Understanding beginning teacher's professional identity using a Foucauldian lens: the importance of networks of power and care of the self

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Abstract

Professional identity has been recognised as a significant area in the teaching profession for many years now. However, as concerns about the recruitment and retention of teachers in the UK increases, the need to ascertain why the profession is failing to recruit new teachers and keep existing ones is becoming increasingly important. The National Education Union (NEU) conducted a survey that found that one in three teachers planned to leave the profession within 5 years with 'diminishing respect for the profession' being cited as one of the causes (Weale, 2021). But what is it that is leading to the erosion of teacher's professional identities? And how can teachers reclaim their professional identities so that the teaching profession is able to recruit and retain educators?

The present study has sought to answer these questions by interviewing four beginning teachers in England and six university staff who work in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England and Scotland. Two major themes emerged from the interview data gathered: the care of the self and power. Participants spoke about the need to be reflective practitioners who are ethically driven and about the desire to have power over their own professional identities and the profession at large. Foucault's writing on the care of the self and power has therