic which expanded its portfolio of courses when it merged with part of another University to form a ‘county’ University in 2006. It has

five campuses spread across the south of England and retains, as I noted in chapter one, a strong vocational focus with a curriculum 'for the professions', such as teaching, accountancy and nursing. The institution is strongly connected through NHS and Teacher Development Agency contracts to careers and work in the public sector. For example, in 2008-9 nearly three-quarters of its undergraduates were preparing for careers in health, teaching or social work. This is reflected in the institution's faculty organisation where Healthcare and Education hold the largest number of programmes. This makes the institution vulnerable to cuts in recruitment to those services. Hence, the key drivers for change are centred on diversifying its current curriculum and reducing its dependency on a small number of public services.

Students have, historically, been recruited mainly from the South of England. However, at the start of the study in September 2008, the University began expanding its provision for international students through the validation of a number of Masters in Business Administration (MBA) programmes and Masters provision in Public Health courses which recruit heavily from Asia. Despite these shifts, the New U itself continues to use a number of terms to describe itself, such as a 'regional' or 'access' University, which are rooted in its past. Whilst the majority of staff spend most of their time teaching, as I noted early in chapter two, the University has set up a number of research institutes to diversify its funding streams. However, like its taught curriculum, many of these are highly dependent on public funding where, for example, most of the money going into the Institute for Health Research, comes from the NHS. For the foreseeable future, activity continues to be focused on the preparation of students for specific kinds of work in certain professions.

At the time of the study there were very few courses in academic subjects. Those that exist were confined to the social sciences, such as psychology, and tend to be used to service vocational provision. There are no study programmes in the humanities or liberal arts. I therefore use the term 'workplace' University to describe New U's core purpose and activities. I see this as akin to Carr's idea of a 'vocational' University (Carr,2009) but as being more closely linked to work activity itself. The Health Faculty for example, now uses a simulation centre to train its nurses and employs 'practice supervisors' and 'assessors', based in hospitals, to teach health-

based courses in the University. Further still, the University itself sees every part of its curriculum as ‘employability-focused’ (Education Strategy (2008-13)p.4) including provision for part-time courses. Every student completes a work placement as part of their course.

The table below highlights some of the key characteristics of New U just prior to the start of the study period in September 2008. The data reflect the curriculum, recruitment patterns and wider student characteristics of a University that is still highly connected with the local area and an ongoing commitment to the ‘widening participation’ agenda of the last ten years.

**Table 4:1 Key characteristics of the institutional context 2007- 8**

Total number of u/g and p/g students	19,000
Percentage of all registered students undertaking programmes related to teaching, healthcare and social work	70%
Percentage of students studying part-time	35%
Percentage of students who are defined by HEFCE as ‘mature’	46%
Percentage of students who are classed as ‘non-white’	57%

Many of the part-time and mature students referred to in the table are undertaking courses in partner institutions, such as Further Education (FE) colleges, where they undertake Foundation Degrees prior to completing their studies in the main University. These colleges are an established part of a large and growing network of partner institutions which form a key strand of the institution’s push to become a ‘distributed’ University. The partner FE colleges currently teach approximately a 1,513 of the University’s students and are a defining characteristic of the study institution as well as many other post ‘92 Universities (Mitchell, 1999).

New technologies mean however, that the University’s reach extends well beyond established physical networks to centres in the Middle and Far East, which now form part of its ‘learning infrastructure’ (Education Strategy (2008-13). As a QAA Audit (2009:13) noted, ‘the University sees collaborative provision as mainstream work’. Currently, one third of the University’s students are taught away from the University itself. New U also pursues its ‘widening participation’ goals through the recruitment

from schools of those studying a range of vocational subjects. It is also highly attuned to changes that might enhance the connections between its curriculum and any shifts in the upper school curriculum. Its Education Strategy (2008:2), for example, states

We will respond to changes in the 14-19 curriculum and the development of diplomas to ensure that these provide additional entry routes to vocational higher education, not additional barriers, and that our curricula are matched with students' prior experiences so there is seamless developmental progression

I have sought in this first section to convey something of the University's characteristics and purposes. It is typical of a certain 'type' of post '92 institution in terms of its student profile, its ethos and contexts. It seems no longer adequate, in other words, to position a UK university in terms simply of whether it is 'pre-' or 'post-' 1992 or belonging to an 'elite' or 'mass' system (Trow,1970). The description and positioning of such an institution has to pay attention to other forms of differentiation.

Ainley (1998:144) notes for example, how HE has become 'differentiated according to course and institution by class, gender, 'race' and, it could be added, ability'. Kok et al (2008) and Deem *et al* (2007), note how market forces, competition for research funding, enhanced Research Assessment Exercise scores and private investment have produced further differentiation within the so-called 'new' universities. This means that 'post – '92' Universities such as Oxford Brookes, with strong academic aspirations, are pulling away from institutions such as 'New U'. It is also possible to identify examples other emerging 'types' such as Buckingham Chiltern University College which are extremely specialised or, as in the case of Northampton University, highly localised.

Hence, in portraying and emphasising New U's 'connectedness' to a number of external sources for student recruitment, its reliance on a number of specialised labour markets and its particular student profile, I am locating the institution in a group of similar universities. This particular group of institutions have enjoyed sustained growth in an expanding market for a 'vocational' form of higher education but future consolidation of the university system makes them vulnerable to change in



those contexts. I have also noted how, in common with similar institutions (Kok *et al*,2008), 'New U' continues to legitimate its mission in terms of highly instrumental and extrinsic goals which suppress or have 'forgotten' a more liberal conception of higher education (Lyotard,1984). We will now turn to the ways in which these institutional characteristics and purposes are played out through the discourses and arrangements presented to new teachers as they enter New U.

### **The institutional discourse**

New U's core mission, strategies and plans reflect a number of themes, which, at a rhetorical level, further position the University in terms of its responses to a range of internal and external imperatives. For example, the ethnic mix of the institution is clearly recognised in New U's mission statement which seeks to 'to create a vibrant multi-cultural learning community which enables people to transform their lives by participating in excellent, innovative education, scholarship and research'. The rhetoric of 'growth', 'responsiveness' to new markets and employers and 'transformational' education also feature prominently. Such rhetoric reflects an institution that is both highly adaptive to its environment but is also hoping that changes to its regimes of teaching and learning, will help it to survive and prosper in a rapidly changing environment (Trowler *et al*: 2005).

At the heart of this re-positioning, as stated earlier, is the University's 'Curriculum Review' (see appendix five for a summary) which was completed in summer 2008. At the core of this document is an attempt to re-think and set out some key aspects of the University's changing orientation to its curriculum, conception of learning and the employability of its graduates. The Curriculum Review's three stated aims are:

1. To provide a curriculum which excites, motivates and engages students
2. To develop students as independent and self-regulatory learners
3. To prepare students for life beyond the University

The review is partly an attempt to shift the culture and practice of the University through a re-definition of teaching and learning itself. In the back ground documents to the Curriculum Review, definitions of learning move from 'a change in behaviour'

to one where 'learning is seen as an inter-personal affair between the teacher and the student, the student and his/her peers'. Such a shift in view, whilst not in itself problematic, privileges one view of learning over others and exemplifies a wider shift in the discourse of teaching and learning in higher education. Gornall (1999:45) notes how

...wider structural, market, pedagogic, legislative and organisational changes in higher education since the 1980s...have been associated with a changing discourse about teaching and learning as opposed to subjects and research, which put the recipients of education, as 'customers', at the centre of the picture.

Whilst the Curriculum Review does not refer to students as 'customers', it does promote personalised learning and the need to meet the 'individual needs and priorities' (p.4) of each student. The review also elaborates on what it comes to call 'realistic learning' which broadly sees learners as active participants in learning processes rather than the passive recipients of them. This is a broadly 'constructivist' view of learning (Corden,2001) which emphasises collaboration and active, relevant approaches to learning.

The ways in which this view of learning, in contrast to cognitive or social approaches, influences the PGCAP and shapes the teaching activity of the research participants, are set out below and in the following chapters. I describe in chapter five how the teaching of some of the research participants comes to be bound up with the way in which the Curriculum Review seeks to enhance the employability of each student. Employability is defined by the university as

... a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

The Curriculum Review views the University as having a direct and active role in ensuring that graduates are 'ready' for the job market when they leave the University. This overlaps both with the discourse of 'graduateness' (Ross,2006) in terms of subject knowledge and with that of 'skills', in relation to what are termed

'personal skills' and those required to be a 'lifelong learner' (p.6). The thinking behind the review seems to be that these and other attributes must permeate the whole curriculum and not just areas that are overtly 'vocational'. The University is seeking, through the review, to be highly adapted to the labour market, as well as to its sources of recruitment.

## **Staffing and institutional socialisation**

New staff are introduced to the thinking behind the Curriculum Review during their one-day induction into the University, one of a number of formal arrangements which are in place to socialise them into the University. However, engagement with these arrangements seems to depend on where the new staff teach and the nature of their contracts. New staff from partner institutions are not invited to the University's 'exhibition' event (institution-wide induction process) and those on fractional contracts often don't attend. The exhibition consists of a day of activities designed to provide attendees with an overall introduction to its mission, students, history, organisation and its physical facilities. It also provides an opportunity to see one of the University's campuses and meet senior managers.

New staff are also allocated a mentor who is not usually their line manager. The 'Mentoring Guidelines' (p.2) for the University suggest the purpose of a mentor is to 'enable new staff to be introduced to the University's values, culture and working practices within a relationship of mutual trust and respect'. The existence and value of these mentoring arrangements is uncertain as many of the PGCAP group were not aware that they had a mentor a month after their employment with the University began (it was established later that a mentor for each member of the PGCAP had been 'found' as the support of a named mentor was a condition for participation in the PGCAP programme). Induction arrangements, as formally set out by the University as a condition of probation, also include a local induction to the new starter's workplace, as well as attendance at courses on health and safety, customer care and equality and diversity.

I turn now to the overall patterns of teaching and research activity in the University. There are few published statistics on this at an institutional level. However, it is

possible to convey broad patterns of activity from two sources. The first of these comprises data from the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA). Although the most recent statistics date from 2006-7, they reveal how in that year, 'New U' employed no staff who were categorised as 'research only'. For UK universities as a whole, 'research only' staff constituted a significant part of the academic workforce (27.9% of full-time and 11.3% of part-time staff). The differences in the proportion of academic staff who were designated as 'Professors' was also significant. In 2006-7, 'New U' had approximately half the proportion of full-time professors employed by UK Universities as a whole (7.2% and 12.4% respectively). The differences in the figures for part-time Professors is even more pronounced (7.1% in 'New U' and 27.9% for UK Universities). It should be noted however, that in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) , New U was commended for its 'world-leading' research in Earth Systems in Environmental Science, Communications, Cultural and Media Studies and Social Policy.

The second source of data on overall patterns of activity is derived from statistical surveys of academic staff. According to staff returns to an institutional 'time allocation survey' (2007-8) academic staff spent the majority (86%) of their time engaged in teaching, in contact with students or administering their courses. The majority of the remainder (12.06%) was spent on research. These figures reflect the demands placed on academic staff to support the needs profile of the students who enter the university, the historical focus on teaching and learning and the administrative arrangements. Academics in New U receive very little administrative support except with student recruitment and the running of examination boards. Course management is very 'hands-on', complex and time-consuming. Teaching loads typically exceed fifteen hours per week and are seen by managers as 'flexible'. There is no actual stated maximum number of teaching or contact hours. I turn now to a description of the professional programme of teacher education for the University with which the research participants were engaged.

## **The Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP)**

### **Background**

Although Land (2004) has identified the earliest origins of educational development in higher education as taking place in the 1960's, it wasn't until the 1990's that the need for 'teacher development' in the HE sector was fully recognised and appropriately debated. The drivers for these changes are relatively easy to identify and are fully explored by Henkel (2000), Trow (1970) and Trowler (1998). They include the massification of the HE system since the mid- 1980's, the arrival of new modes of governance or 'New Managerialism' (Pollitt,1990) on the back of the Jarratt Report (1985), the need for more visible lines of accountability and the dynamics of technological change.

The introduction of programmes to support and develop novice teachers in higher education is generally attributed to the recommendations of the Dearing Review, published in 1997. The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, as it was more properly known, recommended a raised profile for teaching and learning in higher education and potentially, the compulsory licensing of academics. The literature review (chapter 2) indicated how the introduction of 'compulsory' teacher training to higher education had a very mixed and broad set of responses from the HE community, particularly in more traditional institutions where 'even the discourse of pedagogical development is foreign to many academic staff' (Kogan, Moses, & El-Khawas, 1994, pp. 81-2).

There were broadly three types of reaction. First, a philosophical and political one epitomised by Rowland (1998) and Nixon et al (2001), who viewed educational development in general and the training of academics as teachers in particular, as a threat to the traditional autonomy of university teachers and indicative of increasing state control of academic life. Whilst the earliest proposals to train academics as teachers drew on a competency-based model, the form of credentialisation that emerged in higher education, mediated through the HEA, exercised much less central control than equivalent systems imposed on schoolteachers and staff in further education (Bailey & Robson, 2002).

A second reaction, quite logically, was to question whether compulsory training could achieve the things set out for it by the Dearing Review and the additional report subsequently published by Cooke (TQEC, 2003). Trowler and Bamber (2005, p.81) note, for example, that the aspirations underpinning the introduction of training programmes such as the PGCAP and the National Teaching Fellowships ‘lack any clear theory of fundamental change and [...] the expectations being placed on training are simply too diverse and ambitious.’ They also questioned whether the intervention epitomised in PGCAP and equivalent programmes – directed at novice teachers – was the most appropriate one and could find

no direct causal relationship between lecturer training and student outcomes. With such training focusing on the development of the student rather than development of the discipline there could be little impact beyond the individuals undertaking it’ (Trowler & Bamber,2005:82).

A third type of reaction came from those who researched the experiences and the attitudes of those who led or validated programmes such as the PGCAP themselves. Some of these were referred to in chapter two when referring to the work of Fanghanel (2004) in particular. Her work highlighted how some course leaders thought that ‘conforming to institutional goals, the standards set out by the QAA (outcomes-based curricula) and the HEA frequently produced ‘dissonances’ (Fanghanel,2004:577). However, there have been claims to more positive impacts too. Rust (2000:260) reports, rather tentatively, that on a course similar to the PGCAP ‘behavioural change [in the participants] had been achieved’ and that ‘in many (possibly most) cases, the changes are deep’. Furthermore, Gibbs & Coffey (2004:99) suggest how ‘teachers who completed accredited programmes [of teacher development] were demonstrably better than those who undertook no such accredited training’.

### **Provision, staffing and management of the PGCAP**

The study group were undertaking the University’s PGCAP programme in the 2008-9 academic year. In common with similar programmes in other universities, participation in this programme is a condition of employment for those who are newly appointed academic members of staff (those who have the title ‘lecturer’) within the University. For those working in partner institutions, the programme is also

compulsory but is not a condition of employment. The PGCAP is neither compulsory nor a condition of employment for existing members of staff, but is 'strongly encouraged' through the University's appraisal system. This may obscure a story of conscription for promotion prospects.

The PGCAP programme is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA), which means that it complies with the Academy's standards, values and knowledge areas. First introduced in 2001, it has undergone a number of changes since, last being re-validated in 2006. The programme is at Masters level and is composed of two 30-credit modules spread over two academic years. Those who are not in an academic role generally complete the first module but may progress further if they wish. It is also possible to 'top-up' and achieve a Masters qualification. One or two participants do this each year, progressing on to a generic MA in Education or MA in Medical Education.

The programme is managed from the Directorate of Teaching and Learning by the Associate Director of Teaching and Learning for the University, who has the main teaching and co-ordination role. The programme is formally part of the Faculty of Education but is generally held at 'arms length' from the faculty – ironically, no academic staff from the faculty teach on or manage the programme. The programme has no core team but is delivered by the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Programme Manager. Some specialist inputs are provided by the library, student services and learning technology. In the study year the course team also comprised a tutor from a partner college, who contributed on an ad hoc basis and myself as an 'extra'. Whilst the core team was larger than it had ever been, the Programme Manager agreed that it was significantly 'under-resourced' in terms of staffing. The Programme Manager explained that this was largely for historical reasons and that many academic staff who might have contributed felt that the PGCAP was 'too closely associated with human resources' and another burden on already heavy teaching loads.

### **Programme delivery and engagement**

Given that the one of the primary aims of the study is to establish the kind of roles that the PGCAP might play in the socialisation of the study group, it is important

to convey the kinds of experiences that the study group had. Participants in the PGCAP are required to attend a number of face-to-face workshops (set out in appendix six) which constitute the core 'delivery' method for the course. These are enhanced by a variety of on-line discussions and reflections via a 'BlackBoard' Virtual Learning Environment'.

The following descriptions are based on observations made during my participation in the PGCAP programme during the 2008-9 academic year. In all, there were ten one-day workshops beginning with two induction days in mid-September 2008. I taught on four of these days and attended the rest as an observer. What follows is based on those observations. An extract from my notes after lunch on day 1 of the induction session (the first meeting of the programme) provides a sample:

**Research diary extract 11<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

*"Home straight. Things going to time. Wondering what kind of theory or concept of learning we are working to here? What are they getting from this? Layers of meanings, skills. Not sure what it adds up to. Reluctant to get close. Action Learning Sets session preceded by JM so feels a bit disjointed. What is being constructed here? Workshop as a tried and tested method. No risks. Mark looking for recognition. Liked by group. Lesley wonderfully laid back and engaging – even playful. Difficult atmosphere for participants to play up in. Too friendly. What are we espousing here? Orientation days so no content? Seeing themselves? We had no outcomes or no invitation for them to say what they wanted. Close. I recruit two more study participants."*

The workshops typically used a blend of demonstration, presentation, group activities and 'instruction' and are underpinned by a broadly 'social constructivist' approach and an 'active' pedagogy. Social constructivist models of learning contend that knowledge is 'co-constructed' by learners and teachers rather than being 'passed' from the teacher to the learner (Vygotsky,1978). Fanghanel's (2004) sample of similar programmes suggested that such approaches might be typical:

educational developers tend to favour participation over control and have a constructionist view of learning. They tend to favour progressive....



educational ideologies. These encourage student-centred methodologies, and active pedagogy with an emphasis on personal development, rather than propositional knowledge

The initial topics in the programme broadly reflect the likely needs of novice teachers, such as session planning, assessment, and large group teaching with a growing emphasis on building practice through reflection and self-evaluation. The curriculum is structured around the stated learning outcomes but is also 'flexible', with topics being interpreted by facilitators according to their preferences and expertise. The programme is also pragmatic in terms of focusing on the issues participants might experience in their early encounters with students. There is a heavy focus in the programme on 'student support' as well as teaching. New and existing staff are reminded that 'the student body is increasingly diverse and their expectations of higher education are increasing' (Education Strategy' (2008-13) <sup>2</sup>. The same document notes how student support must be 'integrated into the learning process'.

I noted in my observations how a number of competing and linked discourses seemed to emerge during the year. The first is the 'survival' or 'craft' discourse, the expressed need to acquire 'tips' and 'ideas' to get through the initial weeks of teaching without total humiliation. The second is the 'institutional' discourse where the nature of the university's students and the thinking underpinning the Curriculum Review are shared. The third is the 'reflective' discourse – the development of practice through reflection and self-evaluation – though heavily conditioned by the need to produce reflections as part of the assessment. There is finally, the 'support' discourse – the sharing of the processes and systems that exist to identify, maintain and develop non-traditional students, of whom there are many as noted earlier. Such services are laid out by visiting speakers from the areas concerned.

The dominant discourse of the induction is that of 'reflection', as the group realise that the primary role of the PGCAP is not to equip them with a 'tool-kit' of skills

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<sup>2</sup> The staff survey conducted in 2007-8 had described an 'high dependency' culture amongst under- and postgraduates.

but a largely work-based programme that provides a forum for discussion and the co-construction of knowledge from experience. Fanghanel (2004,p.581) has noted how in other programmes 'reflection was used to operate a paradigm shift away from teaching seen as an 'innate ability' or a 'craft skill', towards comprehending teaching as a 'process with which to engage'. Considerable effort goes into capturing the essence of reflection and the kinds of frameworks and models that can be helpful in taking novice teachers on from merely thinking about practice to a more transformative approach where reflection is not a discrete course element or an exercise in self-justification or chastising oneself.

### **The study group**

The group was composed of ten participants drawn from the 2008-9 PGCAP cohort whose recruitment I described in chapter three. They 'belonged' to one of three recognisable contexts – lecturers in Osteopathy from a partner institution, a range of lecturers drawn from the 'professions' working in the University and a number of staff employed by the University in what might be termed 'support' roles. All of the group were graduates and were teaching their profession as academic staff or sharing their specialist expertise with learners as part of a service, such as careers or sports development. All were teaching on either undergraduate or postgraduate programmes. The majority were continuing to work in their profession so, for example, the Osteopaths were still practising and fully registered Osteopaths. Two of the three lecturers were continuing in their professions of Nursing and Accountancy. One lecturer, an ex-schoolteacher, was the only participant teaching full-time.

### **The Osteopaths**

There are three Osteopaths in the study and their backgrounds are outlined below. They work at one of the UK's 10 specialist schools of Osteopathy. They work on a three-year masters programme (M.Ost) in Osteopathy validated by the University. In the UK, Osteopathy is referred to as a form of 'manual medicine' alongside that of Chiropractors and Physiotherapists. Though often considered a form of complementary medicine, there is growing evidence that Osteopathy is effective in the management of musculoskeletal conditions such back and neck pain. (Nemett *et al*,2008). Osteopathic skills centre on the ability to palpate the skin and the knowledge to relate this to the workings of the anatomy, particularly muscles, joints

and moving tissue. Unlike physiotherapists or nurses, Osteopaths are primary healthcare professionals registered with and regulated by the General Osteopathic Council. They diagnose their own patients and refer on or treat them as appropriate.

The profession dates back to the 1870's and the School of Osteopathy in the study was the among the first to be formed. Osteopathy became a graduate-only profession following the Osteopath's Act in 1993. Such courses then became state-funded in 2003, drawing universities into the realm of osteopathic education. Previously all institutions offering Osteopathy had been stand- alone providers. Osteopathy has also moved from fully patient-funded profession, to one funded by the NHS and private health insurance. It has, in short, become more fully integrated into state funding and control. It has also grown from a profession with 500 practitioners to one of 3000, and is growing by approximately 200 graduates a year. There are now 10 accredited centres training Osteopaths in the UK. The School of Osteopathy in the study runs mainly pre-registration courses which are at Masters level.

**Table 4:2 Backgrounds of the Osteopaths**

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Background</b>
Craig	36	Qualified as an Osteopath in 1998 and joined a shared private practice where he still works part-time. Started teaching in the Osteopathic school in 2008 as a clinical tutor after two years working part-time in a local school for children with special needs. Has an M.Sc in Paediatrics completed in 2007. Teaching is focused on clinical areas but also teaches sociological aspects of Osteopathy
James	42	Enrolled on an Osteopathy course straight from school in 1986. Qualified as an Osteopath in 1991. Has run a 'sole trader' Osteopathy clinic since qualifying. Went on to do part-time teaching six months after qualifying. Has taught part-time in two other Osteopathic schools in different parts of the country and on short courses overseas. Teaches in clinical and non-clinical areas of the B.Sc in Osteopathy.
Jane	26	Started her degree in Osteopathy after a year of work experience in a primary school. Qualified as an Osteopath in 2006. Parents are both teachers. Has worked since qualifying in a large private Osteopathic practice and teaches mainly in the clinical areas of the B.Sc in Osteopathy. Most of her teaching is in 'shared' areas where she can observe and learn from other tutors.

The three Osteopaths in the study group are all new appointments to service a Masters programme in Osteopathy (M.Ost.) and their teaching is confined to that programme. All three are also practising Osteopaths, either as 'sole traders' or partners in larger practices. The Osteopaths had a range of experience as Osteopaths from four to twenty-two years.

### **The Support Staff and those supporting teaching**

A number of terms have been used to describe and conceptualise the work of those whose primary function is to design and deliver services that support those engaged in teaching and research. To date, Gornall's (1999) work in this area has been the most comprehensive and persuasive, urging care and clarity in the way such terms are used and developed. For Gornall, the term 'support staff' retains an 'upstairs/downstairs flavour and is 'too inclusive' – that is, not differentiating between specialist roles. Such roles include librarians, personnel functions, careers advisers and student services. Gornall distinguishes between a number of categories of support staff in developing the term 'New Professionals' to describe those whose roles

*'cluster around changing forms of support for teaching and learning ... that is not lecturing..... and may be one-to-one, ad hoc and unassessed, and*

*in learning support that is resource-based, but not necessarily in the role of technicians or librarians per se' (p.45)*

These 'New Professionals' are drawn from a range of activities from 'traditional' support roles such as librarians or 'co-ordinators' of teaching and learning, who symbolise a shift from teaching to learning, from the teacher to the learner. Gornall positions these staff in 'liminal' spaces (p.48), having both power but also suffering from marginality – the inhabitants of a 'new territory'.

There were four support staff in the study group whose 'formal' roles included an academic liaison librarian, a library manager, a careers advisor and a Sports Development Officer. Their backgrounds are set in the table below:

**Table 4:3 Backgrounds of those supporting teaching**

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Background</b>
Linda	32 Librarian	Did a degree in French after completing A levels at school. Worked for three years as an archivist in a museum then got a job in a hospital library. Completed a professional librarianship course by distance learning in 2007. Now works liaising with academic staff in the Healthcare Faculty of the University
Abigail	49 Careers Adviser	Trained and worked as a schoolteacher after leaving university. Left teaching and worked periodically in youth work combined with voluntary work and bringing up a family. Undertook a specialist qualification in career counselling prior to returning to full-time work. Secured a job as a Careers Advisor in nearby university. Has worked in current role in study university for eight years. Children now grown up.
Juliet	45 Sports Development Officer	Entered the fitness industry having left school with modest qualifications. Combined bringing up a family with courses in the evenings to become a qualified fitness instructor. Then studied Sports Therapy part-time at a local college and then undertook a part-time degree in the same subject and at the study university. Started a PhD but abandoned this as a job-share in her current role grew became full-time.
Clare	54 Library Manager	Joined the university in 1989 as an Information Assistant. Undertook a postgraduate librarianship course shortly after, then moved to work in an electronics company for a year as a librarian. Then moved back to the university as a librarian.

These were not strictly the 'New Professionals' identified above since they mainly occupied fairly traditional roles in which, formally, they work 'at a distance' from core teaching and learning activities. However, even traditional roles, such as that of a librarian, have been modestly re-shaped so that a 'liaison' librarian would support students and staff through running workshops, tutorials and one-to-one sessions to enhance referencing or search skills as a normal part of their role. Such sessions might constitute a quantitatively significant part of the role.

### **The Academics**

The remaining part of the study group were more difficult to position as originating from any 'defining community', having in common only the title 'lecturer' and what that might have implied in terms of contractual obligations to teaching, scholarship and assessment. However, they 'typified' the disciplines and professions that

dominated in the university, being drawn from Business Studies, Teacher Training and Nursing – disciplines which Nixon et al (2001, p.233) would define as ‘explicit vocationalism’ or courses that were highly adapted to the labour market. In the case of teacher training and nursing, the relationship between courses and work is of a highly specific nature, with each being to a large extent, controlled by agencies of the state – respectively the Teacher Development Agency (TDA) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

**Table 4:4 Backgrounds of the academics**

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Background</b>
John	61	Has worked in finance and accountancy for his whole career. Left school and worked in a bank and then worked as a cost accountant in an engineering company. Started his own financial consultancy business in the 1970s. Then took professional exams in insurance to give him ‘chartered’ status. Completed his MBA in 2004 in the study university.
Peter	41	Peter is a full-time Senior Lecturer in Education and has a Ph.D. He has been an educational researcher following a career teaching in primary and secondary schools as well as in further education. He has responsibility for the training of teachers in European languages in the University. Peter volunteered to do the PGCAP and had been working in the University for a year prior to the start of the study.
Katrina	47	Katrina is a part-time Lecturer in Nursing and had been a qualified nurse for 25 years prior to starting at the University. She specialised as a children’s nurse and became a ward sister in 1998. She has worked in four hospitals and often found herself in ‘unofficial’ teaching roles. She had taught in another university as a Nurse Educator for one year. Katrina works for two days per week in the study University.

For Nixon et al (p.233), these sorts of ‘academics’ were part of a ‘new proletariat’ in higher education where the nature of the students, their courses and the prevailing ideology of ‘competence’ are all controlled by the state rather than the academics themselves. They do not easily resemble the academics at the heart of Becher & Trowler’s (2001) analysis, lacking the autonomy, the traditions and the status of discipline-based academics.

## **Summary**

The chapter has described the institutional contexts of the study, the main characteristics of the PGCAP programme and the backgrounds of the research participants. I have noted that the participants had joined what I termed as a ‘vocational’ or ‘workplace’ university, where significant numbers of staff were drawn

directly from the professions for their experience and skills in a range of occupations. Such professions seemed to dominate the curriculum. I have also highlighted certain key characteristics of the student profile and alluded to a 'culture of dependency' in that student population. I have drawn particular attention to the nature of teaching staff activity focused on teaching and support for courses and learners. There was little time given over to research. Research, I noted, tended to be concentrated in Research Institutes which are separate from core teaching and learning activity.

I have therefore characterised the research participants in this and the previous chapter as teachers rather than traditional 'academics': those whose careers as academics had started when they were undergraduates (Henkel,2000). In contrast, the research participants, had worked mainly outside of teaching or higher education in a range of professions within which the majority were still active. I observed how they typified the institution's wider staff profile and, in turn, the pattern of recruitment on to the PGCAP programme. I have also suggested that, with relatively weak induction arrangements and the part-time nature of most of the participants' teaching roles, the PGCAP remained as the most likely source of institutional and teacher socialisation. Having described these important contexts, I turn now to the heart of the thesis, the three empirical chapters. These draw upon the in-depth interviews with the ten study informants.



# Chapter five: Narratives of engagement, experience and motivation

## Introduction

In its very nature, being a member of a disciplinary community involves a sense of identity and personal commitment, a way of being in the world, a matter of taking on a cultural frame that defines a great part of one's life. (Becher and Trowler, 2001:47)

The thesis now turns to the analysis of the data produced across the three interviews undertaken with each of the ten participants. This is the first of three chapters which, together, seek to explore the ways in which the research participants start to 'become' teachers in higher education. All three chapters use forms of narrative analysis (Mishler, 1986; Cortazzi, 1993) to re-construct the stories provided by the participants across the study period. These analyses are designed to bring out the significant events, behaviours and emotions that have meaning for the participants and for the study. Coffey & Atkinson (1996:54) describe this as 'the ways in which social actors produce, represent and contextualise experience and personal knowledge'.

There are many ways in which such experiences, knowledge and emotions can be re-counted and analysed (Woods, 1999) or viewed in terms of the 'form' or the 'function' of the language used (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996:62). There are, as Mishler (1986:67) emphasises, 'many approaches to issues of meaning'. Like Mishler, I wanted to 'connect' the responses my participants gave to individual questions and make a sustained account. In this way, I hoped to use the interview responses to form a 'story re-told' by each respondent and across a number of interviews. Kvale (1996: 199) develops this idea further when he describes how the

narrative analysis of what was said leads to a new story to be told, a story developing the original themes of the interview. The analysis may also be a condensation or a re-construction of the many tales told by the subjects into a richer, more condensed and coherent story than the scattered stories of the separate interviewees.

However, as I pointed out in chapter three, I did not interview my respondents 'narratively'. Thus, their narratives were largely 'embedded' in their responses to the questions I had posed. Although Mishler (1986) describes ways of 'dis-embedding' narrative accounts through structural analysis and textual functions, I felt these were too functionalist in their approach. Instead, I chose to use 'critical event narrative analysis' as described by Webster & Mertova (2007:71), who suggest that human experience is 'recalled in the form of critical events that are instrumental in changing or influencing understanding'.

Before describing these analytic processes further, I want to provide detailed justification for the use of narrative analysis in the context of the research participants themselves. For Cortazzi (1993:5) teachers' narratives are key to understanding 'what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do'. In other words, narratives can take the researcher into the culture of teachers and to allow them to hear their 'voice' in a direct way. Such an approach is intended to work on a number of levels here. Firstly, it is an explicit and effective way of seeing what is there, and, in this context, the 'surface patterning' of teacher socialisation from the participants' perspectives. Secondly, it involves trying to 'make sense' of the ways in which the participants begin to engage with their teacher role and 'move' into it. This approach is also concerned with how they report their engagements with others, notably their students and the PGCAP, as well as their broader experiences and motivation. These deeper patterns of meaning begin to reveal how established professional identities are imprinted upon the narratives of the professions, and take on particular forms and meanings.

In order to derive the narratives set out below, I carefully read and re-read the interview transcripts of all of the research participants. I looked for events or experiences which seemed to be influential in developing new understandings of what it might mean to become a teacher in higher education. I was looking, in other words, for actual or potential 'change experiences'. These did not have to be critical in terms of being traumatic or even challenging, but events to which the participants drew my attention. As Webster & Mertova (2007:74) note, 'an event that is less than critical can still have an impact on a person's performance and functioning'. I then carefully examined and re-examined the events I identified for each individual,

searching for commonalities and differences in participants' behaviours, emotions and experience. These are displayed through a series of short narrative extracts, each composed of the voices of one or two of the participants describing a set of events and experiences or feelings which are displayed together to 'typify' the group as a whole at each of the three interview points. Each description is saturated with direct quotations from the chosen participants embedded in a text which seeks to sustain their voices. Atkinson (1990:21) refers to this as a 'humanistic' or 'pictorial' style where the text 'incorporates the subjects' speech and the author's commentary to interpenetrate in complex ways'. Each of the narrative extracts is also drawn together with a description and a preliminary analysis, This seeks to 'generalise' the events described by referencing other participant voices which the extracts seem to typify. These are then drawn together with a closing synoptic discussion and a summary.

### **Analytical perspectives**

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which the professional backgrounds of the research participants might affect and be affected by the processes of becoming a teacher in higher education. The question framing this chapter asks what kinds of similarities and differences there are in these processes across and within the different professional groups represented in the study. More specifically, it explores the ways that professional backgrounds might shape the novice teachers' pathways into teaching, early encounters and ongoing engagements, as well as the wider processes of becoming a teacher.

This first analytical starting point stems from a number of studies which suggest that individual identities are powerfully shaped by wider groups or contexts. As Denzin (1989:73) states, 'no self or personal experience story is ever an individual production. It derives from a larger group, cultural, ideological and historical contexts'. McIntyre (1981:206) further argues that 'individual agents or individual forms cannot be identified in isolation from the context and traditions in which they are embedded'. What these studies and the work of Taylor (1989:28) on 'defining communities' all show, is that the accounts given by individuals cannot be understood without some consideration of the wider structures in which people live

their personal and professional lives. Such structures provide language, experience and values that get taken into, and help to form, each new experience. Whilst some individuals may be more 'agentic' than others (Bandura, 1997:3), wider social structures invariably shape individual dispositions and actions.

In some parts of the higher education system, such a context is seen primarily as a disciplinary one. Here, a discipline is said to define 'a sense of identity and personal commitment [...] a way of being in the world' (Becher & Trowler, 2001:47). In a more nuanced account, Henkel (2000) suggests that other factors, including institutions and the teaching act itself, are powerful sources of socialisation. Yet while each of these studies acknowledges that identity may be partly shaped by other careers, their focus is on the acquisition of a single professional identity rather than the movement between multiple identities, a point to which I will now turn.

### **The professional groups**

I observed how certain patterns started to emerge when the interview transcripts were analysed in groups resolved around professional backgrounds and formal roles. Indeed, when the transcripts were analysed across three established professional groups – the Osteopaths, Academics and Support Staff - highly distinctive ways of thinking and acting which connect back to the previous chapter were observed. The Osteopaths, for example, all made strong connections between their patients and their learners; the support staff sought to 'perform' their teacher roles better, and the Academics were highly active in trying to 'transfer' their experience and skills to improve the learner experience. Such commonalities are a powerful confirmation of the observations made by Denzin and others above.

That being said, such an approach may also tend to reify any patterns observed, leaving other more powerful and significant ideas largely unseen. For example, a lecturer in Nursing shares thoughts and actions which belong to the Academics but also, perhaps more powerfully, to the Osteopaths. To avoid such a reification, I set aside the professional groupings described above so that a fresh analysis could take place. When this second examination of the data was undertaken, a slightly different set of groupings started to emerge. The first group again consisted of the

Osteopaths, but this time they were joined by another health professional, the Lecturer in Nursing. Together, they constituted a 'Health Practitioner' group. This second analysis retained the 'support staff' as a coherent and meaningful group, described from now on as a 'Learner Support' group to more clearly evoke their roles and emerging identities. This second examination of the data left two of the research participants, the remaining two academics, outside of either of the above groups. While each of these participants has commonalities with their professional group, there are many differences too, so they are considered as the 'Academic Staff', separately below.

### **The Health Practitioners (Craig, Katrina, Jane and James)**

#### **Narrative 1 - Patient-centric images of teaching**

It is early in the first interviews, soon after the start of the PGCAP. They have a very limited amount of teaching experience at this point. The participants are asked about how they see the role of a teacher in higher education. Although the health practitioners talk at length about their pathways into teaching and their emerging expectations of the PGCAP in broadly similar ways, it is their focus on patients in these responses that is most striking. However, whilst these short vignettes show highly patient-centric views of teaching, this is not simply a transfer of 'care' for patients into 'care' for learners but a more ambiguous set of connections to their main professional identity.

James, an experienced Osteopath, responds by talking about how the role of being a teacher in higher education 'comes from being an Osteopath'. He describes how, when he deals with patients, he sees himself 'as a facilitator, as a catalyst to help that individual's health'. He further describes his role as an Osteopath and the way in which he 'facilitates their bodies to heal themselves' rather than healing 'with his hands'. James likens this to being a teacher as his role is to 'facilitate knowledge' in his students.

Katrina, a very experienced nurse, sees the role of a teacher in higher education as being about facilitation, drawing out and building upon the knowledge in the room 'because a lot of the girls have got a lot of the experience'. In recounting her teaching experience to date, she draws parallels between her students and her patients in ways that take her back to nursing on the wards. Katrina talks of 'being in control' when you are a nurse and 'especially as a ward sister you're there to sort of not control but

you know, you can direct and yes, manage, and teaching sometimes isn't as easy to manage'. Students appear much less predictable than patients, 'who do what you really want them to do with a bit of encouragement.

Craig is also an experienced Osteopath. He uses an image of teaching which begins with a strong belief that his area of practice brings 'benefits to the world' and how he would like to see 'practitioners entering into it? who have not only similar values, but [who are] not only motivated by purely material concerns'. He moves on to see teaching as a way to 'encourage practitioners to engage with areas of their practice which may not have immediate financial rewards attached but involve broadening, expanding themselves in the profession they are in for the benefit of their patients.

These seem to be complex displays of professional identity, with the 'patient' playing different roles for each member of the group. For James, references to patients seem to help him think about teaching in a particular way. That facilitation, rather than a more didactic approach, is more effective. It makes teaching feel familiar to him, and that his learners, given the right environment, can learn for themselves in just the same way as his patients might heal themselves. Katrina is also committed to a facilitative view of learning but the comparison with patients works differently for her. Here, the control she can exercise over her patients cannot be applied to her students, who are far less predictable. This seems to disturb and disorientate her, whilst Craig's references to patients seem to work in another way. For him, patients and their care are the focus of a moral position. He sees his teaching as a route to this higher goal, a way of deflecting his students from material concerns. He sees his teaching as having a moral purpose. Like James, he uses a role model to exemplify and justify his point.

These patient-centric views of teaching take particular forms and demonstrate differing concerns and features. These forms – the need to achieve more control, to develop greater independence in learners and to achieve a moral purpose – all appear to help these participants to connect with and initially to maintain their professional identity. The power of these identities is underscored when the fourth member of the health practitioner group states that

I'm an Osteopath not a teacher. I'm an Osteopath first and a teacher second. I am an Osteopath most of the time and when I come into teach I stand up as a model of an Osteopath and you learn from me. I am what Osteopathy is and what an Osteopath does that's what you're supposed to be learning. (Jane, interview 1)

This initial maintenance of a main professional identity generally, and the role of patients specifically, provides a useful baseline from which to observe subsequent change and draw comparisons with the other study group, as well as other novice teachers. For now though, the study turns to the teaching encounters of the Health Practitioner group.

### **Narrative two - defending the profession**

It is now three months since the first interviews and the health practitioners are asked to recall encounters with learners that have been significant for them. They are also asked to justify their choices. When asked to recall and justify a significant encounter with their learners, the members of this group sought to illustrate how working with those they are training generates professional dilemmas. In each of these described encounters the profession is, in some way, protected from the students. The integrity of the profession comes before the reputation of colleagues or the progress of individual students. Hence, whilst they discuss the pedagogic struggles they face, such as getting greater interaction in their groups, they give more prominence to the ways in which they have upheld the standards of their profession.

Jane is an Osteopath who qualified just three years before the study period. She chooses to recall how 'a student came up to me with a very specific question which I answered and then realised there was an agenda behind it'. She further recalls how the student then 'asked me to come over to her group which was being tutored by a colleague of mine who'd just given some factually incorrect information'. Jane then realises that her colleague 'isn't going to back down' and how she thinks that the students now believe that her answer is 'the right one' and then, how her colleague goes about explaining how 'her theory is the correct one'. Jane recognises that she has 'fallen into a trap' set by the students. She justifies that choice of an encounter on the basis that 'it made me very uncomfortable and whilst I don't want to contradict my colleagues I also don't like to think of them giving out wrong information, particularly when it's clinical stuff because that should be correct'. There are, she notes, 'lots of things in our profession that are easy to interpret in different ways but clinical findings

are straight-forward and have to be that.

Katrina, a very experienced nurse takes her example from a very recent small group session which didn't go well. She starts by noting how she 'always thought the smaller the group the easier it would be and actually it isn't' rather, 'the smaller the group the harder it is.' Katrina is unsure why this is the case but describes how in one particular group of four, a group with which she has several 'issues', there is 'a girl who has a diagnosis which means she isn't particularly good at eye contact which I do have concerns about going into nursing because I think you need a bit of eye contact in nursing obviously'. She notes that 'because of her issues, she was vocal and she joined in but it was very difficult not to focus on her at different times'. Katrina concludes by saying that 'when you've got somebody with difficulties it is really difficult in a small group because you can't even absorb them or carry them along really'. She regards this as 'her most difficult session' and that's why she has chosen it.

In Jane's account, she faces a situation that all teachers face, that of contradicting a colleague directly in front of students. In many contexts, this might present an opportunity for sharing or acknowledging differences of view, something that Jane herself concedes. However, here there is no room for debate or discussion. There is no hesitation; the other tutor is simply 'wrong'. Clinical practice isn't debatable. For Katrina, there are pedagogic difficulties in terms of working with a very small group but there is a fault with this group. It can't function properly as there is a student who is difficult and who is, in any case, 'not suitable for nursing'. She transfers her problem to the student. These tensions between professional backgrounds and an emerging teacher role also appear in Craig and James's accounts.

### **Narrative three - teaching as a distinctive practice**

It is now the final interview and the participants are asked to compare their main profession with teaching in higher education. In these narratives, the health practitioner group variously begins to recognise that teaching is a distinctive practice, an entity that exists outside of their profession, if still highly connected with it. Teaching, at least in higher education, has different conditions and demands; it may not be just about the transfer of practice from their professional context to their teaching context



Jane recalls how she had said in her first interview that she 'stood up as a model of an Osteopath and you learn from me. I am what Osteopathy is and what an Osteopath does that's what you're supposed to be learning'. She now thinks that after some sessions on the PGCAP and as 'part of the reflection process' she has 'learned to understand a little bit more about my brief as a teacher and how students learn' that it's 'not just me...I can't just stand there and say this is how Osteopathy works. I need to show them how to get to how Osteopathy works'. She states, 'that's something I learned in my transition from Osteopath to teacher but it's helped my practice life as well. I think, it's made me think about certain practice issues and problems and problem-solving in a different way'. They 'inform one another.

The comparison for Katrina, a very experienced nurse, begins with 'problems' she's observed on wards and the way in which 'people [junior nurses] perhaps not able to, not having the understanding behind what they are doing' have made her 'much more interested in the academic process and the training that they get'. She notes that the 'skills and the practice that you see as you're at work and the teaching that you do at work' feels like 'a natural progression from sort of supporting pre-registration nurse students to then being the nurse manager'. In the work setting, she adds 'you sort of organise and plan, but again then you're able to influence your teaching because you lead by example so if you want people to do clinical skills you teach about it, then lead by example and hopefully they all follow you'. This is in stark contrast to teaching in higher education where the 'difficulty I have is I can't lead by example because I'm not on the wards enough to do that.

Craig sees more similarities than differences between being an Osteopath and a teacher in higher education as 'you are fundamentally trying to help people' and that's also 'a good motivation as a teacher'. He continues, 'I think those sorts of professions where you are working with people, there is a sort of transferable ethos'. He further sees Osteopathy as being 'like detective work, you are trying to diagnose, a diagnosis, what's wrong with people and then try to do something to help them. I improve their situation and I mean the degree to which that kind of approach applies to students. I suppose you are doing your preparation in advance, you're in advance looking at what they need and you have to learn about the course, it's degree of detective work. You can't just chuck paint at a wall; you are trying to work out their learning needs in advance.

However, not all of the group have reached this point. James, an Osteopath, retains a highly patient-centric view of teaching when he describes how he might

Start the day saying that this is what today's lecture will be about or what the tutorial will be about; this is what we hope to achieve at the end of it and what I need to know is that you understand this, this and this so that we can achieve an end. So using a similar kind of principle as Osteopathy

has taught me I will use a similar aspect of introducing various ideas and ensuring that that individual or group of individuals one by one is aware of and is happy with what is being taught.

Further on in this account, James describes this as 'consenting' his students. For Jane, by contrast, the processes of teaching and reflection may have begun to loosen her early identification with Osteopathy, and to shape her view that teaching goes beyond simply being an Osteopath; it must get them to understand the practice itself. Jane also recognises that professional knowledge is often tacit and needs bringing out. In Katrina's account, teaching in a higher education context is actively contrasted with teaching in the workplace. She recognises the embedded nature of learning within practice and, as in her previous vignettes, is feeling a loss of control over the 'defective' practice she has seen in her junior colleagues. She has to rely on others, which disturbs her. For Craig, the distinction between teaching in higher education and being an Osteopath is again more complex. He is beginning to see that, whilst his patients and his students have many similarities, the latter are also significantly different.

### **The Learner Support group (Abigail, Juliet, Clare and Linda)**

#### **Narrative four - establishing role boundaries**

It is early in the first interviews with this group. Like the Health Practitioner group, they have some teaching experience at this point, gained as part of their role in the university libraries, sports development or the careers service. Their narratives illustrate complex connections between professional backgrounds and the socialisation of this particular group. Two kinds of connections seem significant here. Firstly, the way in which the group members define themselves in terms of what they are not, as well as what they are, is noteworthy. They very carefully position themselves in their support roles and, in doing so, begin to distinguish themselves from what they regard as teaching. Secondly, the connections between their backgrounds and their socialisation into teaching are also mediated through wider organisational shifts.

Clare is a library manager and relates how 'I see myself as a support staff rather than an academic lecturer. We are pushed to do the teaching and it's become part of our remit to do teaching. I think it is something I will

enjoy as I am a natural performer and you need to have that ability to be able to stand up in front of a group and be able to do that. I find that quite hard to answer. I am hoping I will grow in the PGCAP and bring out more of what I need to do. Since we have had the Curriculum Review..., it's very much that they want to have the support staff and the information literacy skills embedded in the curriculum. Also to use the librarian's experience and that will come out more as we progress through. The more qualified we get the more kudos we have. I see my role as a facilitator so they know how to use the information that they find, and how to evaluate.

Juliet is new in her role as a Sports Development Officer. She thinks that she 'doesn't really have a role as a teacher', and prefers to see herself 'mainly supporting as opposed to lecturing' as she is in 'a dual role because throughout this [PGCAP] course I am going to be properly lecturing, giving lectures in a professional manner to the best of my ability'. She therefore sees herself 'becoming more of an actual teacher', whereas she doesn't see herself 'as a teacher now'. Juliet goes on to say how, by the end of the year, she would be 'comfortable in seeing myself as a teacher and possibly to engage a bit more'. She sees her immediate challenge as 'understanding all aspects of teaching in order to support, particularly on an individual level for the elite athletes.

Both of these connections are seen in Clare's account. That is, being 'pushed' to teach as part of a wider and changing discourse of skills and a perception of not being a teacher. Hence, while doing more teaching fits with her sense of personal growth, it is also an obligation. Juliet elaborates the careful positioning of her role in relation to the way in which she is doing it now is not teaching because it is not lecturing.

Such obligations and perceptions have similar effects on others. For example, Abigail, a careers adviser, finds her teaching role expanded by a new university push on 'employability'. Such initiatives have no current status in the academic curriculum so Abigail finds herself negotiating her way into established programmes where 'it would be helpful' for the academic staff. The lack of power of the support staff in the curriculum seems to affect how they approach their teaching.

### **Narrative five – new pedagogic performances**

It is now three months since the first interviews, and the 'learner support' group are asked to recall encounters with learners that have been significant for them. Their vignettes focus on 'performance' – getting the session 'right' in terms of subject, activity and management. The need to do their best is prominent in a teaching environment that is also very unfamiliar. Now, the students they meet are unlike their customers or clients; they are an undifferentiated mass. Furthermore, the content is not theirs and they are anxious about the coverage, level and how students will respond. They worry about making mistakes. However, although the students seem challenging, they are not 'problem students'. These are problem situations that are very different from the highly learner-driven ones they are used to. They have fundamental concerns which seem to disrupt both their experience and emerging conceptions of 'good teaching' derived from the PGCAP, which advocates interactive and task-based approaches.

Linda recalls an encounter with a large group of nursing students. She recounts how it was 'like a revelation, it was completely different to anything I had done and it came towards the end of my bulk of teaching. The students engaged completely and utterly and they listened and they were a bit scared of me, which sounds awful but it was really great and I got drunk on the power of it all. The reason why is because nursing students are assessed on referencing, but they aren't assessed on information searching or search strategies and they can use Google for everything when they are searching but they are assessed on the way they are referencing. Going into a classroom and saying "did you know this is worth 20% of your marks" and go aahhh!! And looking at you and it kicks in immediately, so it was completely different and dynamic to all the other sessions I had done. But it was much more of a lecture not a workshop like the others I had done. So more nerve racking for me and I was dreading it and felt sick with nerves and it was incredibly successful, not in terms that they all know how to reference perfectly but in terms of, I felt the students saw the worth and the value in what we were doing and they wanted to get it right. The other thing about the referencing sessions which was different was the nursing and health for academics often seem to be obsessed with referencing themselves for some reason and they take it very seriously and get quite het up if things go wrong with it.

Abigail selects an encounter that follows on closely from a session where she is observed as part of her PGCAP. Her recall of the selected session starts when she is 'approached by the academic dept to come in and run a few sessions. So I suggested we run four sessions for them in a block (one on self, opportunity, aspiration and results)'. Abigail moves on to describe how this session is 'a very different topic and different approach'

from what she has used before. She describes how she 'used exercises, some talk' and that they are performing arts students, so 'they are quite laid back students, often arriving late and they will readily say they don't understand what is going on'. She describes how she 'set out what I was going to cover and had three exercises through the hour. I did come unstuck though and that was where I became less confident, because I didn't know the exercises as well and found I was giving less examples, chatting less and less to inform them about terms in depth'.

Juliet commented: Going into the session I had been asked to get involved in this, very last minute and not a great deal of preparation. I sort of knew what to expect and once I got into the session I didn't realise it was going to be me explaining it. The lecturer said I was going to explain what it was all about. Very much off the cuff, a bit of anxiety and from the start making sure I covered everything and I did forget one significant thing which the lecturer did pipe in at the end. They are quite informal sessions, it's not a lecture style theatre where all the practicals take place and I comfort myself that most students expect you to know what you are doing and expect the best from you and not here to critique me. I am quite happy talking to groups and standing up the front and discussing what is required, but would have preferred more preparation and would not have missed out on that one point as I would have given myself bullet points to make sure I covered everything.

These feelings of not wanting to make mistakes, the need to cover everything and the need for control are powerfully evoked in these accounts. In part, these may be part of a conventional journey into teaching but they are also shaped by comparisons with more learner-centred approaches and the wider discourses of employability and information literacy which they are now asked to deliver. Linda's account of 'control' may be a way of coping with these pressures.

### **Narrative six - discomfort and reverting back**

It is now the final interview and the participants are asked to compare their main profession with teaching in higher education. Their narratives now illustrate how the members of the Learner Support Group seek to reconcile the teaching that forms part of their main role with the changing contexts and demands of their new teaching.

Abigail describes how her careers role is 'very client centred and it's focused on their agenda and their needs' whereas, 'in the main, when I'm teaching, I'm saying here's this agenda, imposing to a certain extent you know whatever the curriculum is saying needs teaching at that point'. She

then recalls how when she was a secondary teacher 'I preferred... I almost preferred to be listening to the students than telling them and I think I'm learning a little bit now you can well, certainly at this level, you can do both within a classroom situation and I'm quite enjoying that.' She then attributes this to her own 'misconception that a teacher will deliver something if that makes sense so the bit of the PGCAP I've enjoyed is seeing students as learners. I'm thinking much more clearly about what will they learn out of it.'

Juliet begins her account with a description of how 'within the fitness industry, I was instructing people and that would be on a one-to-one basis or it could be a class situation but it was on more of a personal level. I always found even when instructing quite a large group of people... it was always a fairly close situation and relationship where ...people would see you as a peer, as an equal, not as person of any greater status where obviously they still would have respect for your knowledge and information that you could pass on, but certainly not that you would have more knowledge than them.' 'I preferred that way of teaching which is the way as I'm now teaching, I'm probably trying to gravitate back to all that because I think the subject and the teacher have a better feeling about the whole learning process so I think probably looking back at that, that was the ideal situation where you're actually having much more of a discussion about the whole fitness situation and you'll impart knowledge and then questions or reaction will move backwards or forward. I think probably myself and the subject would learn a lot more that way and it's more comfortable so I think I sort of gravitate.... Or am trying to gravitate back towards that and apply that in a very different situation'. There are sort of two camps for me really in style, one is fairly instinctive which is very interactive and then you have a very much which is probably very unfair of me but academic style which is your lecture theatre and what you invoke by the word lecture where you're just talking to somebody and lecturing them and I personally I can take both styles, it doesn't bother me um but I wouldn't want to be the lecturer.

They are beginning, sometimes through the PGCAP, to re-shape their perception of the teaching role. Teaching is being equated with something more collaborative, a re-conceptualisation of teaching itself. However, there is as yet, no settled 'style'. They frequently 'gravitate back' to a peer-based approach because it generates a 'better feeling' about the learning process. There is a continuous movement between an instinctive and an academic style.

## **The Academic staff**

I aim here to provide brief accounts of the two remaining research participants who are not included in the vignettes above. As stated earlier, whilst parts of their interviews share one or two features in common with Katrina, the Lecturer in Nursing, there are too few of these commonalities to justify a third distinct group of narratives. Despite this, the motivations, experiences and emotions of the academic staff still constitute interesting case studies in their own right. Their socialisation into teaching in higher education is still being shaped by their main professions but in ways that do not justify inclusion in the above groups.

## **The Teacher Trainer**

Peter has been in the University for a year following a six-year career teaching modern languages in schools. He is objectively different from the rest of the study group in that he is the only full-time member of staff, holds a doctorate and volunteered to do the PGCAP. Peter's experience, his qualifications and high levels of pedagogic knowledge, albeit gained in a different part of the education system, suggest that his transition into a university teaching role might be relatively seamless. His interview responses suggest that this is indeed the case, though his background as a schoolteacher is evident in many responses. There is a sense in which his background seems to fully equip him for his new role. For example, in his response to how he saw the role of a teacher in higher education he said

The journey from becoming a secondary school teacher then a primary school teacher working in further education gave me a particular insight into different processes. I felt that when I came into higher education I had the skills that were transferable to this environment and I wanted to deepen in a way my reflection on processes involved in education.  
(Interview one)

'For me creating the identity of a higher education teacher is basically taking into account people's life experience, exploiting them and letting them reflect and move on. What I do emphasise is the modelling of how this knowledge is put into practice. (Interview one)

Peter seems to view his role as a teacher in higher education as an extension of his work in schools, and believes that his skills and experience can be 'transferred' into a university context. He continues, by seeing how his teaching will be facilitative in

its approach and focused on modelling the practices of a school teacher. When asked to recall a significant teaching event during interview two, Peter selects a challenging encounter with a group of students who are reluctant to engage with language learning

The peculiarity of these two groups was the fact that they had the particular reaction against languages, probably based on their previous secondary school experience and secondly, there was this fear underlining their perceptions of the subject because they thought they were not equipped with the subject knowledge. It was a straight forward challenge so I had to implement methodology to engage them and let them be part of the lesson without scaring them. It was a really challenging opportunity for me to develop language on the one side and the other side to work on people's motivation. I followed a very simple primary school approach to teaching and... I introduced languages in such a way that it was fun and engaging and motivating. (Interview two)

In this highly assured account, Peter is again able to draw directly and effectively on his past experience and skills. He is not using adult approaches at this point but using techniques acquired in the primary classroom to resolve a situation and to 'model' good practice itself.

I think that my experience in secondary education provides me with a sort of foundation background and at the same time it gives me the necessary tools to deal with the processes of teaching and learning... the secondary background also makes me understand the way in which people learn and the way in which the teaching and learning processes can be improved. I think there are loads of different areas within my secondary background I still resort to because they are like the foundation, the cornerstone on which all the work I'm doing in higher education is built upon. (Interview 2)

The way in which Peter's background as a teacher in schools is continuing to shape his socialisation as a teacher in higher education is strikingly summed up in his response to a question in the final interview, which asks him to compare his main professional background with the role of a teacher in higher education. Here, he elaborates on the notion that his school experience is central to his work in higher education



I think that my experience in secondary education provides me with a sort of foundation background and at the same time it gives me the necessary tools to deal with the processes of teaching and learning. My secondary background also makes me understand the way in which people learn and the way in which the teaching and learning processes can be improved. I think there are loads of different areas within my secondary background I still resort to because they are like the foundation, the cornerstone on which all the work I'm doing in higher education is built upon. (Interview three)

The role played by his professional background seems unproblematic. There is a simple transfer from one context to another, a subject I return to in the discussion chapter. I now move to the second 'academic'.

### **The Business Studies Lecturer**

John is a part-time lecturer in Finance and Accounting. He teaches in the university two days a week and continues to run an established business consultancy service the rest of the week. While he was recruited into his current university role soon after he completed his MBA in 2007, he did some ad hoc and introductory level teaching prior to that. John's teaching career at the University comes late on in his business career as he is now close to formal retirement age. Despite this, he seems keen to undertake the PGCAP and to develop his teaching skills further – though his approach is 'conditional'.

He also hesitates, like the support group, to define himself as a teacher, though he has a clear sense of what his teaching is designed to achieve

My role in higher education is one of facilitating the transfer of knowledge to students both postgraduate and undergraduate level, in such a way that whilst I transfer a certain element of knowledge I also build within [the students] the confidence and capability to use the information in such a way as they are able to self motivate, self direct themselves in the expansion of that knowledge, also to develop techniques for a continuing expansion of that knowledge, not just during the period that they are at university but also later on in life. I find it very difficult to see myself as a teacher first per se, and would be happy with the term lecturing or although I really do believe that I am attempting to facilitate the transfer of knowledge. (Interview One)

Also, despite his long career, extensive experience and a sophisticated view of his role as a teacher, there are few overt connections between John's professional background and his transition into teaching in higher education. Indeed, these are not overtly expressed until he gets to the final interview and is asked how his teaching role compares with his professional background

My experience in accounting and finance from a practical perspective has an impact on my teaching and lecturing to the extent that I hope to bring to the process of knowledge transfer a level of practical experience and practical examples. (Interview three)

I find that students are particularly interested in the realities of the theories that are being presented to them and presented by somebody who has actually undergone some of those realities from a practical perspective.... (Interview three)

I don't think you can provide a greater level of encouragement than to put somebody in front of students who has some practical experience of the things that they're actually talking about. Having said that I'm not suggesting that one should in any way undermine the great value of academics who have spent a great deal more time looking at um subjects in a even deeper way and help to develop the process of thinking about new ways of such theories and practicalities evolving in the future but I'm not in that field and I am in the field of working in accounting and finance and it's that experience which I bring to the lecture room. (Interview 3)

John's professional background is playing a role here in providing a different perspective and adding authenticity to the student experience. He sees this as entirely unproblematic and so does not see any change for himself, only for the students. Indeed, through much of the interview he seems to resist development and a significant shift into the teaching role. His experience is enough – a belief that knowledge gained in his 'other' professional role can and should be readily transferred from the 'real world' to his students or to 'improve' academic courses through the 'modelling' and sharing of professional practice.

## **General discussion**

The above analysis suggests that there are significant connections between professional backgrounds and the processes of becoming a teacher. I view these as powerful 'collective perspectives'. The analysis also suggests that whilst some backgrounds may add complexity to these processes, others may not. After careful

reading and re-reading of the data, it is also possible to suggest that other 'background' factors, such as age, gender and experience, might also be at work. There seemed to be evidence, however, of what might be termed the 'narratives of the professions' in two emergent groups, and the expression of emotions, experiences and behaviours that were conditioned by a particular professional background. I will consider each of these points in turn.

In the narratives of the Health Practitioner group, the professional backgrounds appear to exert a strong influence on how the members of the group view the teaching role, engage with their learners and finally, begin to draw away from a narrative that is strongly focused on patients and the standards of their profession. It was observed in narrative one that each of these research participants draw some parallel between their students and patients. Yet this is not simply a narrative of 'care' (Ellis, 1999) or of 'healing' as such, but a more complex set of views, with the patient providing a way of making teaching familiar and perhaps more certain. However, parallels with patients also unsettle some of this group as they recognise that students can't be controlled in the way that patients might. Kodner (2002:3) has noted that 'traditionally, caregivers demand that their patients be compliant, that is, follow their instructions.' These narratives may therefore be ones of 'control', with each participant seeking to understand and cope with their teaching role in ways that are familiar to them.

In narrative two, the Health Practitioner group demonstrate in differing teaching contexts that for them, teaching in their profession may also mean ensuring that entrants to that profession meet certain tacit as well as explicit standards. Hence, although these narratives contain pedagogic problems, they are primarily about the professions themselves. For this group, teaching 'with' their professional knowledge is unlike dealing with academic knowledge – they are developing future colleagues and this seems to matter a great deal to them. I see this as being akin to Bernstein's 'narratives of the past', which are used to generate 'retrospective identities' (2000:78) constructed from past exemplars, criteria and experience. I develop this observation further in chapter eight. I also see these narratives of the professions as a means of conserving an identity as well as contributing to the development of a new one. Again, this point is further developed in chapter eight.

In the final Health Practitioner narratives, it seems that the hold of the participants' professions may be loosening. Clearly, this does not happen in the same way or at the same pace, but there are commonalities. Among these is the recognition that simply 'being', simply modelling professional practice 'itself' - in the workplace or on a clinic - is not sufficient. They are seeing that providing pathways to the knowledge and skills through planned teaching activity may be required. So, although some members of this group are still using patterns of health thinking, such as wanting to 'diagnose' learner needs, in their approaches, they are also starting to value teaching itself. They demonstrate this through references to learner needs, structuring their sessions and considering the different ways in which students might learn. In these terms, their pedagogic thinking is already fairly well developed (Kugel, 1993). They are not questioning their subject knowledge or their ability to 'perform' in the teaching role but seeing their students more clearly as learners.

If the professional backgrounds of the Health Practitioner group slowed and complicated their processes of becoming a teacher, then the responses of the Learner Support group suggest more problematic transitions. The Learner Support group are, like the Health Practitioner group, still practising their main roles but their professional backgrounds seem to play an entirely different set of functions. Whilst not quite conforming to Gornall's (1999:44) 'new professionals' they do, like her examples, 'other' themselves in terms of their teaching roles. They also get caught up in wider discourses of 'employability' and 'information literacy'. These make them at once powerful, as agents of such discourses, but also powerless.

There is evidence of these ambiguities throughout their narratives. In the first one, it becomes clear that whilst participation in the PGCAP is itself voluntary, the learner support group's involvement in different forms of teaching is not. Their purpose is to 'embed' new institutional initiatives such as the Curriculum Review (an initiative I described in chapter four) into the wider curriculum. This involves teaching large, established groups of students, using approaches that are unfamiliar to them. This is contrary to the ideas and principles they witness and help to construct on PGCAP. Their encounters with students seem to reflect wider anxieties about finding their way into the academic curriculum, but also some pedagogic ones. In narrative five, they describe problematic encounters with students, as well as concerns with their

own performance. In Kugel's (1993: 318) terms, they hold highly 'self-focused' views of teaching illustrated by concerns about making mistakes, leaving things out and being disorganised. Their experience in small-group and highly student-centred sessions, evoked in the final narrative, does not help them. However, like the Health Practitioner group, they begin to recognise that teaching is not just lecturing, or using established approaches; there is a pathway that can incorporate both. However, their established techniques, tied to their professions, sometimes leads to 'reverting back'.

The final two case studies seem to illustrate how the socialisation of teachers into higher education may also be neither complicated nor problematised by an established professional background. The Teacher Trainer case suggests that a professional background may function quite differently. So, while Murray (2005:67) claims that for many Teacher Trainers the transition into higher education is 'challenging and stressful', this is not invariably the case. Where there is an established academic profile and an 'agentic' approach, a background in schools may in fact facilitate an easy transition. In the second case, there is little commitment to becoming a teacher in higher education where this means self development. The transfer of experience, by the most ready means, with accompanying shifts in the students, seems to suffice. Here, a professional background plays no apparent role in socialisation. Other factors, such as age or gender, may be more significant.

## **Summary**

It is apparent that the main professional backgrounds of the research participants function in a number of ways. Those backgrounds motivate, constrain, protect and, more profoundly, disturb them. These processes provoke feelings of elation but also disorientation, especially when interacting with students. Hence, professional backgrounds are not a backdrop to socialisation processes, but an active part of them. From these beginnings a process of becoming a teacher in HE started. Whilst the transition into teaching from and with another professional role may not always be a significant period of transition or of instability, those transitions may be significant forms in their own right.

In the next chapter, a narrative analysis will again be deployed where the 'talk' of the participants will be analysed. This analysis will be used to generate a typology of orientations or commitments to teaching in higher education. This pays less attention to professional backgrounds and more to differing commitments or orientations. These stances and orientations begin to reveal how individuals may view their shifting motivations and experiences as well as the patterns that emerge across the whole group.

## Chapter six: The ‘Dramatis Personae’ – Narratives of orientation and commitment

### Introduction

It is in these areas of teacher biography that the individual has most choice, choosing how to distribute commitments over a range of concerns, selecting an identity from a range of roles and testing it reflexively in a continuous process of interaction with others. (Woods, 1980:300)

In this chapter, a second group of representative narratives is created. Here I examine the participants’ interview responses from a different starting point – the narratives themselves. I do so by setting aside the research participants’ occupational group and ‘derive’ a number of ‘types’ based on the talk they use itself. In this way, the approach is initially ‘blind’ to the individual participants themselves but they will be brought into the analysis later in the chapter. These types are ‘re-constructions’ of the data based on the ‘talk’ used by the research participants and seek to describe how the themed groups identified in the previous chapter portray ‘their’ experiences, beliefs and emotions as they move into their teaching role. These reconstructions or types are seen to constitute a range of orientations or commitments towards teaching in higher education as held by the research participants.

Such a starting point is important for two reasons. Firstly, as Day (2004:62) suggests, teacher commitment is ‘closely associated with job satisfaction, morale, motivation, and identity...’ and features in a number of studies which explicitly link the experiences and strategies adopted by novice teachers with the kinds of commitment they show to teaching itself (Lacey, 1977; Hargreaves, 1977, 1978 and 1979; Nias, 1989). This second starting point also crucially provides another analytical perspective on the data and is intended to reduce the potential for the first set of analyses undertaken in the previous chapter to ‘under- analyse’ the data. In this way, I aim to increase the interpretive validity (Erickson, 1986) of the study as a whole. This approach also seeks to reduce the risk, highlighted by Miles & Huberman (1994:83) of ‘misunderstanding the case it refers to [...] as it highlights

the author's interpretive perspective'. Denzin (1989: 69) also highlights the 'glossed' nature of representative narratives.

The term 'dramatis personae' is used to describe the representations of the narratives derived from the words, phrases and contexts used by the research participants. These may be viewed as types in terms of a range of talk, thinking and action. As in all narrative approaches, the chronology of events is retained but with more of the data being drawn out and patterned in differing ways to the previous chapter. As the actions and behaviours of the research participants could not be observed 'first-hand', the analytical emphasis falls primarily on the particular vocabularies used to describe those actions and behaviours, as well as the emotions portrayed by the research participants in and across their three interviews. The chapter now turns to a consideration of the ways in which talk itself may represent commitment and orientation, as well as being used as a tool to reveal their patterning.

### **The nature of talk**

Whilst there is a whole tradition of analysing 'talk' in the social sciences (see Fairclough (1989), Adelman (1981) for example, and more contemporary research (Yardley and Murray, 2003; Mercer, 2002; Xu Xiao-hui (2010)), I was drawn to the perspectives taken by Wright Mills (1940). Whilst Fairclough and Adelman, among others, have rightly drawn attention to the complexity, meaning and nature of 'talk' and its interpretation, I felt that too much focus was placed on the formal features of texts. Although Fairclough (1989), also emphasises how these formal features of texts may in turn be constrained by power relations in broader social groups, I felt this stance was too 'ideological' as an initial position. I see the classical work of Wright Mills as far less determinist and also less functionalist in the way that it emphasises how language exists not simply as a means of communication among people, but has particular social functions too. I see these functions as particularly apposite here since they relate strongly to motives, as well as the broader functions of language.



At the heart of this analysis, according to Wright Mills (1940:905), are questions of 'why certain motives are verbalised rather than others' and 'why some sectors of the population' use different vocabularies to describe their motives than others. Wright Mill's own response to these questions is that both motive and action are social constructs and might also vary according to differing social situations. Wright Mills cites how the language used to describe a motive or an action might be 'appropriate' for the situation despite not describing the action itself, but instead conform to a wider norm or convention. Such norms or conventions may be highly moral or 'standardised'. This leads inevitably, to the conclusion that 'real' motives and the way in which they are expressed, might be different in some situations.

Hence, in an interview situation a respondent might use language that is deemed appropriate for the wider social group of which they are a part, leaving the interviewer to infer 'real' motives from the language used. However, Wright Mills asserts that such motives can often be represented by words, as long as some account is taken of the typical range of motives which might be found in a particular group in a specific situation. I will return to this broader meaning and significance of 'talk' in the discussion section.

### **Coding the talk**

It seems clear that deriving meaning and significance of motives and actions from transcripts requires a great deal of care. Nevertheless, it was possible, after intensive reading and close scrutiny of the interview transcripts, to identify and code relevant parts of the participants' responses. This process also recognised that interpretation is itself dependent on what is 'in' the talk itself, as well as interaction with the skill and experience of the interpreter. Fairclough (1989:141) describes a process whereby

formal features of the text act as "cues" which activate elements of the interpreters' resources [so that] interpretations are generated through the dialectical interplay of the cues and the knowledge and resources of the interpreter.

It is not an objective process. However, examples of the use of the coding process are presented below, as well as in the analysis itself, so that the outcomes of this

dialectic are more visible. A good example of what I label as 'pragmatic' talk looks like this:

But what I am looking for is that teaching craft to try to be able to understand the different ways that people learn and where there are holes in my practice I can start to understand how to fill them and how to give a more general approach whilst still working on specific groups of people.  
(James, Osteopath)

This is coded as 'pragmatic' talk as it views an improvement in practice in terms of the practical consequences of change. There is also an acknowledgement that current practice doesn't meet a required standard, but with effort and training, this can be remedied. 'Pragmatic' talk sees the world as it is, in contrast to say 'missionary' talk, which creates a world as it 'ought' to be. 'Credentialising' talk, on the other hand, tends to focus on ensuring that existing skills, while not perfect, are ready to be recognised in a formal qualification.

My impression of PGCAP was that it would be a tool that I could use to ensure that I was perhaps along the right track to correct me and to question all elements of my teaching and it would be a tool that would instruct me into how to look further to improve myself when it came to formalising my teaching so I saw the PGCAP as an avenue and a vehicle where various elements of my teaching would be broken down into specific parts and I could cross analyse my teaching and cross examine my teaching on a regular basis through the workshops (James, Osteopath)

These quotations also illustrate how one individual can shift the nature of their talk, even when responding to a similar question. They also demonstrate how some talk is far less straightforward to code than other talk. For example, in this part of Craig's response to a question about how he views his role as a teacher in higher education, it is possible to see a mixture of pragmatic (mainly) and missionary talk (towards the end). Where such ambiguities in meaning were found the text was left uncoded or marked 'ambiguous'.

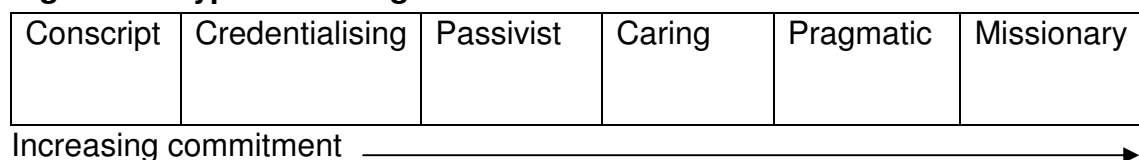
It's more than getting people through exams, but also developing the course as well I feel there is always room for improvement as every course is a work in progress and if I were part of any area of the course more solid and a better foundation and more inspiring for the students. (Craig, Osteopath)

## A typology of talk

The emerging 'types' of talk depict a range of motivational 'types'. These 'types', displayed in figure 6.1, are not a sliding scale of 'people', but reflect an array of vocabularies and potential meanings used by the research participants. There are differing views of the effectiveness of typologies. For Woods (1999), typologies can 'improve our vision and sharpen our focus by drawing together a mass of detail into an organised structure wherein the major types are indicated. They can give us an idea of the range of such types' (p.37). For others, see for example Mac an Ghail (1994), they can mask complexity and convey fixity. However, in Mac an Ghail's analysis he applies his array of 'ideal types' to particular teachers. I accept that to do this would convey 'pure forms' that do not exist, but this is not my approach here. I have instead set aside individuals, as well as occupational groups, to focus on the talk itself in an objective form. I previously referred to this particular approach in the methods account presented in chapter three.

Such an array of 'types' seeks to portray a range of commitment to students, to the PGCAP programme and to the more general processes of teaching in higher education. These types neither 'belong' to any individuals or to any particular groups, nor do they indicate the 'frequency' of particular types of talk. The extent to which these 'types' might relate to particular participants or groups, might 'evolve' through time or occur more or less often, is considered in the following sections.

**Figure 6:1 Types and range of talk**



The different talk types shown in fig. 6:1 will now be identified and differentiated in discussion.

**Pragmatic ‘talk’** occurs from the beginning of many of the participants’ transcripts. Such talk reflects a recognition by the participants who speak in this way that they want to be effective teachers and that they will need some support and development in order to achieve what they perceive as their goals. Those goals are not focused on a qualification, or being ‘inspirational’, but are about enhancing their teaching – making it knowledgeable - and feeling uncomfortable about uninformed practice.

I just believe you need the theory and knowledge behind what you are doing. We all get clinical, practical skills and nursing’s very bad at on the job learning and you tend to be doing it before you are taught about it but wherever I go I like to have the theories that back up what I’m doing and so coming in to the uni it seemed ridiculous to me that people are letting me teach people when I’m not qualified to do it although yes I’m qualified in a lot of knowledge & experience. (Katrina, Lecturer in Nursing)

I just think I could be doing it [teaching] better if I had the skills and knowledge so that’s why I’m doing PGCAP. (Linda, Academic Liaison Librarian)

I thought it would be a more professional approach if I could be on the PgCap and actually find out the best practice in how to prepare for a lecture or deliver a lecture rather than just go half cocked and do whatever I think is appropriate. (Juliet, Sports Development Officer)

Pragmatic ‘talk’ views the PGCAP programme as the primary or sole source of that support rather than peers or the power of reflective practice . There is also a recognition in this ‘talk’ of participants’ being ‘forced’ and ‘needing’ to do things. This talk also recognises that some areas of their teaching may need more work than others and that there are gaps to be filled so that those who use it ‘can do their best’.

It will force me to do things that I would not do otherwise, so an element of self discipline. But what it gives me within that is to reflect in process, to actually sit down and give myself time to put down in stone what I am trying to achieve and what might be improved in some way. How could it have been different and what could I have said different or what else could I have said? (Craig, Osteopath)

I have to say I like being taught, I like being fed information and I like visual stuff but I’m not a great [...] if you said to me how do you want to learn? it would be the old-fashioned way because that was how I was taught as child and so I think moving into adult learning it is a big step especially for some of these 18 yr olds that I’m teaching they haven’t quite made that step and they want to be fed information. (Katrina, Lecturer in Nursing)

This type of pragmatic talk also refers to the way in which aspects of teaching practice might be improved, e.g. 'structuring a session' or 'tips on crowd control':

...in terms of structuring things like learning outcomes, making sure of aims and objectives, know what you are heading for, that had resonance with me and reminds me of all those things. (Clare, Library Manager)

Pragmatic talk also suggests the selective use of PGCAP for self-development, finding out more of the theory of teaching when needed, for example. It shows adaptation in terms of what is already known, what can be done and fits around the roles of others. Those individuals using pragmatic talk see a link between their efforts as teachers and the learning of their students – this is what it is to be a 'good' teacher, delivering knowledge and learning in the best possible way.

But what I am looking for is that teaching craft to try to be able to understand the different ways that people learn and where there are holes in my practice I can start to understand how to fill them and how to give a more general approach whilst still working on specific groups of people. (James, Osteopath)

This of this type also recurs in this form where the research participants move on to recognise that practical advice has little worth until it is utilised in their own delivery. It acknowledges that, prior to this point, competences and skills don't really exist outside the user of that knowledge or skills and that making use of them might be challenging.

...but actually getting things, ingraining them and actually making them part of your practice is a little bit more involved...things can look a bit simplistic but actually taking them is hard. (Craig, Osteopath)

Thus, pragmatic talk reflects how some can find the PGCAP content initially challenging in terms of applying new ideas but also in acknowledging and developing themselves as teachers. However, PGCAP may also give them permission to develop their own style and to organise their own thinking – it is no longer a case of 'getting through' a day, month or term. They can also draw freely on other experience to develop their teaching in HE.

Yes it's true that everything is potentially useful, but in a sense I think what PGCAP is doing for me is allowing me to compartmentalise what I'm learning as I'm learning to think in the first couple of years of a job you do learn an awful lot anyway, just about how to get through the day, how to get through a term, how you get through a year, where your results are coming out, where you expect people to be, you having taught them. But what PGCAP does is, just gives me examples of how to compartmentalise that which helps me as a learner because thus far, my learning has been, my personal learning has been in terms and years and parts of courses, whereas when you learn as a teacher, just teaching in higher education, it's much more unstructured than that. You just deal with whatever comes up so at least PGCAP's given me an opportunity to pigeon-hole as things have come up as issues with other tutors have come up, as teaching craft has come up and it's probably given me permission or so to, as I was saying earlier about developing my own style of teaching, it might be different to other tutors but its given me permission to do. (Jane, Osteopath)

Pragmatic talk continues to illustrate how some participants accommodate approaches that 'work' even when they seem to go against the advice, behaviour, and approaches advocated on PGCAP. By this logic, 'lecturing', if it 'works', is fine. Such talk shows a readiness to adapt an approach, even mid-way through a session, to get through it. Pragmatic talk also refers to a willingness to revert to approaches that have been experienced as learners or as teachers in a vocational setting, even if this is very much 'at odds' with what might be construed as an HE model. Pragmatic talk shows how individually, participants recognise their own limits as teachers but relate this to themselves as learners.

I tried to adopt that but it didn't work when I tried to get students to work in pairs then they would go in a bigger group and discuss things and but it all collapsed in on itself, nothing came out of it, so I didn't follow it through. The other thing is using teaching props, I would really love to incorporate, but can't get my head round how I would do it, with the kind of sessions that I do. I respond better when I am taught that way. So I have this block where I can't translate it, so what would I like if I was being taught? So instead I have gone for a worksheet interactive approach, which I am not very happy with. So I have been influenced by PgCap but haven't got that next stage. (Linda, Academic Liaison Librarian)

Participants' 'talk' of this type reveals how they occasionally revert to an established approach, such as a 'medical model', to discuss the way in which they prepare their teaching. This suggests that 'diagnosing' the learning needs of students is an

important preparation for teaching events. The Health Practitioners then tend to extend this approach by 'consenting' their students, as they would their patients, to ensure they are 'happy' with what will be taught. This also resonates with an andragogical approach:

I may start the day saying that this is what today's lecture will be about or what the tutorial will be about. This is what we hope to achieve at the end of it and what I need to know is that you understand this, this and this so that we can achieve an end and so using a similar kind of principle as osteopathy has taught me um I will use a similar aspect of introducing various ideas and ensuring that that individual or group of individuals one by one is aware of and is happy with what is being taught. (James, Osteopath)

'Talk' of a pragmatic nature portrays teaching as a kind of detective work – discovering things about the students, trying to work out their learning needs in advance and then planning/preparing accordingly. Within such talk, techniques and approaches are 'juggled' to work out how best to pitch a session. Other models of teaching are 'pulled in'. Pragmatic talk also recognises that overt student behaviour is not always a reflection of teaching – it's just 'their way in the world'. When sessions don't go so well, pragmatic talk reminds you not to 'pore over things' but see it as part of the 'longer term' - that there are areas of the course that students will never like and that this needs to be recognised - that's 'how students are within it'.

At its core, pragmatic 'talk' recognises that there is no single 'model' of teaching but a range of approaches from which to choose according to need – there is no 'best' methodology but a range of possibilities determined by student need. Such talk recognises that the wider context may play a role in student interactions and that picking 'selectively' from what's on offer helps participants with their teaching.

***Missionary or idealist 'talk'*** is extensive in the interview transcripts but less evident than pragmatic talk. When missionary and idealist talk is used to open up an account, it reflects how those who use it want to change, rectify or sustain their profession. Such talk often refers to their new course entrants who 'lack understanding' and this seems to motivate those who use it to get involved in teaching and developmental processes. Those who use idealistic or missionary talk

also perceive their profession as being deficient in terms of skills or orientation for the public good, something teaching can put right. Like pragmatic 'talk', idealist and missionary 'talk' connects teaching with learning but it also idealises that process – sharing and developing knowledge is not enough; it seeks to 'inspire':

I just felt that instead of moaning and saying student nurses aren't coming out with the right skills and trained staff don't have the right skills and stop whinging about it – that I perhaps needed to do a bit more about it and so I started to look around for opportunities. (Katrina, Lecturer in Nursing)

...from an idealistic position that I would like to see myself as a source of inspiration for my students. (Peter, Senior Lecturer in Education)

Idealist and missionary 'talk' asserts that the best teaching goes further, to reach patients or other learners. Although idealism co-exists with realism, teaching is conceived as being value-driven, as existing to make something better and is not an end in itself. Missionary or idealist talk see benefits in their teaching for users, i.e. patients. Producing good effects in learners is not enough. Generally, it is felt that processes of learning are complex but must include tangible outcomes:

People should feel safe with you and...my aim is to deliver the best care and I look at everybody as though part of my family and how I'd want to be treated. I suppose I became more & more stressed at times about seeing people speaking in ways I thought were inappropriate obviously not having the knowledge and skills. (Katrina, Lecturer in Nursing)

This type of talk also seems to incorporate broader or more meta-cognitive views of learning, so that learners acquire new material but also build the skills required to learn that material 'well'. At the heart of these processes is a sense that learners need to work things out for themselves. Although idealistic 'talk' is often juxtaposed with realism, teaching is at its heart a value-driven activity, whereby a more 'democratic' approach runs parallel with a need to develop the skill of teaching or 'producing' expertise in others. Those who use idealist or missionary talk also refer frequently to the need to be a 'good role model' for their profession, as well as a good teacher. Their talk refers to inspiration as well as effectiveness.



I see myself as a facilitator of knowledge so that the students can therefore continue the journey in their own professional development through input given by me, allowing them to do things by themselves, independent learners and having me as a guide. I also see myself sometimes as orchestra director, where I tend to coordinate different types of learning, personal experience, motivations and this is very interesting role and very challenging. (Peter, Senior Lecturer in Education)

Those who use idealist or missionary talk also seek, in their early encounters with students, to change those students, as well as to expand their knowledge and skills. Such talk also reflects a different approach to the PGCAP programme which, goes beyond the 'application' of ideas to construct a more thoughtful attempt to re-work and then apply ideas in order to make radical changes. It is more than adjusting an approach or simply applying tools; it's a deeper position – part of moving towards learner-centred and broadly constructivist positions (using experience and dialogue rather than transmission). Idealistic and missionary talk also portrays a number of emotions. Examples of these are frustration when a teaching repertoire cannot service a dry subject, or tensions with the students themselves. There may be a 'truth' about teaching, but it is elusive.

Idealist or missionary talk quickly establishes that the student is the focus for the learning, positioning them at the centre of the teaching / learning process in sophisticated ways. It is about having expectations – developing and changing the student as well as their knowledge. It expresses the idea that the knowledge is not new to students, but part of their own continuing story. It further reflects the belief that, although there may be a 'truth' about teaching, the route to that truth is through the theorisation of your own teaching and not through the application of techniques and approaches learned from PGCAP. Idealist and missionary talk also acknowledges the need to attend to the whole student and to their entire learning environment. Teaching and learning is not simply viewed as a series of transactions.

There's something quite old-fashioned about teaching as well in spite of everything whereby there's something slightly timeless about it in that you know you can relate aspects of your own teaching to teachers you've seen right the way through from when you first started in education. There's a sort of role that it's a fundamental sort of role in your relationship if they'll let you have that role you kind of take it and you can adopt that role and .... that's what you really want to do. (Craig, Osteopath)

I suppose it's helping people to learn it rather than telling them the information and it is uncomfortable because I suppose as a novice at teaching you still are frightened that they are going to ask you the one question that you can't answer. (Katrina, Lecturer in Nursing)

I think that is what is really important, not you being given the theoretical foundation of what teaching and learning should be, but you are creating your own theory based on your practise which I think is the ultimate outcome. I used to be very eclectic in terms of using different approaches, different methodologies. Now I can be more flexible or more confident in teaching in different contexts because I developed the skills of theorising my own practice. (Peter, Senior Lecturer in Education)

For those who use idealist and missionary talk, there is a wider task and responsibility than teaching – it is more akin to cultural and technical reproduction – that it is special and therefore particularly demanding to teach your subject to those who will be 'like you' one day. Unlike an academic subject which 'you don't go on and use', your skills have to be 'worth having'. Students are joining you in your profession so in effect, they are 'stealing or taking your art' and reproducing your skills and approach. Idealist and missionary talk thinks about the teacher as a person, so there is certainly a need to be liked. You 'cannot separate part of yourself off' when reproducing the profession. Idealist and missionary talk means you are also sensitive to how you are perceived by your students and are disappointed by, for example, student 'whinges'. However, when students have formed a working relationship or 'bonded', the teaching feels 'live', like you have 'won them over'.

Those who use idealist and missionary talk suggest they are reflexive too. They use their teaching to inform their 'other' practice; teaching can make them 'remember' techniques they'd forgotten. They work in the 'student's perspective' and take this back to their own patients. However, idealist and missionary talk evokes problems too, so those who want to rectify their profession have problems when they don't see the 'end result' of their work. They miss 'leading by example' and not being able to monitor, their talk suggesting they need to know their teaching is being 'used'.

Idealist and missionary talk carries on pushing at boundaries, as those talking in this way continue to move outside the comfort zone of their 'own way of being' in order to keep engaging with the students. By this point the talk refers to specific ways in

which professional thinking is being 'modeled'. References are made to 'leaving some space and plenty of room for uncertainty', for example.

the need to keep them on-side really the need to keep them on your side ..are they going to follow your advice actually have some faith in your ability to help them the students being engaged with you, actually enjoying [...] it's difficult 'cos it's a need to be liked really which in one way is important but in another is not healthy because we're not there to be liked and it's almost impossible to treat a patient if they don't like you, they've got to have some aspect that is accepting you as a person. (Craig, Osteopath)

The trainees appear to seek idealism in themselves and to report it in others. They respect peers who can create a 'vision' for their subject and how it might be developed, as well as those who have a 'real commitment' to their work. They rely on such people to 'show them the way' and to 'discover' their talents. It is important to 'share experience' with colleagues in order to develop. PGCAP increasingly sustains them through professional reflection rather than the supply of 'techniques'.

***Passivist talk*** occupies only a small part of the narratives. Essentially, it initiates certain accounts by 'othering' the participants concerned in relation to the teaching role. Those using such talk do not see themselves as teachers 'now' though they 'do' teaching. They are not sure how to describe or conceive of the teaching role. Their core role is something else; teaching is essentially tacked on. They start with a highly differentiated view of teaching: lecturing is 'proper' teaching and other pedagogic forms, such as mentoring, are not. Only formal and structured encounters are regarded as teaching.

I do see myself as maybe sort of guidance, mentoring role, for instance, with the national governing body courses, I will be collating information, helping students and I am looking for areas for funding opportunities. So I would say it would come into the role possibly, maybe not classified as teaching but as part of the role of teaching. (Juliet, Sports Development Officer)

I do see myself as becoming more of a actual teacher whereas I don't see myself as a teacher now, I would like to think that by the end of the year I would be comfortable in seeing myself as a teacher and possibly to engage a bit more. (Juliet, Sports Development Officer)

Passivist talk conveys a lack confidence and clarity in what its users do and how they should develop their teaching role. They are defined by the work of 'proper' teachers. First encounters with students are deemed problematic as the content is decided by others. Students are a problem and the material is not their own. Lack of control extends to short-notice, 'off the cuff' sessions which look routine on paper, but are not.

This type of talk reveals a lack of familiarity with material and inadequate preparation, leading to problems with "difficult" students. First encounters provoke anxiety and uncertainty. The PGCAP feels irrelevant, not easy to apply, and perhaps even counter-intuitive, though PGCAP can reduce differences with academic staff.

I have been approached by the academic dept to come in and run a few sessions. So I suggested we run four sessions for them in a block (one on self, opportunity, aspiration and results). This was on aspiration, to do with action plan, decision making, it's less concrete in that sense. A very different topic and different approach. So used exercises some talk, they are performing arts students, so they are quite laid back students, often arriving late and they will readily say they don't understand what is going on. I did come unstuck, that's where I became less confident, because I didn't know the exercises as well and found I was giving less examples, chatting less and less to inform them to terms in depth. (Abigail, Careers Advisor)

Passivist talk views lecturing as an activity requiring 'more knowledge', which needs to be 'imparted' to learners. Those using it prefer to be with peers or in a peer-based situation which is seen as 'ideal' and they gravitate back to it if they can. Those using passivist talk feel challenged by new situations which draw on experience but have to be re-interpreted into a new setting.

I preferred teaching amongst peers, I preferred that way of team teaching which is the way as I'm now teaching as opposed to being a student I'm probably trying to gravitate back to all that because I think the subject and the teacher have a better feeling about the whole learning process um so I think probably looking back at that that was the ideal situation where you're actually having much more of a discussion. (Support staff)

Those using passivist talk also show a low regard for themselves as teachers. They do not regard themselves as being 'teachers yet', nor are they academics or regarded 'as teachers' by others. They are trying to balance 'telling' and 'listening' and now see that earlier conceptions of teachers as 'deliverers' may not have been right, and that "teaching" may not always lead to "learning". You should seek to 'win people over' as well as teach them. The Curriculum Review described in chapter four is powerful for them, 'positively' and 'negatively'. Thinking as a teacher is quite a 'foreign concept'. To call yourself a lecturer, as well as your other role, would be deceitful. They continue to live without the need for teaching.

Passivist talk finally makes some connections to a wider context. There is a sense of 'broadening out' across the learning environment and taking on a 'holistic' view of students. It sees that teaching now has to 'fit' that wider context, which 'doesn't improve your confidence' as there are 'fresh challenges'. These challenges are met with more reading/research so that teaching is better prepared but still delivered in a non-academic way. Passivist talk also reveals an insecurity about knowledge by those who use it – that they don't know enough to teach 'properly'. There is an initial insecurity, then a different form of insecurity manifests itself as awareness of more approaches grows; you are no longer sure of 'what your 'style' is. Passivist talk helps those using it to distinguish between their instinctive (informal) style and an 'academic' style which is 'lecturing'.

I now have to think in much broader terms and where that fits with everything else and make sure it fits with everything else so there are various ways in which it has affected me across all of those but it certainly from, I think would make me a better teacher that I have thought about those things as opposed to being very narrow-minded and just delivering my little piece of information so I think yes its effective in that it'll make me a better teacher but I think in some ways it doesn't improve your confidence because you have to meet all these other criteria that you didn't have to meet before. (Juliet, Sports Development Officer)

Passivist talk conveys a feeling of being lost in the space between these 'styles', and those using it also try to change their style so it 'fits' with the wider institution.

Disorientation is caused by trying to keep a 'core' style, but to experiment as well.

PGCAP 'opens horizons' but doesn't tell you how you 'should' teach. The talk reveals the struggle they have to 'work out' their own best practice.

Style to me would be your style of teaching um and there are sort of two camps for me really in style. One is fairly instinctive which is very interactive and then you have a very much which is probably very unfair of me but academic style which is your lecture theatre and what you invoke by the word lecture where you're just talking to somebody and lecturing them and I personally I can take both styles it doesn't bother me um but I wouldn't want to be the lecturer, I would want to be the informer and conduit, ...those are the two that I'm thinking of and fall between. (Juliet, Sports Development Officer).

Such talk also reveals how certain approaches and enlarged contexts are disorienting, so that you have to 'navigate your own path' but simultaneously feel at the whim of external events

**Helper/Carer** talk is the smallest narrative category. It begins with the need to create a 'safe environment' for learners and draws parallels with patients and other professional lives to portray this view. Helper and carer talk sees the role of the teacher as helping the confidence of learners to cope with challenges and being placed in difficult situations.

The student was very much kind of feeling out of her depth and I was given the job of supervising her and I think I began to share her experience because I felt I didn't want to just take over and do what had to be done for her I was conscious of the need to actually help her and see what she needed and try and give her a bit more encouragement help to nurture a greater confidence in herself. (Craig, Osteopath)

The early memorable encounters of those using 'helper and carer talk' are strongly shaped by the consequences of assessment on students or their learners' first encounters with real patients. Caring talk reveals how adverse assessment decisions feel like 'breaking the news' and students have to be 'helped through this'. Such talk describes deep conflicts between objectivity of the assessment processes and clashes with personal feelings: 'liking students' and not 'hurting them'. Carer talk moves on to draw direct and clear parallels between professional work and teaching. Carer talk must have the interests of patients and students at heart, so those using it are likely to be surprised by student behaviours and attitudes. Part of the role of

those using carer talk is to provide the skills that will mean their learners feel 'safe and comfortable', which, they believe, is how you can best support people who are new to the professions:

People should feel safe with you and you should be... my aim is to deliver the best care and I look at everybody as though part of my family and how I'd want to be treated. (Katrina, Lecturer in Nursing)

This type of talk draws clear distinctions between different teaching approaches so that 'when you are advising it's client-centred, but when you are teaching you are 'imposing' whatever the curriculum is saying: things that 'need to be taught'. Teaching is more clearly defined; it has an 'agenda'.

My careers adviser role is guidance advice information so its very one-to-one, which I enjoy. It's very client centred and it's focused on their agenda and their needs whereas in the main when I'm teaching I'm saying here's this agenda imposing to a certain extent. You know, whatever the curriculum is saying needs teaching at that point um what occurs to me as we're talking about this and it may or may not be relevant (Support Staff)

Caring talk adopts a 'non-confrontational' or 'gentle' style when it refers to teaching. Those using it can be challenged in larger groups; as they lack strategies that work for them. They see learners in a close situation and relationship: as a peer and as an equal, not as a teacher, or someone of 'greater status'. Caring talk acknowledges a fuller role for technology and more participative approaches, but suggests there is also something fundamental and enduring about teaching. It has a nurturing aspect; that is what you really want to be. "Being a teacher" is a very maternal kind of role, in which you evidence a human side unlike your 'other professional role'. Whatever the teaching context, caring talkers show a desire to help and hold to the view that one-to-one teaching is 'productive': a way of accomplishing some 'shift' in the learner.

**'Credentialising talk'** also occurs relatively infrequently. Such talk reveals a consistent lack of uncertainty. Those using it begin their accounts by regarding the PGCAP programme as a validation and recognition of their teaching experience and skills acquired to this point. PGCAP also provides the opportunity to test and refine

that experience, to check that what is being done is 'correct', and to join the teaching fraternity. PGCAP will add status.

I had become 4 years ago a teacher on a course paediatrics and I was invited to formalise all of the teaching I've ever done and I thought well isn't that wonderful to be able to formalise my teaching experience and also to be able to learn more and question myself about what I've learned as an apprentice almost and I see that quite truly actually I became a teacher in apprentice form so I came to be on PGCap to perhaps formalise my apprenticeship and say um justify what I've done so that's how I've ended up on PGCAP. (James, Osteopath)

Credentialising talk is used to describe those who see themselves as good teachers or natural teachers already; they just lack a formal qualification. There are no gaps, just the enhancement of current skills. Past teaching has been an unconscious process so that, by implication, it was 'natural'. The professional certificate is seen as a vehicle by which those using credentialising talk make sure they are 'doing it right'. There is self exploration, but the primary purpose is to test existing knowledge by comparing the university model with existing practice and then blend the two.

My impression of PGCAP was that it would be a tool that I could use to ensure that I was perhaps along the right track to correct me and to question all elements of my teaching and it would be a tool that would instruct me into how to look further to improve myself when it came to formalising my teaching so I saw the PGCAP as an avenue and a vehicle where various elements of my teaching would be broken down into specific parts and I could cross analyse my teaching and cross examine my teaching on a regular basis through the workshops (James, Osteopath)

This sort of talk reveals a need for students to understand technical knowledge and to be agile with applying it. Occupational and teaching lives are seen as separate and the core occupation matters. It can be sufficient for some to 'be' and to 'do' and reconcile with the idea that 'teaching just isn't me'. Credentialising talk also refers to ways in which new approaches to teaching are resisted or not adopted. Those talking in this way hold on to occupational formats, such as the 'medical model' or traditional teaching approaches, such as lecturing. There is shallow engagement at best, with teaching 'tips' bolted on to these existing approaches. For those who use credentialising talk, teaching is also reduced to the 'transfer of knowledge' from the



real world to the academic world; its purpose is to bring 'realism' to the learning process and the 'reality' of theory. Credentialising talk 're-bundles' experience to 'reflect' academic perspectives. It is one of the possible 'refinements' that ensures a smooth 'transfer'. It is explicitly vocational learning – not learning for its own sake. The 'realities' of theories are 'presented' to students.

To a great extent there is a smooth transfer of knowledge acquired both currently in a business sense and previously in other business environments with the presentation of that knowledge perhaps re-bundled to an extent to reflect academic perspectives and then presenting it to students. (John, Business Studies Lecturer)

Those who talk in this way display a readiness to do the PGCAP without engaging with it, as long as it gives the answers they need. Thus there is a determination to retain existing approaches; the programme gives people what they need to know. Those using credentialising talk retain a sense that they are still in their old role and don't think of themselves as 'doing teaching'.

However, those individuals using credentialising talk do develop further, eventually regarding teaching as a differentiated activity, but only where it is assessed. They stick with established approaches without questioning why, apart from the need for 'efficiency'. They recognise that some skills might require different approaches, but don't trial them. Aspects of teaching, such as assessment, remain difficult as they lack 'training' and want to do it 'properly'. Their teaching still sits outside the curriculum but they want it to be recognised. They are beginning to recognise that teaching does not lead to consistent or clear learning, but they persist.

Credentialising talk indicates a view that PGCAP is a means of checking out practice, to understand whether teaching is being done correctly. Such talk persists in seeing teaching as a performance. Practice is 'cross-examined' not as part of a developmental process, but to complete the assessed portfolio. The mission is to look for material for their portfolio.

The way I deliver and manage my higher education teaching at the moment is strongly decided by my profile my PGCAP profile that I have to hand in pretty soon and I'm busy cross examining all of the teaching I do on a day to day basis looking for examples to myself for my portfolio that is going to exhibit in my portfolio the style of teaching that I have that is evolving. (James, Osteopath)

Credentialising talk recognises that students can and should influence a teacher's work, but differentiation is limited to 'types' of students: undergraduate, postgraduate, young or old, mature and less mature. The PGCAP is a 'reminder' of the value of reflective writing and the evaluation of teaching. Other gains from PGCAP are 'difficult to recall'. Those using credentialising talk can be 'surprised' or even 'shocked' by enthusiastic and committed students. Those using such talk initiate 'proper teaching sessions' when 'pushed' and the students 'know what they want'. It is not a case of wanting to 'get away from the classroom'.

While it suggests a sense of 'broadening out', credentialising talk shows that professional demands can feel 'burdensome'. This leaves those using it feeling 'disoriented'. When challenged to 'develop', they want to stay with their 'usual approach'. They are slow to acknowledge change but eventually recognise their lack of 'proper' engagement with teaching and the PGCAP programme. The PGCAP's impact is often not felt until it is over.

I was just doing it I wasn't really engaging with it at all and I felt that I was giving the answers people wanted to hear um but I was still in my head I suppose determined to go along as I always had done and you know just give people what they need to know and things like that um and I hadn't realised I was doing this until I had a session with some students. (Linda, Support staff)

**Conscript talk** is rare. It is often associated with a role change and more responsibility that includes teaching. It begins by acknowledging that the teaching part of an enhanced role is the least welcome part and implies a feeling of being pushed to 'do' teaching. Conscript talk considers the PGCAP to be of limited value and of little help to an established pattern of teaching though reflection is acknowledged as 'always useful' in a generalised way. PGCAP is also of limited value, as teaching is always 'lecturing' so that a PGCAP discussion that is not about 'lecturing' is not used, though may be useful in the future.

I see myself as a support staff rather than an academic lecturer, we are pushed to do the teaching and it's become part of our remit to do teaching.  
(Clare, Library Manager)

Conscript talk reveals a sense of feeling 'odd' in the teaching situation, 'not being a teacher' or an 'academic'. "Conscripts" could 'live without' the teaching part of their roles but recognise that they may need to 're-position' themselves as teachers so that they can 'survive' technical and other forms of change. They see teaching as part of something that has to be done, part of a resigned acceptance. They see no change in role and there are 'no plans' to develop. Conscript talk shows early on that teaching materials are re-used in an unamended form in new teaching situations. However, there is often a desire to 'get it right'.

Conscript talk often selects early teaching encounters that have at their heart a 'problem student' whose behaviour can largely be attributed to the student's own actions, such as lateness. Certain groups have a 'peculiarity', which is regarded as an aberration. These challenges can though, with the application of a suitable technique or a 'methodology to engage', be resolved. There are usually affirming outcomes that signal success in the use of a technique and strategy. This seems to build more certainty that current approaches are working

The student arrived an hour late of a three hour lecture and asked if I could run over what had happened in the first hour. As a pure knee jerk reaction I told her absolutely not and she could go away and read the lecture notes if she was that keen. She explained somewhat apologetically she had been ill that morning, but I gained the impression that more embarrassment, however as an outcome to that I did notice she was more submissive in terms of discipline thereafter, it was of interest that the other students were tending to lean in my direction. (John, Lecturer in Business Studies)

Conscript talk shows some loss of rigidity and a willingness to try different things. Users of this talk refer to becoming more 'fluid' in their approach, though there are limits to this. Conscript talk is used by those who do 'too little teaching' to change much. Technology and the students have changed more. PGCAP provides reassurance; 'you are not on your own' but peers on PGCAP are viewed with caution. Learning from PGCAP consists of 'odds and ends'. Reflection remains 'difficult' though the talk is 'coming to terms with it'.

## **General discussion**

This discussion is divided into three sections. The first section offers general comments regarding the overall patterns observed. This is followed by a discussion of how these types might relate to the composite groups and individuals generated by the previous chapter. Thirdly, observations are made regarding how the patterning of the talk might evolve: the 'maturing' of commitment, as Day (2004:66) describes it.

### **Degrees of commitment**

Despite some uncertainty in the way specific sections of text might be coded and the relative infrequency of some types of talk, it seems clear that a diverse range of commitments or orientations amongst the participants are evident from the interview data. Each type of talk is seen to embody a range of views and perspectives on the participants' conceptions of teaching, their interactions with students and, to an extent, their expectations of the PGCAP programme. These views and conceptions give each of the types a narrative form and distinguish one type from another.

In viewing these types as varying in their commitment, it is possible to see how, to a greater or lesser extent, the participants 'buy-in' to, 'play at' or 'resist' the process of becoming a teacher in higher education. However, the patterning of the talk suggests that a dichotomous position, being 'committed' or 'uncommitted', as Nias (1989) has suggested, is not adopted. Rather, there are degrees or shades of commitment. Hence, while the 'credentialising' and 'conscripted' talk may indicate low commitment, the motivation to teach is usually present. At the other end of the typology, the missionary and the pragmatic talk indicate that the idealistic or values-based nature of many of the motives held by teachers studied by Day (2001), are reproduced here.

In a study of a hundred primary teachers Nias (1980) identified four differing forms of commitment to teaching. These commitments were termed as 'vocation', a 'calling' to teach; as 'profession', a dedication to one's skill as a teacher; as a commitment to 'identity', where people could become the people they wanted to be and as career-continuers', where commitment is based on apparently rational decisions defined by 'investment' and 'loss'.

## Commitment and the professions

In coding the data and deriving the types of talk, it became clear that there might be some association between the types of talk and the professional backgrounds of the participants. The potential associations between the types of talk and the composite groups derived in the previous chapter are set out in the table below. Here, the occurrence of talk for each individual and their occupational groups is displayed. In column one, the occupational groups identified in the previous chapter are listed. In the second column the two most common forms of talk for each participant in those occupational groups is displayed.

**Figure 6:2 Occupational Groups and their use of talk types**

<b>Occupational groups</b>	<b>Forms of talk</b>
Health practitioner	Pragmatist/missionary
	Pragmatist/missionary
	Pragmatist/missionary
	Credentialiser/carer
Learner support	Pragmatist/passivist
	Pragmatist/passivist
	Credentialiser/conscript
	Conscript/passivist
Teacher trainer	Credentialiser/carer
Business Studies lecturer	Pragmatist/conscript

The associations between the backgrounds of the research participants and their talk are not clear. However, there are some things that appear to be linked and potentially of interest. The first observation is that the majority of participants use some pragmatic talk, regardless of background. The second is that certain types of talk, notably missionary and passivist talk, occur frequently in the Health and Learner Support groups respectively. The third observation is that pragmatic and missionary talk occur relatively frequently together. A final observation is that whilst there is

movement between forms of talk, these are 'associative' rather than 'contrastive' (Hargreaves, 1981: 303).

Of these observations, the tendency for the 'health practitioner' and the 'learner support' groups to adopt missionary and passivist talk respectively seems most striking. It is probable that this difference is 'context dependent' in that these groups, as noted in the last chapter, held contrasting views of their roles and engagement. These views may be played out in their commitment to teaching.

### **Changing commitment**

These commitments can be viewed initially as an extended form of motivation with the individual at the start having a 'free choice'. Woods (1981:292) describes commitment as 'the willingness of the individual to give scarce personal resources – time, energy, money – to one's work'. Others, such as Lortie (1975: 25), note how combinations of individual decisions and social constraints lead to 'particular dispositions' in those who choose to teach. Such dispositions include 'conservatism' or 'individualism'.

As noted above, there was a tendency, for much of the talk to 'become' more pragmatic as the study period progressed. Thus, whilst many of the participants talk in 'missionary', 'passivist' or 'credentialised' ways at the start, their talk generally converges into a 'pragmatic' one by the end. It seems likely that these participants are, like Lacey's (1977) novice teachers in schools, adjusting to the circumstances in which they find themselves. It also appears that retaining 'missionary talk' is difficult in the face of challenging students and other factors. Lacey (1977:72) described this as a process of 'situational adjustment' whereby individuals adjust or comply with an authority figure's (college tutor or headteacher) definition of that situation. Whilst it is hard to identify what these 'authority figures' might be in this study, there may be a range of other factors at work. Day (2004) notes how in his studies in schools

It was clear that although teachers maintained their commitment, their understanding of the job, changes over which they had no control and changes in their own life, had caused them to modify their approach to their work (p.66).

## Summary

In this chapter I have identified a range of commitments or orientations held by the research participants. These orientations shift through time and when they are attached to particular occupational types, suggest that wider contexts, as well as individual dispositions, may play a role in shaping the way that individuals orient themselves within a teaching role. I have also suggested that the types of orientation held by this group of novice teachers conforms in many ways to those held by novice teachers in other contexts. It seems likely that these dispositions shift as part of a broader process of adjustment to wider opportunities and constraints in the participants' own settings. I conclude the chapter by revealing how the participants appear to 'buy-in' to, 'resist' or 'play-out' a teaching role. It also leaves open the possibility that some participants may even 'play out' the role of a teacher, displaying what I termed 'shallow engagement', with little interest in deeper change.

I now turn now to the third and final analytic perspective in order to further enhance the validity of the study. In chapter five, the participants' narratives were used to construct 'occupational groups' to demonstrate how past experience can be powerfully projected on to teaching itself. In this chapter, I have set aside the participants' backgrounds and through an analyse of their 'talk', produced a typology of commitment which develops across time and in ways that are associated with the participants' backgrounds. The next chapter uses three case studies and a different form of narrative text to synthesise the ways in which professional backgrounds and commitment interact and shift through a number of 'turning points'. I use Denzin's (1989) notion of 'epiphany' and the broader concept of 'critical incidents' as analytical tools here.

## Chapter seven: Critical cases – identities in transition

### Introduction

For the most part, the cases of interest in education and social service are people and programmes. Each one is similar to other persons and programmes in many ways and unique in many ways. We are interested in them both for their uniqueness and commonality. We seek to understand them. We would like to hear their stories. (Stake, 1995:51)

This chapter aims to synthesise and develop the ideas identified in the previous two chapters. These suggest that both professional backgrounds and the research participants' orientations to teaching might contribute significantly to their socialisation into higher education. Having reported these findings, I now seek to establish how the research participants' might achieve a shift in terms of their perspectives on teaching in higher education and, additionally, their sense of themselves – their identities. To achieve this, the chapter will approach the data by looking at the accounts of three selected case studies. I begin by presenting the cases and move on to examine the ways in which their identities appear to shift by deploying Denzin's (1983) notions of 'epiphany' and Tripp's (1993) notion of 'critical incidents'. I see the selected cases as 'exemplifying' (Bryant, 2004:51) the experiences, ideas and emotions experienced to some extent by all of the research participants. I also believe the cases are 'revelatory' for their capacity to reveal both the role of professions, the types set out previously, and how these might become merged into authentic and complex accounts.

Epiphanies are described by Denzin (1989: 23) as 'life incidents that are significant in that they are events which impact on an individual's life'. They are further described by Denzin (1989: 23) as 'turning points' that may alter the structure of a person's life. He outlines how these may have different levels of significance, by categorising epiphanies in four forms: the major epiphany, the cumulative epiphany, the minor epiphany and the re-lived epiphany. He writes how they can be positive or negative, arise from crisis or change, present in a variety of forms but receive their meaning retrospectively (1989:71).



Critical incidents are similarly defined by Tripp (1993:24) as 'some event or situation which mark a significant turning-point or change in the life of a person or an institution or in some social phenomenon'. However, Tripp (p.24) also suggests that critical incidents are

not always dramatic or obvious but are mostly straightforward accounts of very commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice which are critical in the rather different sense that they are indicative of underlying trends, motives and structures.

The concepts of 'epiphany' and 'critical incident' therefore provide a range of analytical tools to determine the ways in which specific events and actions might stand out and indicate deeper change. However, whilst both concepts highlight sources of change, they do so in different ways. In an epiphany, moments and experiences actively shape people's lives, even though they may not know this at the time of the event. A critical incident, on the other hand, becomes such through the active involvement of the person concerned; it has to be 'activated' through some form of analysis. The chapter will return to this as part of a later discussion.

A narrative approach is again adopted in the construction of the three cases but the individuals are represented in a different way. As in the previous chapters, these are not of the kind displayed by Coffey & Atkinson (1996), where interviewees provide first-hand and seamless stories of their experiences as a narrative account. Rather, they are closer to the analytic narratives or vignettes referred to by Erickson (1986), in which the voices of the participants are embedded in an 'interpretative commentary' (p.152) which seeks to highlight their changing realities over time and to point to the more general significance of those instances. Atkinson (1990:83) refers to these as 'textual elements' and I adopt his advice to 'set off' the case study individuals from the main body of the text so as to create a 'temporal frame inhabited by the actors and the researcher'(p.83). In each frame there are data which occurred 'then' and the reporting of 'now' for the reader.

## Individual narratives

The first 'composite' vignette is that of Craig, one of the Osteopaths.

### Case study 1

Craig is an Osteopath in his mid-thirties who qualified in 1998. His Osteopathic practice is centred on a special school where he works with children who have been referred because of emotional and behavioural problems. The special school deals with children with a range of conditions but particularly autism and ADHD. He also works as a sessional Osteopath in a private practice.

Craig completed a Master's degree (MA) in Paediatrics just prior to joining the study. His pathway into teaching begins with the ad hoc supervision of trainee Osteopaths placed in the special school although he has done a small amount of teaching in an 'exercise context'. The supervision activity leads to an invitation to do a small amount of clinical teaching at the main training centre for the Osteopaths.

These early experiences give him the sense that he has a 'flare' and an 'enthusiasm' for teaching, despite a few [nervous] 'David Beckham' moments [saying 'you know' repeatedly]. He sees the invitation to undertake the PGCAP as an opportunity to acquire some teaching 'techniques' so that he can be a 'better' teacher. Craig recognises that this marks some kind of transition for him since, for the first time, he will be in an HE environment with 'intelligent and engaged adults'. However, he draws confidence from his MA which was 'geared to reflective thinking'. He has clear and pragmatic expectations initially of the PGCAP in terms of getting 'ideas' and 'using assessment effectively'.

Craig is both pragmatic and idealistic in the way he perceives the role of a teacher in higher education at the start. He thinks that Osteopathy 'brings benefits to the world' and he wants his students to acquire these values too. He also sees a role for higher education in 'broadening and expanding' his students in their profession so that they can benefit their patients. In this way he wants to maintain and enhance Osteopathy itself which 'isn't just treating sore backs'. It's about a career and less about personal motives

'I would like to be inspirational, if I could inspire somebody through my input to go on and entertain a thought that I have found useful in my own past, if I can transmit that it would be good' (Interview 1)

He also recognises that to be an effective teacher you must also 'deliver' learning outcomes and students must 'take on' the knowledge required to pass exams. Craig recognises early on that his students are not an undifferentiated group but possess individual needs and motivations that need to be 'sussed out' but these are also really hard to get at. This need to understand his students better means that he compares them to his patients so that teaching, though new to him, 'is a familiar thing I am working with'.

Craig adopts a strongly evaluative stance as another way of understanding the role of a teacher and his 'effectiveness' as a teacher. Hence, although there is an initial expectation that PGCAP will provide him with tools, he recognises that developing as a teacher also requires both a situational and a social awareness. He therefore intends to monitor sessions 'that go well' so that generalisations about teaching can be made and to 'learn from colleagues'.

Four months after starting to teach at the school for Osteopaths Craig is still drawing strong parallels between patients and students in terms of his 'meeting their needs' but also as being 'consumers'. However, there are sources of dissonance, too, as students 'have more guile', are 'more quick to judge you' or are 'on your case'. Craig is finding it difficult to control his students in the way he can control his patients.

Patients are 'more surrendering...we lie them down on the plinth and calm them down a bit... that's the first stage of the battle won... whereas students are much more likely to come back at you.' (Interview two)

Craig recalls teaching encounters that illustrate a helping and facilitative approach and situations that go out of his control. He recalls a struggling student whose difficulties he thinks he can address through 'more encouragement' and by 'nurturing a greater confidence in herself'. However, this doesn't work and he takes over her patient and 'mis-reads' the situation, upsetting the patient. The student 'gives nothing back' and leaves him 'struggling to find the right tools for the situation'. His clinical teaching is also 'very dynamic' and being a role model in a clinical situation is 'enough'.

In other teaching situations, though, such as lectures or tutorials, students are 'off the hook and start applying their critical faculties to you'. Large group teaching situations provide the biggest challenge. He is 'shocked' by the challenge of holding students' attention. His students are 'not like' the way he was as a student. He commits a lot of energy to developing his resources and looks for student 'reactions'. He embellishes his large group sessions with 'off the cuff remarks' which sometimes 'get a laugh'. Teaching becomes in part, like 'doing an act'. Craig's background as an Osteopath 'works' in most clinical teaching situations but the further he is from the clinic, the tougher it becomes.

By the summer he is acknowledging that he has found teaching 'harder than being an Osteopath'. Indeed, he finds teaching 'extremely demanding', a 'bottomless pit' of preparation, unlike his Osteopathy which is 'ring-fenced'. Here, his professional background doesn't support him. He finds himself doing more and more work for the students. His teaching is also influenced by the need to 'please' or at least 'not to annoy people because these could be your future colleagues'. Osteopathy is 'not like' an academic subject; his students will join 'him' in 'his' profession. This means your skills have to be shared, but also need to be 'worth having'.

Craig's orientation shifts or grows. He regards 'helping people' as his primary motive for teaching and for being an Osteopath. Teaching and Osteopathy are the 'sorts of professions you are working with people and there is a 'transferable ethos'. There are other parallels, too, such as the way in which both roles require you to 'do some detective work... you can't just chuck paint at a wall; you are trying to work out their learning needs in advance'.

For Craig, teaching remains a personal mission that has strong parallels with Osteopathy. For example, he continues to worry about how his patients and students regard him. He needs to keep them 'on-side', which is 'a kind of needing to be liked'. His patients have to like him so he thinks his students should, too. He recognises that students are not like patients: 'you can probably teach and not be liked'. He becomes able to 'give students my other side'. He retains his focus on his students and is ready to "move outside your comfort zone ...think on your feet leaving room for uncertainty but letting yourself off a bit [...], getting over the business of needing to be liked." He is more pragmatic though very anxious to please.

By the end of the academic year, Craig's original energy and enthusiasm have been tempered a little. He is letting the students do more of the work. He is more fluid.

'I repeated a lecture I did last year and I just went and copied the handout and just gave it to the students and so it's sort of actually acquiring and now it gives you confidence as well I think once you do some repetition of teaching there's some degree it feels like less work but also you're suddenly doing a bit more off the cuff you go OK I remember doing this I know this area and you're reaping the benefits and the students maybe are engaged more so you're less like today I didn't need any notes I did an anatomy session with them teaching some anatomy and I just did it off the cuff'. (Interview three)

He has recognised that some students are 'just hard to reach'. It's 'just their way in the world'. He is bringing the real world into his teaching but 'surprised by lack of student awareness'. Craig seeks the timelessness or 'truth' of teaching. He uses more 'caring' talk as it's a 'paternal kind of role really'. He still sees PGCAP as a source of skills.

Having described through a composite vignette the changing realities of Craig's experience and emotions, the next case study introduces Katrina, an experienced nurse manager.

## Case study 2

Katrina has been a nurse since leaving school twenty five years ago and is now a part-time lecturer in the University. She is clear about her goals, having opted to specialise in paediatric nursing just a year into her initial training. She eventually became a Ward Sister after substantial periods in two different hospitals. Katrina became more interested in education during her time as a ward sister and found herself doing more teaching about 'the things that were really important to her'. Katrina is an idealist.

There are two aspects to Katrina's pathway onto the PGCAP. First, she is primarily on a mission to rectify the mistakes made by junior nurses through education at the start of the study. She sees younger staff under-performing around her. This upsets her; she needs to put it right. This prompts a transition from *ad hoc* teaching based on the need to something more organised which builds into a formal programme.

Her involvement in a disciplinary case reinforces this focus and there is a permanent change of direction. There is deep personal commitment to rectify training and the nursing profession. She combines an operational job as a ward sister with a role as clinical facilitator and adds lectureship in nursing to this. She has built up this role from that of Visiting Lecturer (VL) to a part-time lecturing position

The second factor in Katrina's participation in the PGCAP concerns career decisions. She is on a path of which teaching is becoming a growing part but she isn't certain enough to fully commit to teaching. Part-time arrangements keep her options open.

*I had an experience with a member of staff where I ended up going to the NMC because of an issue where an incident had happened and it just made me suppose focus on and look at what I wanted to do in the future. And I think education sort of was becoming more and more important, and I just felt that instead of moaning and saying student nurses aren't coming out with the right skills and trained staff don't have the right skills and stop whinging about it (Interview one)*

Katrina enters the PGCAP as a volunteer. She has a strong belief in knowing the theory before you do a job. It seems 'ridiculous that people will let me teach people when I'm not qualified'. Kate sees herself as a facilitator with a role to 'share knowledge, anecdotes and incidents – to get it very real to people'. For her, it isn't just about transferring or passing things on.

Her early focus on her subject knowledge, even at the start of PGCAP, has given way to a stance that sees her students as active participants in the learning process. Kate recognises that facilitation isn't easy either; it's 'not the most comfortable way'. She's trying more group work. Facilitating is risky as when 'you are a novice at teaching you are still frightened that they are going to ask you the one question that you can't answer'.

This is a control issue for Katrina, who finds teaching isn't like being a ward sister.

*'It's a control issue. I do like being in control. And I think that's the thing about being a nurse. You are very much in control at times and it's something that especially as a ward sister you're there to sort of not control but you know you can direct and yes, manage and teaching sometimes isn't as easy to manage because you never quite know what anybody is going to do so you know, patients do what you really want them to do with a bit of encouragement but with teaching it's a bit more flying by the seat of your pants, isn't it? But it's not they say you shouldn't be in your comfort zone but you shouldn't be in that oh my god zone but in between'* (Interview 1)

This disturbs her. Katrina initially views PGCAP as a source of knowledge in order to 'get better at teaching and to improve the student experience. In this sense, students are 'like patients'. As a teacher you can 'improve it for the student like you improve care for the patient'. She searches for ideas through observing others. She has career decisions in terms of moving from clinical to training; she's testing the water, which is informing her decisions.

By Christmas, Katrina is recalling teaching encounters that illustrate how she is attempting to shift further towards a facilitative rather than a transmissive approach. She is clearly anxious to grab the attention of students and focus on their needs so as to ensure they are interested. She describes them as active learners. Her sessions are developing though she concedes that she is 'grabbing the instant easy things'. She is disturbed, though, by what she perceives as the teacher's role. She wants to make theory interesting. PGCAP itself is also a challenge. She isn't in her 'comfort zone', but though not a comfortable place, it is liberating, which gives Katrina permission to take risks while supporting her. She wants the 'underpinning theory' before more ideas are used.

*'I think its brilliant if you've got a clinical skills lab. It's brilliant for practical but there's all those things you've got to give them with theory but when it's the drier subject it is hard because actually I think a lot of the people who come into nursing are? very practical-based people and they can relate and join in practical stuff, skills stuff, really easily but the drier stuff you can almost hear the sighs. How am I going to make this interesting for you? What I try to do is give them the scenario and then get them to fill in a paper so they use the stuff cos they tend to like the doing um but again and it's really difficult so few people in the group to get any kind of noise going and It's just you.'* (Interview two)

By the summer Katrina is still coming to terms with the demands of teaching in HE. She sees her HE role as being about 'structure', 'theory' and 'formality'. She feels disembodied from the practice of nursing itself and so this is therefore not 'a natural progression'. She can no longer 'lead by example' as she isn't on the wards enough. She needs to draw on a different knowledge base as well as her experience. 'You're doing it from a

much more theoretical evidence base'. Her career is torn between higher education and her role as a matron. She finds herself reverting back to her medical model of teaching. She finds it a huge jump into higher education teaching from workplace teaching. She doesn't see practice-based models as the way to teach. She appears to be a bit medically model oriented still. She is 'shocked at how different it is'.

These shifts in orientation are accompanied by pedagogic shifts.

*I think for me when I came it felt like I had this huge pile of knowledge that I wanted to deposit on the students and it's you need to know all of this I need you to leave with this knowledge and it was like if I told you everything I knew about it part of it would go in and I'd be able to impassion you to want that knowledge as well and I think for me my perception now is actually they're not just empty jugs that you're going to fill up with all this information you've actually got to work at getting them to want to get that knowledge and to help them look for that knowledge and use that knowledge' (Interview 3)*

In the background the NMC case continues and it feels as though there is a need to prevent these things happening to other people. However, for Katrina, there is a recognition that students have an active and independent role in the learning process. As a teacher, you don't (and shouldn't) do all of the work. You need to develop their interest – this may not just 'happen'.

The third and final composite vignette is that of Juliet, a Sports Development Officer.

### **Case study 3**

Juliet works in the University as a Sports Development Officer. This involves her in developing sports partnerships with local organisations and organising sports qualifications for trainee teachers. The role is 'still developing' as the post was new when she got it. Julia had 'drifted into' a career in the fitness industry after her children started at school 13 years previously. She continued her training by completing a course in sports therapy part-time in her local college and then did a degree in the same subject in the university where she now works. She found she was good at helping her fellow students, being 'the person that everybody came to rather than the teacher to explain what was going on'.

On completing her first degree, she embarked on a part-time MA degree in Sports Therapy alongside a job-share in her current post. When her job share ended shortly after, Juliet decided to work full-time and abandoned postgraduate study. She joined the study after two years in her current post. Although teaching was not formally part of her role she would occasionally 'cover' lectures which were in her area. Juliet opted to do the PGCAP, viewing it as an opportunity to develop her CV and open up 'further opportunities'. Juliet is considering an MA in Education after

PGCAP rather than a higher degree in Sports Therapy. Leaving her qualifications 'as they are would be a waste'. There is an overt career aspect but she is essentially passive and pragmatic in her talk at this time.

*'I see myself mainly supporting as oppose to lecturing although again it's a dual role because throughout this course I am going to be properly lecturing, giving lectures in a professional manner to the best of my ability. I do see myself as becoming more of an actual teacher whereas I don't see myself as a teacher now. I would like to think that by the end of the year I would be comfortable in seeing myself as a teacher'. (Interview one)*

At the start of the study there is no 'formal' teaching role for Juliet though her *ad hoc* teaching sessions are continuing. However, she sees herself 'becoming more of a teacher' as the PGCAP progresses, hoping that more teaching opportunities will arise. She is highly dependent on others for these opportunities. For the moment, she 'doesn't see herself as a teacher...more as a sources of guidance...a mentoring role...may not be classified as teaching'. This is part of the role of teaching. She makes very modest claims for herself as a teacher.

Juliet intends early on to draw heavily on PGCAP as a source of new tools for dissemination and technology but also to be 'more professional about how I deliver'. She 'needs to know what she is doing'. Juliet worries a lot about whether she knows enough to teach, whether she is 'researching the right material. She tends to focus on the subject matter and doesn't understand the material well'. She's attempting to structure a session so that the students get more out of it. Being a good teacher is primarily about knowing your subject: delivery and crowd control; being 'professional'.

By Christmas and interview two, Juliet's lack of control over teaching situations re-emerges in her recall of a critical teaching session

*'Going into the session I had been asked to get involved in this, very last minute and not a great deal of preparation, I sort of knew what to expect and once I got into the session I didn't realise it was going to be me explaining it. The lecturer said I was going to explain what it was all about. Very much off the cuff, a bit of anxiety and from the start making sure I covered everything and I did forget one significant thing which the lecturer did pipe in at the end'. (Interview two)*

It's very much 'off the cuff'. It means taking more risks with 'no powerpoint'[...] it's informal and unstructured with the students as active participants.

By the summer and interview three, Juliet is still disturbed by differences between her past teaching roles in the gym, which were more 'personal' and the demands of teaching. She 'preferred teaching among peers'. She finds herself 'gravitating back' to a more collaborative position and drawing on practical experience.



Juliet is now considering 'wider issues' such as how the student progresses. She is still 'not an academic'. Whilst her insecurities and disturbances continue, Juliet is now beginning to identify contrasting approaches to her teaching. She terms these her 'style' though she is 'not sure what her styles is'. The first of these is the style she had developed in the fitness industry and the second is a conception of teaching that she has built whilst on PGCAP. She is trying to find where her 'true' style is.

*Style to me would be your style of teaching and there are sort of two camps for me really in style one is fairly instinctive which is very interactive and then you have a very much which is probably very unfair of me but academic style which is your lecture theatre and what you invoke by the word lecture where you're just talking to somebody and lecturing them and I personally I can take both styles it doesn't bother me um but I wouldn't want to be the lecturer... I would want to be the informer and conduit [and] so a much more informal style ...so the style to me is the direction your teaching takes and how you actually deliver so that's what I mean by style and the styles I'm thinking of are your intuitive style and your very formal academic lecturing style ...those are the two that I'm thinking of and fall between.*  
(Interview 3)

As well trying to find her style, Juliet recognises the worth of PGCAP in 'opening her eyes' to a range of different tools as well as the 'ethos' of the university and how her teaching fits in with it. She no longer has a primary focus on her lesson plans; she is using things from PGCAP to 'make her teaching better' but at the same time 'retain her style'. Keeping the way 'I want to deliver but be able to experiment with various sorts of techniques' having seen other people do it. There is a separation of teaching & subject. She's adopting an eclectic approach, 'picking bits', and is more pragmatic.

*I suppose the whole thing for me is opening up horizons, about what it means to be a teacher and how you can teach...but it doesn't tell you how to teach it...try to work out your own best practice. You can take things from it ...you can navigate a path through. There are things I would never have looked at because that I might never have looked at because they're in education and not in my subject...(Interview three)*

## **Discussion**

It is possible after careful reading, 'listening' and re-listening to the data contained in these individual case studies, to detect the ways in which these novice teachers have changed through the period of the PGCAP and their participation in this research. Indeed, the temporal nature of the research generally, and the PGCAP in particular, affords the scope for such change. It is possible to see how the various professional backgrounds of the participants begin to interact and merge with the orientations they successively adopt to form complex pathways of change and

socialisation. The purpose here is, firstly, to examine these pathways and to look for commonalities and differences in these changes. I then move on to consider how change 'itself' may have been achieved.

I argue that, when further attention is given to the data, underpinning these shifts are a series of moments or insights in each case study that seem close to Denzin's (1989) notion of an 'epiphany' or that of a 'critical incident' (Tripp, 1993). The use of these two concepts of change is important since, whilst Denzin distinguishes between differing forms of epiphany, the application of these forms can be imprecise. For example, a single event which might be viewed as representing a problematic moment in an individual's life, would be termed a 'minor' epiphany by Denzin, could in the timescale of this study, be part of a 'cumulative' epiphany running over a long period of time. Hence, I restrict my use of Denzin's terms to 'minor' or 're-lived' epiphanies where, in Denzin's terms, 'personal character is manifested' (p.70). I draw on the idea of critical incidents when, as I indicated earlier, commonplace events may indicate deeper underlying trends, motives and structures. These are less associated with the moments of crisis and have to be 'activated' by the participant.

### **The loosening of professional bonds**

The process of becoming a teacher seems to begin with a 'loosening' of professional bonds. For Craig and Katrina, their existing profession begins by providing both a strong context and rationale to develop a teaching role. They are able to take a range of elements from their professions that initially help them begin to establish themselves as teachers. Their profession provides them with authenticity and credibility in the form of substantial experience and skills and, for Craig, there is an ethos that needs to be 'transferred', too. They situate themselves in terms of their profession and, for a brief period, teaching seems like an extension of it. Parallels with patients in particular, make teaching seem familiar to them. This is reflected in their talk, which is essentially characterised by idealist or missionary vocabularies, as they seek to enhance or rectify their respective professions. They have a strong commitment to those professions, which can be fulfilled through teaching.

However, early encounters with students, recalled in the first interview, suggest that Katrina's initial missionary orientation to teaching may not work. Her learners are not like her patients as they cannot be so readily controlled. This looks like the first in a series of critical moments for Katrina, as the differences between nursing, teaching in a nursing context and teaching in higher education emerge. For Katrina these are potential moments of minor epiphany. However, Craig remains, at this point, strongly bonded to both Osteopathy and his missionary purpose. These seem congruent at this point.

Juliet situates herself in terms of her profession quite differently. Her initially passive talk reflects her need to 'work around' academic colleagues to create or accept teaching opportunities, but also the role she has in 'supporting' others and a background in the fitness industry which has little apparent relevance to her emerging teaching role. Juliet does not know enough for this new teaching role, so her professional background needs to be augmented with reading and research, making her feel vulnerable. At the start, her experience in the fitness industry boosts her confidence in standing up in front of people. However, it provides little credibility in an academic setting and this disconcerts her. Like Katrina, she can see that teaching in higher education is substantially different from much of her past experience, but here she believes this is essentially a pedagogic problem. There are critical incidents which loosen her commitment to past approaches, but these have yet to 'add up' to an epiphany.

Alongside such disturbances there is pragmatic talk too, as they all contemplate the craft aspects of teaching: writing session plans and outcomes, for example. You cannot just 'be' an Osteopath or a Nurse except in clinical settings; you have to organize and structure your knowledge and experience for learners so that they can access it. Craig and Katrina also recognize that the PGCAP can help them with this but that to be an effective teacher you have to understand the students as well. It is not a case of straightforward 'transfer' from one context to another. This is about understanding what you are doing and PGCAP is initially seen as the source of such insight. They have made modest steps towards becoming a teacher in higher education.

## **Shifting orientations**

In their second interviews, the three individuals (cases) recount their significant teaching events. These oral accounts of events illustrate a more complex interplay between initial orientations, professional backgrounds and the purposeful recall of early interactions with learners. They also show that encounters with students can be powerful sources of change and they constitute key turning points.

This can be illustrated by Craig's responses and shifting 'talk'. By the second interview, much of his early idealist talk has gone, particularly in relation to students. Furthermore, his ongoing encounters with students are now profoundly disturbing him. The parallels he saw between his students and his patients are now breaking down as he sees students as increasingly different and even casts some of them as 'deviant'. His students 'take' things from him; he doesn't 'give' as before. Other critical incidents, across a range of teaching, also seem to shock him, particularly in large groups. Here, he has to be more like a teacher; 'being' an Osteopath isn't enough. The breakdown and erosion of Craig's patient-centric views of students, whilst not complete, seems profound. I see this as akin to a 're-lived' epiphany: events given meaning in the re-telling.

Craig is coming to realise that he has less power over his students than he does over his patients and this is, for him, a form of epiphany. His encounter with a 'problem' student, referred to above, illustrates this powerlessness. Beyond this point, Craig talks less idealistically about his goals, his students and his teaching. He talks more of 'strong structures', managing the students 'more actively' and increased preparation to 'hold' the students. His attachment to his initial commitment has been loosened and he is re-thinking how this might affect his teaching. This is reflected in more pragmatic talk.

By the second interview, there is also much less idealism and far more pragmatism in Katrina's talk. During the autumn term, Katrina is busily re-working and developing her approaches to teaching, taking ideas from the PGCAP and trying to see 'what works'. This is a highly pragmatic stance. There are successes and failures. She applies some techniques in a lecture to provide early focus and interaction and this works, though she lacks the resources of her hospital skills lab. Her encounters with

small group work are much less successful. Though she misses the facilities of the clinical skills lab in her hospital, there are shifting kinds of epiphany for Kate as she struggles to apply the techniques from PGCAP. These create dissonances of the kind noted by Fanghanel (2004:584):

Disjunctions transpired, on the other hand, when they expressed an inability to reconstruct practices explored in the courses at local level often on epistemological grounds, or by invoking practical or structural causes.

There are, through this period, a range of critical incidents as Katrina immerses herself in the development of the skills of a teacher. Yet she has not changed her commitment, which continues to underpin her developing practice. However, she notes that more theoretical sessions are 'hard to teach'. It's hard to 'get any noise going, it's just you'. PGCAP sessions are not comfortable either. However, she still wants her learners to be more adult, not passive receivers of information. Her talk again reflects this. Like Craig, Katrina is also beginning to recognize that her students are 'not like' her patients. They are difficult to control and teaching is 'less easy to manage' than a ward. This seems to connect back and build on an emerging epiphany noted above.

For Juliet, her early anxieties about her knowledge base are not borne out by her encounters with students. These sessions generally go well. At this point there is no connection with her background, so she is wholly dependent on PGCAP for ideas. Her orientation remains essentially passive; she applies ideas from the PGCAP, in contrast with Katrina, there is limited experimentation. Teaching is still largely a technocratic exercise, incorporating ideas rather than playing with them. Teaching, in Kugel's (1993) terms, is largely about her own performance. Success and positive feedback suggests this approach works. Her initial orientation is hardly disturbed.

### **Retreat and new realism**

By the third and final interviews in the summer, all three individuals have accrued significant teaching experience. By this point, Katrina is experiencing a range of dissonances. Some of these, like Craig's, emerge in the second interview: there are differences between patients and students and the latter are 'hard to control'.

Katrina is now also recognizing that teaching in higher education is profoundly different to teaching in the workplace. She cannot control the students' subsequent practices in the workplace. Katrina is not on the wards and cannot monitor or witness how the students use their new knowledge.

More significantly, Katrina is also recognising that teaching in a university requires more than the recall and transfer of experience. It requires theoretical knowledge as well as 'skills' and an approach that encourages active engagement with that knowledge. She still persists with her missionary stance, but pragmatic talk is now replacing idealist talk. She recalls how students are 'happy to be passive' and this tests her idealism. The recognition that her 'medical model' of teaching, focused on skills and workplace practices, is 'at odds' with teaching in HE, is an extension of her earlier epiphany. You cannot 'be' a nurse or nurse/manager in higher education; you have to engage learners with an evidence base and be a focus for knowledge as well as practice itself. Kate pragmatically 'reverts back' to her medical model, and in this way 'holds on' to some of her background.

Juliet continues to be uncomfortable with her own knowledge base though. Unlike Katrina and Craig, her students do not directly generate this discomfort. Juliet sees differences between the way she was perceived when she was a fitness instructor and the way she thinks she is perceived now. In her past roles as an instructor, people 'saw you as a peer, as an equal'. In higher education, by contrast, lecturers 'must have a wealth more knowledge' than their learners. However, the PGCAP allows her to see that collaborative approaches are possible in higher education too; that people can 'learn together'. Yet the perception of 'difference' persists and Julia prefers teaching 'among peers'. Like Katrina, Juliet 'gravitates back' to her former techniques and her experience whenever she can.

However, much of Juliet's former approach doesn't work in larger groups, so she is trying to steer through a different kind of pathway that has a more 'academic' approach to the knowledge base, combined with elements of her 'old' style of delivery. Juliet's talk now becomes more pragmatic as she continues to re-combine different parts of her experiences, some from the PGCAP together with her newly-acquired subject knowledge. This means, for a while, that she 'loses her style'. She

is somewhere 'between'. Gornall (1999: 48) suggests that such experiences and feelings may be quite common among support staff who are 'inhabitants of new territory between teaching and non-teaching roles [...] with no real or settled status [...] they are threshold people who fall on or between the boundaries of categories, a "liminal" status'.

For Juliet there is no 'settled' approach but the continuing search for her own style. This search discomforts her but she realises that it is possible to retain her existing approaches, to re-combine these with things that she's heard on PGCAP and that you can work out your 'own best practice' from what is offered. Juliet refers to this as her 'enlightenment' and is a form of epiphany. Her increasingly pragmatic talk reflects this shift.

In his final interview, Craig has shifted away from his early idealistic talk towards more pragmatic and caring talk. However, he remains highly committed to enhancing his teaching, finding it akin to 'a bottomless pit' in terms of preparation. Also, he hopes he has Osteopathic skills that are 'worth having'. Craig continues to liken his students to patients, but has moved from the recognition that they are different to a position whereby his learners have to be kept 'on-side'. However, you don't have to be 'liked' to achieve this. Craig continues to define himself in relation to his students, unlike Katrina & Juliet, who are 'moving' mainly in terms of their practice of teaching. Craig though, confirms that he is distancing himself from his students when he tells a group to 'get off his back' when they make complaints about the Osteopathy course. He is 'letting himself off a bit' and recognises that some students are 'just hard to reach'. It seems likely that Craig is having what Denzin (1989) would term a 'cumulative' epiphany, where reactions to certain kinds of experience extend over a period of time.

## **Summary**

I have sought to portray through the three case study individuals how professional backgrounds and research participants' orientations to teaching, might contribute significantly to their socialisation into teaching in higher education. It has been noted how professional backgrounds and particular orientations become combined in

complex and often unpredictable ways to form individual narrative pathways. These pathways seem to consist of three stages, in which forms of epiphany and critical incident provide 'turning points': moments of realisation and recognition in the participants themselves and their new situation as teachers. Encounters with students form the heart of these turning points, providing emotional and pedagogic challenges. These encounters tend to produce progressively more pragmatic talk in each participant. Where these pathways began in idealism, the shifts are extremely painful; where they have their roots in pragmatism, less so.

I have described the three stages as the 'loosening of professional bonds', 'shifting orientations' and 'retreating/reverting back'. These are the commonalities I observed in the data across the three case studies. In each of these stages, I saw different processes, though always with some form of epiphany or critical incident performing 'change' work. In the first stage of 'loosening', the case study individuals seem to be struggling with issues of power and control but begin to 'give way' to the dissonances and disturbances they feel. This seems to loosen their other, prior professional ties.

In the second stage of 'shifting orientations', I witnessed periods of 'immersion' in new pedagogies and new 'realities' when student encounters produced yet more moments of epiphany and critical incidents. It is in this stage that such moments appear strongest as the case study individuals now 'see' teaching in higher education as a kind of 'truth'; they see its form and significance for the first time. In the final stage, that of 'retreat' or reverting back', forms of epiphany and critical incidents continue to produce dissonances, but now there are additional resources too. 'Reverting back' does not mean a return to who they were, but a selective and purposeful use of past and new resources. I return to the themes of 'resource' and 'dissonance' in the next chapter.



## **Chapter eight: Discussion – making sense of becoming a teacher in higher education**

Identities produced by the new regions are more likely to face outwards to fields of practice and thus their contents are likely to be dependent on the requirements of these fields. Identities here are what they are, and what they will become, as a consequence of the projection of knowledge as a practice in some context. The future of the context will regulate identity and the volatility of the context will control the nature of the regionalisation and thus the projected identity (Bernstein, 2000: 189)

### **Introduction**

In the thesis I have portrayed the processes of becoming a HE teacher experienced by a number of staff who are new or relatively new to teaching in one University. A range of factors were seen to shape these processes, notably the ‘other’ professions and ‘other’ occupational identities of these staff. These backgrounds provide the motivation to teach but can also constrain, protect, and, on occasions, disturb them. These other ‘prior’ identities were seemingly maintained but then re-worked by encounters with students, wider pedagogic discourses and, in particular, by forms of ‘epiphany’. Hence, professional backgrounds were seen not as a backdrop to the processes of becoming a teacher, but as an active part of them.

The thesis has revealed how the participants’ seemed to ‘buy-in’ to, ‘resist’ or ‘play out’ a teaching role. These terms referred to varying levels of commitment to the teacher role. Those participants who bought in to teaching in higher education showed a deep engagement with their pedagogic practices and a shifting conception of self as teachers. Those who resisted the teaching role set narrow limits to change in identity or pedagogy and those who played out the teacher role showed a shallow engagement with pedagogic change and put little energy into seeking out a new sense of ‘self’. These orientations raised questions about commitment generally, but also about the role of the PGCAP in the preparation of these novice teachers in particular. The preceding chapters finally revealed how dissonances and cumulative epiphanies are key to the ways in which a teacher identity is constructed and re-shaped. Both vocational identities and past teaching practice were seen to persist, so that there are examples of ‘reverting back’ to established teaching approaches.

**Figure 8:1 Visual metaphor to capture key processes of becoming a teacher in 'New U'**

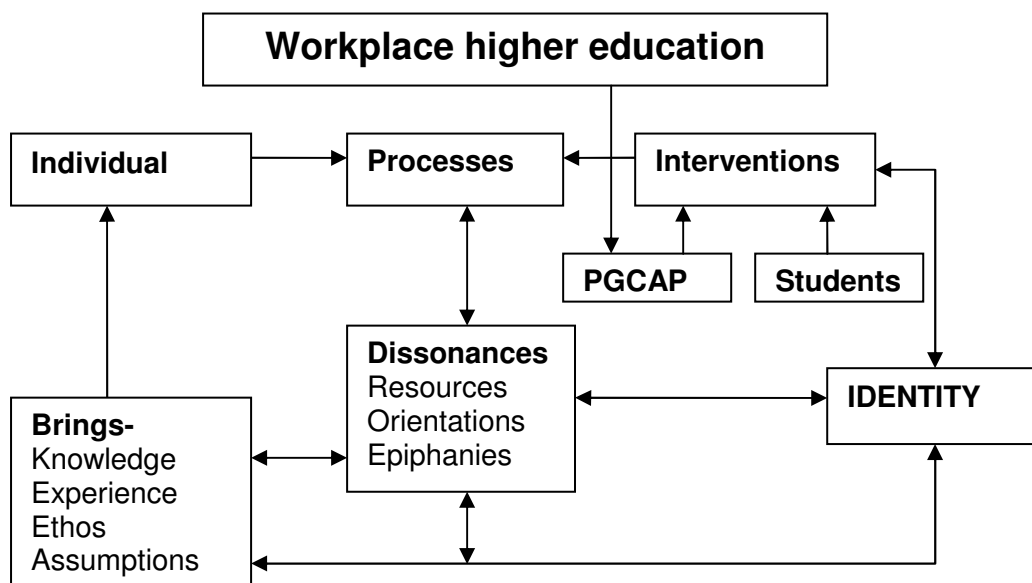


Figure 8:1 above provides an overview of the key processes and connections evident in the data. It shows how the research participants brought a professional background and identity, into the process of becoming a teacher. It highlights how key 'interventions' in the form of the PGCAP and student encounters in particular, initiated a number of processes which loosened and changed the orientations and commitments that people start with. Dissonances and forms of epiphany were key to the ways in which a teacher identity was constructed and re-shaped. All of these processes occurred in a vocational or workplace university which seeks to socialise the participants primarily through a programme of teacher training (PGCAP).

Addressing the research questions has revealed how the processes of becoming a teacher might take place. In this chapter I develop and discuss these findings, considering the relationship between identity formation and pedagogic development, the role of the PGCAP and factors such as 'career transitions' in these processes. I draw on two theoretical frameworks to achieve this. First, the work of Bernstein (1996,2000) and in particular his study on 'retrospective' identities, 'regions' and 'projected identities' in the process of identity formation, which frames the discussion 'situationally'. Second, I use the work of Bandura (1997) and his concepts of 'self-efficacy' and 'agency' in order to examine the role of individuals. This frames the discussion 'individually'.

I begin by highlighting the way in which the study shifts from a pedagogic perspective to one that is more focused on identity and how the role of pedagogy becomes intertwined with it. I examine the processes by which new teachers with strong vocational backgrounds begin to 'move' their identities to analyse how a professional from another field might become a teacher in higher education. Later sections move on to consider the particular role the PGCAP, the programme with which the research participants were engaged, has played in their socialisation.

These discussions are broadened out into wider and ongoing debates about the credentialisation of teachers in higher education, highlighting emerging contrasts between 'traditional' academics and those who teach vocational disciplines in universities. I view the contrasts between these groups as significant for both the processes of credentialisation and identity formation itself. The concluding sections examine the relationship between the individual, the institution and the wider higher education environment and the way in which career considerations played a particular background role in socialisation of some participants.

### **Identity and pedagogy**

I described in chapter three how a change of study context had provided an opportunity to look at a number of distinctive occupational cultures and how these might affect the processes of 'becoming' a teacher in higher education. This was also intended to challenge the way in which my own experience and perspectives as a staff developer (Bath and Smith, 2004) might privilege pedagogic factors over others in shaping the processes of socialisation. It did not 'close off' the possibility that such processes might still be heavily shaped by the acquisition and application of the teacher's 'craft' or the impact of wider institutional regimes. These processes had, after all, featured in the literature review. Also, at the outset, I regarded the PGCAP as an important site for the research participants' socialization into teaching in higher education

It became clear from the first interviews, that the processes of socialisation were related as much to identity as to pedagogy. It was also apparent that while the challenges of acquiring and applying the pedagogic skills and approaches advocated

in the PGCAP were often expressed, this was accompanied by another set of narratives. These other narratives make increasing references to challenges to identity itself. It was also possible to see how pedagogy and identity become intertwined so that thinking 'as' a Nurse or Osteopath might guide initial teaching practice in the university. Hence, while their vocational experience provided a pedagogic resource alongside the skills and approaches shared in the PGCAP, that experience also complicated and delayed the processes of becoming a teacher.

### **Parallel narratives**

#### ***Narratives of resource***

The participants' early experiences and emotions were portrayed in two kinds of narrative. I view these as 'parallel' narratives, one of resource and the other of dissonance, which operated within and across both identity formation and pedagogic development. I first saw a 'resource' narrative emerging, where the PGCAP and vocational identities work to provide a range of ideas, standards and experiences. This is akin to Bernstein's 'narratives of the past', which were used to generate 'retrospective identities' (2000:78) constructed from past exemplars, criteria and experience. A number of the narratives are shaped in this way. It was possible to see how past practices and expectations of the participants and their students have shaped their thinking and their teaching practices in the university.

Bernstein also highlights how those who occupy the new university 'regions', vocational disciplines such as Nursing or Business Studies, project knowledge from outside practice into the region itself. Such fields, according to Bernstein (2000), continue to regulate their practice, but also their identity. These projections are also evident in the study with the healthcare professionals, who draw on their practice as Nurses or Osteopaths to shape how they undertake the work of the university teacher and the development of their students. It was clear that in some cases, the participants remain highly connected to the field of practice itself. This is less akin to the 'porous' boundaries described by Clegg (2008) in a study of 'non-traditional' academics. However, it should be noted that Clegg's study focused on full-time, rather than part-time, university academics and may have produced different effects.

The 'resource' narrative crossed into pedagogy through the PGCAP and into the participants' teaching experiences. All of the participants viewed the PGCAP primarily as a resource and, from the beginning, it was a source of ideas, possible approaches to teaching and a forum for exchanging experience with peers. It also constituted a space within which reflective activity could take place and be developed. The PGCAP was, additionally, a forum where participants could meet those who support teaching in the university, for example, the 'new professionals', such as learning technologists and librarians (Gornall, 1999). The participants drew on these resources in a variety of different ways and at different times, though usually working from a 'craft' view of teaching towards a more reflective approach (Schon, 1983): viewing teaching as a process 'with which to engage'. Their narratives rarely, if ever, referred to the values, purposes or philosophies underpinning teaching in higher education itself, even though these were explicitly considered on the PGCAP programme. I develop the broader role of the PGCAP in a later section.

## **Parallel narratives**

### ***Narratives of dissonance***

The empirical chapters also highlighted narratives of dissonance across identity formation and pedagogic development. Such dissonance was often portrayed in the literature as coming from a number of sources. I referred in chapter two, for example, to the 'transfer problem' highlighted by (Fanghanel, 2004). Here, participants in courses like the PGCAP learn generic skills which then have to be taken into their own context. Dissonance was also said to be derived from identity change itself. Castells (1997: 6) describes how the acquisition of further identities 'is a source of stress and contradiction in both self representation and social action'. I highlighted earlier Murray's (2005) work on schoolteacher transitions into higher education. Boyd and Lawley (2009) also refer to health professionals 'feeling new' or 'undervalued' (p.3) in higher education and also how 'new nurse lecturers strive to be credible as nurses and as academics'. They noted how it is 'unclear what the subjects wanted to be credible as' (p.3).

I have observed similar dissonances to these with both pedagogic skills and identity formation being complicated by 'transfer' issues (Evans, et al, 2011), past practices as teachers in vocational settings and continuing to 'be' another kind of professional.

I also noted how past practices and other identities were no longer a guide to future thinking and action. This suggested that there may be limits to what ‘retrospective’ identities and actions can achieve in a higher education context. The standards, exemplars and values that held in the workplace remain a guide, but also seem to contradict new practices.

I summarise these parallel narratives of resource and dissonance in figure 8:2 below. This shows how the ‘main’ identity of the participants is initially a resource to be drawn on but also how, as their learning progresses, becomes a source of dissonance. The pedagogic skills and experience gained from their ‘main’ work seems to be a source of dissonance at the start, ideas generally failing in their new teaching contexts. Similarly, ideas taken from the PGCAP often fail initially too, but as participants persevere, sometimes combining ‘old’ and ‘new’ approaches, they had more success. They became more able to draw more selectively from what the PGCAP offered them.

**Figure 8:2 Identity and Pedagogy as ‘resource’ and as ‘dissonance’**

	Resource	Dissonance
Identity	Vocational life as a guide to practice as a teacher – standards, ethics, motives and experience	Vocational life – experience has limits in HE and complicates the adoption of a teacher identity
	Retaining main identity	Acquiring a dual identity
Pedagogy	PGCAP – skills, ideas, approaches, peer experiences Workplace peers	Past teaching and past experience as a guide to teaching doesn’t work (This is a sentence, therefore an idea)
		Transfer of skills

(Arrows indicate time)

### Maintaining identities

Chapter four described how many of the research participants had come from a distinctive occupational culture. I also explored how these backgrounds and

occupational identities had specific roles and effects as each participant moved towards a teacher identity. Each participant seemed to hold on to or maintain their vocational identities. These periods of identity maintenance seemed to perform in different ways and to persist for different periods. In both the healthcare and the learner support groups, these periods are often quite extended. For the cases that are outside these groups, vocational identities seemed even more persistent, being substantially still in place by the end of the study. I turn to these aspects of identity maintenance next.

Bernstein (1996:78) described how retrospective identities 'provide exemplars and criteria' but I want to elaborate on this further. These narratives of the past did seem to provide standards, those of the professions themselves, but they also perform additional functions. They seemed to help the participants cope with the new demands of teaching in higher education. For example, the patient-centric views of the healthcare group, helped them to make teaching 'feel familiar' and therefore easier to control. For others, notably the Learner Support group, identity maintenance appeared to protect them from, or to 'resist', new discourses and approaches to teaching. In the remaining cases, as noted above, identity maintenance seemed less clearly related to vocational identities, but to background factors such as age or a more 'agentic' approach.

A period of identity maintenance was also related to the kinds of commitment that the participants hold and the way in which the 'loosening of professional bonds' took place. In chapter six I portrayed how specific individuals and, to an extent, some of the professional groups, were initially highly idealistic or, conversely, very instrumental in their commitment to teaching. Whilst these 'types' did not 'belong' to particular individuals or professional groups, the sense in which participants were 'buying in' to, 'resisting' or 'playing out' the role of a teacher, also seemed to relate to identity maintenance. It is reasonable to suggest, for example, that behind the extremes of this talk, individuals may be holding their vocational identities for a longer period than those whose talk was more pragmatic. The period of identity maintenance was associated with a set of interactions between occupational groups and their commitment. I now turn to the way in which identity maintenance was disturbed.

## **Identities in motion**

The majority of the participants experienced an extended struggle to build a teacher identity in higher education. Vocational identities appear to have been 'loosened' or challenged by particular events and encounters. Such occurrences were invariably cast as problematic or challenging, encounters with learners playing a central role. It seems that, where past approaches, values and standards were challenged, there were a range of dissonances. I described in chapter seven how these may have constituted moments of 'minor' or 'cumulative' epiphany (Denzin, 1989: 71). The idea of 'critical incidents', as described by Tripp (1993), was used to evoke the way in which past standards and particular kinds of orientation were progressively 'disturbed' and challenged. I use the term 'identities in motion' to capture these disturbances.

I see these disturbances as having rather a different form to those described by McNamara *et al* (2002) and Samara and Luce-Kaplar (1996). In these studies, for example, there were references to continuous shifting between positions of 'being', 'becoming' and of 'in-betweenness' in building a teacher identity. In other words, novice teachers did not report a kind of journey from 'student' to 'teacher' but more discontinuous states of 'being' and 'not being' a teacher and eventually 'becoming' a teacher. It was more about 'becoming' than 'travelling'. I also see them as different from Fanghanel's (2004) portrayal of 'dissonances'. In Fanghanel's work, dissonances were attributed to 'transfer' problems (p.585), the application of generic teaching approaches and 'structural' factors, such as lack of time and the low priority given to teaching by some departments.

I noted how these dissonances might be shaped by identity itself. Identity seems to work in two ways. Firstly, it works directly in the way that Bernstein (2000) describes, with experience, past standards and exemplars being brought forward and then being challenged by new teaching experiences. Secondly, identity worked indirectly, with the various commitments made to teaching itself affecting the way that dissonances might be experienced. Chapter six concluded how it was possible to see three kinds of broad commitment that stretched across the whole group and



through and over time. These kinds of commitment, which I elaborated on earlier, were termed 'buying-in' to, 'resisting' and 'playing out' the role of a teacher.

I see these commitments as a key part of the processes of becoming a teacher in higher education. These are not 'suspended' or 'in-between' states, but highly complex sets of interactions between past experience, new encounters and shifting orientations which, for most of the participants, disturbed their identities and shaped the situations they were in. Those who at various times, bought in to teaching, often seemed to feel the deepest disturbances. This disturbance was related to pedagogy but, more profoundly, to identity.

Becoming a teacher in higher education seems to involve a commitment to teaching itself - as well as to another identity. It may require a recognition that teaching is a distinctive practice – it is not an extension of vocational practice itself. This may also mean re-thinking how vocational experience can be used. Experience is still a resource but one which should be re-thought in the context of higher education. Hence, experience, as well as pedagogy, was difficult to transfer. Those who at various times, 'resist' a teaching role also experienced profound disturbances, but for different reasons. Here, experience was used to defend an identity, to 'hold off' new ways of working. There also seemed to be periods when some of the participants 'played out' a teaching role. I use this term differently to Murray's notion of teacher trainers 'masquerading in HE' (2005:73), seeing it as a term to describe those who view their teaching as an extension of their vocational experience. For this latter group, vocational identity was barely challenged.

### **Prospective identities**

I use the term 'prospective identities' to describe how the disturbances and dissonances are reduced in a period when the participants seek to control and develop their positions. Most of the participants eventually recognised that teaching in higher education was profoundly different to workplace practice. It was a practice in its own right. However, they continued to draw on their other experience and their other identities. They also recognised that there must be some adaptation to their

new situation. They needed to 'grow into' their teaching role. This coincided with the increasing pragmatism evident in their 'talk' as revealed in chapter six.

At the heart of these processes was a range of shifts and actions that sought to combine selected parts of some participants' past experience with new approaches. For example, the 'medical model', referred to in chapter five, became combined with elements of a more 'academic' approach. Other participants referred to a new 'pathway' through established and new approaches. This was a highly selective process, with chosen parts of their past teaching being combined with new practices. This meant that there is no 'settled' approach but a continuing search for their 'own' style. This search brought further discomfort but also the realization that existing approaches could be re-combined with resources from the PGCAP and what they have observed around them. They could 'work out' their 'own best practice' from what was offered.

In this way, participants could also 'hold on' to some of their background but let go of other parts. These processes resonate with Bernstein's (1996:79) notion of 'prospective identities' which continue to 'use and rest upon narrative resources'. Hence, whilst prospective identities are essentially 'future-oriented', they draw on other or earlier identities, but more selectively than the retrospective identities referred to earlier. This was part of the participants' search for an authentic sense of 'self'. These processes and experiences were not shared in the same way or to the extent by all of the participants. While most of them began to re-synthesise aspects of past and present, others put their experience to work as it stood.

### **The role and significance of the PGCAP**

At the start of the study, I regarded the PGCAP as an important site for the research participants' socialisation into higher education. This was based on the assumption that, as most of the participants were part-time teachers in higher education, the PGCAP would be one of their main connections to the university and to higher education more generally. It was also based on the research literature, which suggested that there are a lack of opportunities for part-time staff to collaborate with

and meet higher education colleagues. Part-time staff are, it was said, 'are often excluded from departmental activities' (Abbas & MacLean, 2001:346).

Participants viewed the PGCAP primarily as a resource, a source of ideas, possible approaches to teaching and as a forum for exchanging experience with peers. I noted how it also constituted a space within which reflective activity can take place and be developed. Chapter four showed how the PGCAP was fairly typical of educational development courses (McGuinness, 1997) in terms of its approaches, content and ideologies and how these are mediated through a number of competing discourses. In the light of these observations, and the original research questions, I want at this point to re-consider the role of the PGCAP further.

The role of the PGCAP, as a source of socialisation into teaching was, I would argue, relatively limited. This is based on two key observations. First, the participants' view of the PGCAP as a 'resource', a 'craft' to be acquired, implied a fairly limited or shallow level of engagement. Some participants even seemed content to 'bolt on' techniques to established approaches. They viewed teaching itself as a means to an end, a way of 'sharing' their profession. Whilst I noted a recognition by many of the participants that teaching in higher education is a practice in its own right, this was invariably 'conditioned' by their vocational experience, for example, as a means to 'defend' their profession.

Second, the challenge of transferring generic teaching ideas leads many of the participants to stay with 'safe' approaches whereby they can control the situations they confront. Such approaches are drawn from their vocational experience, as in the 'medical model', or 'borrowed' from their more didactic peers. These 'narratives of control' and 'narratives of the professions' are terms I used in chapter five. The interactive, task-focused and broadly constructivist approaches advocated on the PGCAP, are frequently abandoned. There is little evident commitment to developing the skills of teaching itself, as noted in the study of primary school teachers by Nias (1980).

The effects of the PGCAP in terms of its institutional or wider discourses also seemed limited. Whilst some members of the learner support group seemed

initially susceptible to the 'improvement' of their teaching, such discourses did not surface in the interviews with other participants. The role of the PGCAP seemed more subtle and more limited. It appears to liberate some of the participants to develop their own style of teaching in ways that are more meaningful to them. Furthermore, it seems to act as a proxy or marker for their development so that participants might say, 'well I've done the PGCAP and that's what you're supposed to do'. They value the opportunity to do it but in a somewhat 'symbolic' way. Additionally, the pedagogic impacts seem more modest than those claimed by Rust (2000) or Gibbs and Coffey (2004).

### **Identity formation in vocational and academic disciplines**

The processes of becoming a teacher in some vocational disciplines may also be different from those in academic disciplines. The literature review highlighted how identity formation for 'traditional' academics is a complex weave of factors, but strongly linked to the nature of their disciplines (Kogan, 2000). Other sources of socialisation, such as the academic's own history or moral framework (Henkel, 2000), are less frequently cited. Indeed, some sources, such as Becher and Trowler (2001), draw particular attention to the power of 'structural elements' in the disciplines to reduce the scope for individual agency in identity formation processes. Teachers in higher education from vocational disciplines may have differing experiences because of their relationships with their own field of practice, which sit outside higher education itself.

Bernstein's emphasises the way in which identity formation itself is linked to different knowledge structures. He draws on the notions of 'inwardness' and 'inner dedication' to account for the way in traditional disciplines or 'singulars' generate strong inner commitments to those disciplines. The strongly bounded character, insulated nature and internal coherence of singulars can, in turn, create the possibility of a 'purity of identity'. Within the singulars, the discipline itself creates and controls its own knowledge. By contrast, vocational disciplines, or 'regions' do not control their own knowledge base. They also face outwards rather than inwards, 'producing identities which might be more diffuse' (Beck & Young, 2005: 187).

Whilst Bernstein (2000) does not explore the processes of socialisation and identity formation themselves, he states that 'the sacred face of singulars sets them apart, legitimises their otherness and creates dedicated identities with no reference other than their calling' (p.54). This thesis has illustrated that socialisation processes might look rather different when a 'teacher' is grounded in a vocational discipline. Those with a vocational background come to teaching in higher education with stronger and more complex narratives. Also, there is no 'sacred face' but a more complex set of explicit and implicit expectations of standards and behaviours that also come from that vocational background. Bernstein (1996:69) suggests in his earlier work that in this way, regions can 'regulate' identity. I would argue that while the connections between fields of practice and identity formation are strong, such fields may not regulate identity itself. I return to this in the conclusion.

Chapter two examined the way in which the PGCAP and similar programmes are attempting to credentialise teaching in higher education. In particular, it noted how some academics, for example Rowland (1998) and Nixon et al (2001), resisted the training of academics as teachers and the increasing state control of academic life. Bernstein has referred to such developments as 'genericism', seeing them, like others, as part of a wider attempt by the state to control practice and knowledge. Again, I want to contrast this position with that of the research participants. Some, like those drawn from an academic background, are compelled to undertake the PGCAP but they do not challenge the idea of teacher development itself.

Further, for some of them, the PGCAP and becoming a teacher in higher education, are an opportunity to 're-professionalise' and to develop their careers.

I want to suggest that credentialisation has very different effects, which depend on the backgrounds of those concerned. For Rowland (2002), programmes such as the PGCAP have become part of managerialism itself and represented an assault on professionalism and traditional academic values. At the heart of this process was the 'training' of academics to be teachers (Bath & Smith, 2004: 10), and the way in which this training reduces the control academics have over their work. It specifically asked them, as I noted in chapter two, to consider and 'live up to' externally and centrally imposed standards. Whilst the new institutional structures of the Higher Education Academy and Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs)

lack the central powers of the OFSTED and the TDA (Beck,2008), they constituted a source of de-professionalisation in parts of the higher education system.

By contrast, for some of the research participants, the PGCAP and teaching in higher education offer not an assault, but an opportunity. Whilst I noted earlier how the PGCAP acts primarily as a resource and as a proxy, I think it had some additional effects on some of the participants. For some, notably those in the learner support group, the PGCAP was an opportunity to enhance and re-professionalise their current role. Many expressed surprise that they are 'allowed' to teach without a qualification, saying how this 'wouldn't happen' in their 'other' professional roles. They explicitly sought to gain aspects of evidence-based and practical knowledge from the PGCAP as part of a more 'professional approach'. I now turn to the way in which longer term processes may have affected commitments to the PGCAP and to the wider processes of becoming a teacher in higher education.

## **Career transitions**

Chapter seven described the way in which established identities shift through moments of epiphany, immersion or critical incidents. I cast these as transitions in a broader set of socialisation processes which were heavily conditioned by past experience. I want to suggest that 'sitting behind' these experiences, for some of the research participants, were a number of broader career transitions. These contrast with the relatively 'bounded' (King *et al*, 2005: 981) careers of traditional academics, being more a particular kind of 'profession-to-profession transition'. In such a transition, teaching in higher education and undertaking the PGCAP offer a low-risk opportunity for career development, a chance to try on 'possible selves' (Ibarra,2004) or re-constitute a career that perhaps has begun to plateau.

These transitions were not driven by fixed stages of career development (Levinson, 1978) tied to the life cycle. I prefer other possible explanations, such as 'career maturity' (Burns,2010:44), where individuals build a second career which permits a better match to mature developmental needs than a job chosen in adolescence or where, as noted above, a first career has reached a plateau. These ideas are linked to Super's (1990) notion of 'recycling', where part of the normal career development

trajectory initially laid to rest earlier in the life cycle, is re-visited. This can lead to 'trial activity, new choices, identity changes, and increased adaptability and personal agency' (p. 247). These observations are consistent with the absence of any consistent motive, age or degree of 'fit' with known points of career change in some of the study group. For some, it seems, credentialisation may be worth it.

### **The interplay of institution, individual and wider contexts**

Past studies of teacher socialisation, such as those by Lacey (1977) and Stowell (1988), used functionalist or interactionist frameworks to conceptualise and further comprehend processes of teacher socialisation. Such frameworks, however, can be restrictive in focusing too much on 'structures' or on individual perspectives. Indeed, Delamont and Atkinson (1985) suggested twenty five years ago, that these frameworks had already 'run out of steam' (p.310). In contrast to Lacey (1977) and Stowell (1988), I want to acknowledge differences between the participants' experiences of socialisation, rather than seeing them as processes common to the 'group'. I intend to develop the way in which each of the participants drew on their own histories, the resources around them and their contexts, to shape the socialization process itself. In this way, I bring together and enlarge the earlier discussions to suggest that, in the socialization process, an individual's past plays a psychological role alongside the processes of identity.

To broaden the analysis in this way, the chapter draws on the work of Bandura (1997), particularly his concepts of 'self-efficacy' and 'agency'. These, I suggest, account for the ways in which individuals are more or less able to mediate between their own experience, teaching encounters and wider environments. Self-efficacy is a particularly useful idea since it denotes an individual's ability to use a belief in their own capabilities and exercise influence over events and environments that affect their lives. Additionally, self-efficacy is said to depend heavily on personal past experiences of success in other fields, or what Bandura (1997: 80) terms 'enactive mastery experience'. Hence, success in another field builds self-efficacy and resilience in readiness for activity in another field and in ways which exceed the effects of 'vicarious experiences, cognitive simulations or verbal instruction' (p.80).

In other words, experience can act as a resource in psychological processes and further contribute to teacher socialisation in this way.

I propose that most of the participants actively used their past experiences, as well as the resources around them, with varying degrees of agency. Bandura (1997) defines agency as 'the power to originate actions for given purposes [...] the exercise of self-influence to bring about desired results (p.3). Whilst all of the participants were 'agentic' in these terms to some degree, the way they used the resources at their disposal varied a great deal. To begin with, it was clear that each participant came to the study with differing amounts and kinds of experience. They also came with differences in their degree of self-efficacy based on that experience. They were more or less 'agentic'.

In some cases, participants were able to organize and harness their experiences, be persistent in their search for solutions to classroom problems and to improvise a solution. Such participants also drew in highly selective and purposeful ways on the resources they had around them. For example, I described many of the actions of the teacher trainer in chapter five as highly 'agentic'. In a challenging situation, he was able to identify a part of his experience that might work in the new setting, adapt it and use it successfully. This participant also exercised personal agency in other ways. He used the PGCAP very selectively as a forum for reflection and by this means, generated his own 'self theory' of teaching in higher education. He continued to be persistent when his techniques learned in school fail and found his own solutions using peers and 'trial and error' approaches. Bandura (1997:225) states that

When good results are hard to come by, people with a high sense of efficacy maintain strategic thinking in the search for optimal solutions, whereas those with a weak sense of efficacy have difficulty finding good exploratory strategies and end up deploying their efforts erratically and ineffectively.



Whilst I noted examples of participants with low self-efficacy who exhibited the kind of floundering that Bandura refers to above, it also seemed possible for some participants to 'become' more agentic as the study progressed. These participants showed persistence in their efforts and seem able to combine and use what Bandura terms 'vicarious experience' – the experience of others similar to oneself – to raise their own self efficacy. Such participants referred frequently to comparisons with others' experience while on the PGCAP, noting the conditions under which things do or do not work. In this way, the PGCAP performed an important 'social' function by allowing some participants to re-evaluate their own performance against that of others. The benefits of this were not immediate. Access to increased levels of agency often began with the need to control the situations they are in and I used the term 'narratives of control' at different points in chapter five to describe these processes.

The concepts of agency and self efficacy may also account for the way in which a small number of the participants appear to 'pull away' from the wider institutional discourses on teaching and learning described in chapter four. The Learner Support group in particular started the study highly connected to the University's push on employability through the implementation of the Curriculum Review programme. This initially limited their approaches to teaching as the content was not theirs. However, they eventually developed their own 'styles' and made progressively fewer references to initiatives such as the Curriculum Review and the standards agenda embodied in, for example, the Higher Education Academy. However, the role of agency and self efficacy as, say, a 'mediator' between vocational experience and wider pressures, becomes increasingly speculative with other participants.

## **Summary**

This chapter has sought to develop further the study's findings in terms of the ways in which socialisation might take place. It has drawn upon data from ten interview informants to explore the particular role of the teacher training course the participants undertook as both a contribution to their development and to their socialisation more generally. I have used various middle range theories 'make sense' of the rich interview data. The work of Bernstein (1996, 2000) and, in particular, his

work on 'retrospective' identities, 'regions' and 'projected identities', has been helpful in framing the discussion 'situationally'. I have also drawn on the work of Bandura (1997) and his concepts of 'self-efficacy' and 'agency' to explore how the socialisation of some participants is influenced by particular variations in their experience. These differences appear to confer varying degrees of 'agency' and frame the discussion 'individually' – as located within or inside each individual.

In the remaining chapter of the thesis, the discussion pulls the main conceptual and theoretical ideas together and seeks to highlight the contribution of the study to practice and research. I make recommendations for practice and identify areas for further research based on those findings and the contributions the thesis may have made.

## **Chapter nine: Re-thinking the preparation of novice teachers in higher education – a contribution to practice and to further research**

### **Introduction**

This final chapter aims to bring the thesis to a close and begins by re-visiting the research questions which framed the thesis. A summary of findings is provided, followed by my thoughts on the contribution of the thesis. Finally, the implications and recommendations for future practice are identified and further areas for research are briefly outlined.

### **Re-visiting the research questions**

What are the key aspects of the socialisation of 'new entrants' to teaching in a university with a primary vocational focus? The study has demonstrated that wider structures, discourses and training, whilst not benign, have a relatively small initial effect on teacher socialisation in higher education. They are drawn upon selectively as a resource in the construction of a teacher identity but, what matters more in becoming a teacher in higher education are 'other' professional identities and experiences. These, as Bernstein (2000: 55) suggested, are 'projected' onto teaching itself and, furthermore, contribute to identity formation.

However, these 'other' identities do not appear to 'regulate' new teacher identities as Bernstein suggests, but become combined with training and other discourses to produce significant dissonances as well as resources. Notions of 'identity' and 'pedagogy' are re-worked by these discourses. The processes of socialisation are fundamentally framed by these conditions. Within these conditions, individuals are more or less able to navigate and mediate between their own experience, teaching encounters and wider environments. Differences in that experience appear to play another role in conferring varying degrees of 'agency' (Bandura, 1997) so that individual pathways of socialization are extremely varied.

The particular role and significance of the PGCAP in the development of a teacher in higher education may be more limited than I assumed at the outset of the study.

The evidence for significant pedagogic impacts or as a primary sites for socialisation was rather limited. As I noted earlier, the PGCAP has three broad effects that were spread, as in other processes, unevenly across the group members. The first effect was to act as a proxy or marker for the development of many of the participants, not as a qualification that has to be 'acquired', but as a 'permission' to think in their own way about teaching. The second was to act as a resource for teaching. Initially, this was limited to a 'craft' view but became more of a source of 'vicarious experience', a peer-based resource. The third, 'career' effect, was more limited, but for some of the group, it may have re-constituted or re-professionalised an established role.

## **Summary of findings**

I turn now to the 'reporting' of my findings. In part, this is an extension to the analysis itself. As Miles & Huberman (1994:299) state, 'reporting is not separate from thinking, from analysis. Rather, it is analysis'. The summary below is also presented as a form of 'public text' to aid a wider group of readers to focus on the results of the study (reproduced as an executive summary in appendix seven) . I have in mind those colleagues in the higher education staff development community who may draw on the findings to guide and support their future actions.

The vocational backgrounds of the research participants were imprinted powerfully on their sense of identity (Bernstein,1996,2000) and the ways in which they engaged with their own development as a teacher in higher education. This meant that the processes of socialisation of the research participants were related as much to identity as to pedagogy. These parallel processes produced tensions and struggles of the kind described by Castells (1997) which were manifested in narratives of resource and of dissonance. These narratives gave voice to the processes of identity formation and pedagogic development which reflected highly complex interactions between past experience, new encounters and shifting orientations.

Each participant seemed to hold on to or maintain their vocational identities for relatively long periods. This 'identity maintenance' appeared to protect them from, or to 'resist', new discourses and approaches to teaching. These periods of identity maintenance merged slowly into more fluid phases of change and then into more a more settled and adaptive period. The overall processes of socialization were more

about 'becoming' than 'travelling' (Huberman,1981). Becoming a teacher in higher education from a vocational background involves a recognition that teaching is a distinctive practice – it is not an extension of vocational practice itself. The development of this recognition rests upon and is often expressed in a number of critical incidents and moments of epiphany (Denzin,1989). The development of a teacher identity continues to use and rest upon past (narrative) resources as well as other resources such as professional training and peer support.

The role of the PGCAP as a source of socialisation into teaching, was relatively limited. The challenges of transferring generic teaching ideas into local practice were often compounded by the need to stay with 'safe' approaches drawn from the participants' vocational experience. Whilst some participants seemed initially susceptible to wider discourses of 'improvement' and of 'standards' (Beck & Young,2005; Beck,2008), such discourses barely surfaced in most of the study. The processes of credentialisation (Rowland, *et al*, 1998) seemed to be relatively benign for most of the research participants. Whilst those who work in older universities in a traditional academic role may have felt that credentialisation had reduced the control they had over their work, for some of the study participants, the PGCAP provided an opportunity to 're-professionalise' (Burns, 2010).

Socialisation processes in general and identity formation in particular are also different when a 'teacher' is grounded in a vocational rather than in an academic discipline in higher education. The study confirmed how those who teach a vocational discipline do not control their own knowledge base and look outward from their university rather than inwards 'towards' their discipline. This makes the processes of identity formation and more general socialisation very different from those who might be defined as more 'traditional' academics. It makes the processes of socialisation more diffuse and more complex. In the socialization process, an individual's vocational background also plays a number of sociological and psychological roles, bestowing varying degrees of 'agency' (Bandura,1997) on different individuals. This allowed many of the research participants to draw on past and current resources to solve pedagogic problems and to 'become' more agentic.

## **The contribution of the thesis**

The participants in this doctoral research project are an hitherto under-researched group. Whilst we have significant studies of occupational socialisation in schools, including Lacey (1977), Stowell (1988), McNamara (2002), there is much less literature on similar processes in further or higher education (Deem,2003). The experiences of new teachers drawn from the professions to teaching in FE has been explored by Salisbury (1994) and Jephcote *et al* (2008, 2009), but there are relatively few studies in higher education which explicitly examine those who are 'late entrants' to teaching in higher education. Boyd and Smith (2010) and Murray (2005) are notable exceptions but their work is restricted to single vocational groups such as midwives and school teachers.

I also see this Ed. D thesis affording a 'first opportunity' for a researcher to get close to seeing some of the processes of teacher socialisation 'first hand' as well as through the eyes of the participants themselves. As a tutor, I was able to see some of the teaching sessions undertaken by the participants. I was also able to be part of their PGCAP experience, observing their engagement with the programme and each other. Whilst the risks of over-identification and familiarity are acknowledged (Delamont,2002), I see these affordances of everyday and privileged access, as well as closeness to the group, as building a particular kind of rapport. I do not claim that the research participants 'forgot' my tutor role but I had no need to 'get along' with them or pass myself off 'as a teacher'. I had those credentials.

My claim then is that the study itself makes a particular kind of contribution to the general literature on socialisation but also to those processes in the context of higher education. The study tests certain assumptions that the processes of teacher socialisation are becoming more overtly structured through the activities of the state (Bernstein,2000;Beck,2008) and of the institutions that comprise important parts of the higher education system. It further tests the assumption that institutional discourses and training for teachers, also play an increasingly important part in socialisation. The study finds that these wider structures, discourses and training, whilst not benign, are drawn on selectively as a resource in the construction of a teacher identity.

What matters more in teacher socialisation are 'other' professional identities and experiences which, as Bernstein (2000:55) has suggested, are 'projected' on to teaching itself. These other identities become combined with training and other discourses to produce significant dissonances as well as resources. The processes of socialisation are fundamentally framed by these conditions. Within these conditions, individuals are more or less able to navigate and mediate between their own experience, teaching encounters and wider environments. Differences in that experience appear to play another role in conferring varying degrees of 'agency' (Bandura,1997) so that individual pathways of socialization are extremely varied.

The final contribution of the thesis is to the practice of teaching itself. This is not a point about the 'craft' of teaching but improving the understanding of those who design and deliver teacher education programmes for novice teachers in higher education. I have revealed how identity is as important to teacher development as pedagogy and how shifts in practice may be linked to thinking 'as' a vocational practitioner. I raised this point in chapter eight on page 142. Staff developers need to be more sensitive to the ways in which vocational experience gets taken into teacher development and complicates the acquisition of pedagogic skills. There is an assumption made by Fanghanel (2004) and Evans *et al* (2010) for example, that the transfer of skills is essentially one of 'taking' generic teacher skills into a subject or vocational context. What the thesis reveals is that vocational life itself provides a guide to teaching practice through professional standards, motives and localised pedagogic models. Such a guide complicates and extends the 'transfer' issues already noted by others.

### **Recommendations for practice**

In the introduction on page two, I cited Knight (2002) and his assertion that the descriptions resulting from research questions needed to 'be significant for practitioners, other researchers or theory' if they were to be worth exploring. With this in mind, I set out below a series of recommendations for those who are involved in the induction and development of teachers from vocational backgrounds who come to teach in higher education. I begin with implications for my own practice, then

move on to curriculum and programme development. The section concludes with a short discussion of implications for the wider professional development community.

### **Implications for my own practice**

As both tutor and researcher the reflective endeavour of researching the PGCAP has contributed to my own professional learning journey. In this I have been reminded that people are not 'just students' but come with 'biography and baggage' (Jephcote *et al*, 2009). I now appreciate that I should take much greater account of past histories and past practices as teachers, in those with whom I work with and teach on PGCAP and similar courses. Participants in such courses rarely come as 'clean slates' upon which an account can be written. There need to be ways of sharing this past in more detail and thinking through its particular implications for the development of an individual. It has been a hugely 'sensitising' experience.

### **Implications for the design and delivery of the PGCAP:**

Course and curriculum designers need to re-visit regularly the affordances and merits of providing courses of the kind exemplified in the PGCAP. Its impact on teaching needs to be considered in ways that are distanced from discourses on quality and standards towards those of helping, coaching or mentoring (Furlong and Maynard, 1995) The institution's mentoring scheme needs to be re-fashioned and strengthened into something closer to models of supervision and professional conversations centred on the processes identified in this study. They should take more account of the connections between teaching as a practice in its own right and the form of the subjects or professions taught by those with vocational backgrounds. This is not to simply advocate 'discipline-based' teaching but a greater attention to find ways of constructing pedagogic knowledge and at the same time being mindful of what others already 'know' and 'do'.

The PGCAP programme team should recognise that the process of 'training' or preparing someone to teach in higher education is only in part a pedagogic enterprise. Programme inductions need to share more past 'voices' which foreshadow the ways in which past work will for some time be projected on to participants' teaching. The effects of these projections need to be considered and shared as a core part of professional dialogue and formation.



Whilst the sharing of 'stage-driven' or reflective models of teacher development help to frame overall development, induction processes and further workshops should consider the ways in which participants actively construct their own pathways in ways which use their past experience. The experience of reconciling past standards and expectations with new encounters is complicated but needs 'working through'. There need to be forums, tasks and assessments that allow participants to interrogate experience and to explore these issues.

The programme team might also re-consider the way in which PGCAP and similar programmes construct themselves as a 'resource for teaching'. This stance can give a false sense of security. Whilst there is a role for this approach, more thought needs to be given to building encounters between participants and the wider teaching community to build on 'vicarious experience'. Current encounters in workshops and on-line are too often problem-driven and need to recognise that 'what happens' to novice teachers can be a resource in itself. The solution to a teaching problem in one context is rarely the solution to a similar problem in another context.

Institutional strategies for teaching and learning and related initiatives to describe 'good teaching' have little relevance for novice teachers. They ignore them except if they are overtly part of their 'implementation'. Teachers eventually construct their own self-theory of teaching which embodies past vocational experience as well as new ideas and experiences. References to these initiatives should be sparing and more critically presented.

### **Implications and recommendations for the wider professional development community:**

It is of course timely that given the particular focus by old and new universities on teaching and learning more account needs to be taken in the design of standards, values and the development of pedagogic knowledge of 'other' identities and experiences. Whilst there is a value in 'genericism' at this level, staff developers and agencies need to respond to the growing proportion of the teaching workforce in much of higher education who have a strong vocational background. These teachers embody differing values and experiences from those in academic disciplines upon whom such standards and values are premised.

Furthermore, these recommendations will increasingly apply to older universities where changes to student fees and withdrawal of research funding will mean a re-framing of teaching and learning as a core activity and the preparation of staff for a more demanding pedagogic role.

### **Areas for further research**

In conducting and writing up this doctoral project and engaging with wider reading of extant research, a number of ideas for further research have occurred.

There is a case for more comparative studies based on similar questions and methodologies examining potential contrasts between full - and part-time staff, between novice teachers in further and higher education, between academic staff in differing parts of the higher education system or different routes into teaching in schools. As the number of pathways into teaching in all sectors, it becomes increasingly important to understand the nature of socialisation processes across and within these sectors. This research would inform those who design induction and other professional preparation programmes and take account of the way in which higher education activity becomes more distributed across different provision. There is a particular lack of research into the working lives of those who deliver degree-level programmes in further education (FE) colleges.

There is also a case for more studies that locate the processes of socialisation in the workplace where individuals are 'immersed' in communities of teaching and research practice. These might link, for example, 'expansive' and 'restrictive' learning environments (Fuller and Unwin, 2003) with identity formation. Such research would centre on the process of becoming a teacher, a fully fledged worker in HE through 'apprenticeship' rather than 'credentials'. The process of 'becoming' a teacher has been a mode of development in the past but may need more status alongside more formalised, credentialising arrangements

There is scope for studies that look at the socialisation of 'high status' groups such as doctors and dentists where there are strong cultural, pedagogic and epistemological restraints on becoming a teacher. This would provide valuable insights into those in elite professions who undertake medical education. These

would stand in contrast to studies with a focus on those making late career changes, those like the research participants in this thesis but with more focus on their occupational trajectories both within higher education and their 'other' profession. Those who are 'bi-located' betwixt and between higher education and vocational areas are currently under-researched.

## **Conclusion**

Readers of the thesis will appreciate that in a text of this length a literature review cannot be exhaustive. Similarly, a reflexive account of research methods and analysis, whilst striving to be detailed, cannot fully satisfy all possibilities. There are numerous opportunities for embracing innovation and variety in the way we conduct research, interpret data and write it up. As Hollingshead (2004:63) points out, all scholars should recognise that investigating 'the ontologies of being, meaning and identity in the contemporary age is frequently a messy matter of infinite interpretive possibilities'. I hope that my interpretation of the research participants' experiences and perspectives lends authenticity and credibility to the core of the thesis and that the connections I have evoked between myself and the study has enhanced the thesis.

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# APPENDIX ONE

## Participant Information Sheet

### **“Transition, perspectives, and strategies: on the process of becoming a teacher in higher education”**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please talk to other members of the group if you wish.

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

I am investigating two broad areas of change in academic staff undertaking a period of teacher training in the University of Bedfordshire. Firstly, the formative and more general experiences that shape the process of ‘becoming’ a teacher in higher education. Secondly, to identify the nature of ‘transfer’ of generic skills and knowledge into local practice. I also intend to make recommendations about staff training and development in the university based on the findings.

#### **Who is conducting the research?**

The research is being undertaken by me as part of my Professional Doctorate in Education at Cardiff University. No other member of the University of Bedfordshire is formally involved.

#### **Why have I been approached?**

I am asking for volunteers from new starters on the PGCAP

#### **What do I have to do?**

I would like to interview you at intervals through the first year of the programme. There are likely to be five semi-structured interviews each lasting 40-45 minutes. These interviews will be done individually and within the University of Bedfordshire. I will be asking you about your experiences on the PGCAP and in your teaching in relation to those encounters or processes that are particularly shaping your ‘teacher identity’. You will also be observed during a sample of the PGCAP sessions. The interviews will be taped so that I have a record of what you said. Your teaching will not be observed as a part of this study.

#### **What will happen to the information that I give?**

The transcripts of the interviews will only be accessible to me and to the interviewee and will be kept securely in accordance with data protection act. They will not be used for any other purpose. An analysis of the data will form part of my thesis and may be published in a peer-reviewed journal. You are welcome to see a copy of the thesis or articles prior to publication.

#### **Will my taking part be confidential?**

Yes, completely. The other members of the course team, your peers or your managers will not know you are taking part in the study. No-one will be named or identifiable in any way in the thesis or the reports of the study.

**What if I wish to withdraw?**

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time you wish, without giving a reason. However, if you withdraw I reserve the right to include any information that you give prior to leaving the group.

**Expenses**

You will not be required to incur any expenses.

**Contact information**

I can be contacted as follows:

Tel: 01582 743329

Mob: 07837 093767

E mail: [Trevor.austin@beds.ac.uk](mailto:Trevor.austin@beds.ac.uk)

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# APPENDIX TWO

## INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

10<sup>th</sup> September 2008

Dear Colleague,

**Reference: Research Study - PGCAP**

I am writing to invite you to participate in a small-scale investigation into your experiences on the above programme and as a teacher delivering a University of Bedfordshire course. The research will shape my thesis entitled-

**“Transition, perspectives, and strategies: on the process of becoming a teacher in higher education”**

This is the final part of a Professional Doctorate in Education which I am undertaking in the School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University under the supervision of Professor Amanda Coffey. Ethical approval for the study was given in May 2007 and updated in May 2008 by Cardiff University’s School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (SREC reference number: SREC\229). Additional approval has been given by Dr Pat Jeffries, Chair of University of Bedfordshire’s Research Ethics Committee.

I have attached an information sheet and a consent form and will be elaborating on the research during your induction onto the PGCAP. However, if you have any further questions I’d be happy to answer them.

In the meantime, I look forward to the opportunity of working with you on this research.

Yours faithfully,

Trevor Austin

# APPENDIX THREE

## Consent Form

“Transition, perspectives, and strategies: on the process of becoming a teacher in higher education”

**Trevor Austin**

	Please initial
1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily	
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.	
3. I agree to take part in the study	

Name of participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person taking consent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

2 copies : 1 for participant and 1 for research file

## **APPENDIX FOUR**

### **Interview schedules**

#### **Interview 1 (Sept/Oct)**

1. Can you tell me how you came to be on the PGCAP – the journey to date?
2. How do you see your role as a teacher in higher education?
3. How do you think PGCAP will contribute to your role as a teacher in HE?

#### **Interview 2 (Nov/Dec)**

1. Can you tell me about a recent teaching event that has been significant for you?
2. Why have you chosen that event?
3. What is your image of PGCAP?
4. Has the PGCAP begun to influence your teaching yet?
5. What makes a good teacher in higher education?

#### **Interview 3 (March/April)**

1. How is your role as a teacher different from your role as a....
2. How does your background as ....affect how you see your role?
3. How has your perception of the role of a teacher in higher education developed since we initially met?
4. How would you describe your journey as a teacher in HE to date?
5. What is influencing your work as a teacher in HE teaching most powerfully at present??
6. In what ways is PGCAP influencing your teaching/academic role?

## **APPENDIX FIVE**

**CURRICULUM REVIEW SUMMARY (on following page)**



## APPENDIX SIX

### PGCAP WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

<b>No.</b>	<b>Workshop summary</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
1a	Introduction to course and expectations; UoB context; reflection and e-portfolios	Wed 10th Sep	1000-1700
1b	Introduction to the Higher Education Academic Practice Unit; support e.g. learning sets; academic identity; professional competence; design principles	Thurs 11th Sep	1000-1700
2	Survival guide to teaching and management of academic practice	Frid 26th Sep	1400-1700
3	Ethics and values in academic practice; reflective and critical approach to practice; evidence-based practice	Wed 29th Oct	1400-1700
4	Supporting student learning; specialist support sources; information literacy and retrieval for course participants	Wed 12th Nov	1400-1700
5	Assessment basics and issues; assessment feedback and criteria	Wed 26th Nov	1400-1700
6	Supporting students: personal roles, responsibilities and boundaries; 1:1 personal tutor/ dissertation supervision processes and issues	Wed 10th Dec	1400-1700
7	Developing research and evaluation skills in students; research and research-informed teaching	Wed 14th Jan	1400-1700
8	Nature of learning at the University of Bedfordshire; CRe8 and the Education Strategy	Wed 28th Jan	1400-1700
9	Supporting student learning – equality issues; intercultural communication	Wed 11th Feb	1400-1700
10	Educational 'big thinkers' debate [joint session with 2 <sup>nd</sup> year Unit participants]	Wed 25th Feb	1400-1700
11	Technology enhanced learning; what's the value of technology? e-approaches; e-portfolio	Wed 11th Mar	1400-1700
12	Academic practice issues; review and linking forward to the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year unit	Wed 29th April	1400-1700

## **APPENDIX SEVEN**

### **Transition, perspectives, and strategies: on the process of becoming a teacher in higher education**

#### **Executive summary of findings**

- The vocational backgrounds of the research participants were imprinted powerfully on their sense of identity and the ways in which they engaged with their own development as a teacher in higher education.
- 3. The processes of socialisation of the research participants were related as much to identity as to pedagogy.
- 4. There were parallel narratives of resource and of dissonance which accompanied the processes of identity formation and pedagogic development.
- 5. Each participant seemed to hold on to or maintain their vocational identities for a relatively long period. This 'identity maintenance' appeared to protect them from, or to 'resist', new discourses and approaches to teaching.
- 6. The overall processes of socialization were more about 'becoming' than 'travelling'.
- 7. Becoming a teacher in higher education from a vocational background involves a recognition that teaching is a distinctive practice – it is not an extension of vocational practice itself.
- 8. Developing teacher identities continue to use and rest upon past (narrative) resources.
- 9. The role of the PGCAP as a source of socialisation into teaching, was relatively limited.
- 10. The challenges of transferring generic teaching ideas into local practice are often compounded by the need to stay with 'safe' approaches drawn from the participants' vocational experience.
- 11. Whilst some participants seemed initially susceptible to wider discourses of 'improvement' and of 'standards', such discourses barely surfaced in the rest of the study.

12. Socialisation processes in general and identity formation in particular are different when a 'teacher' is grounded in a vocational rather than an academic discipline.
13. The broader processes of credentialisation were relatively benign for most of the research participants and, for a small minority, provided an opportunity to 're-professionalise'.
14. In the socialization process, an individual's vocational background plays a psychological role bestowing varying degrees of agency on different individuals.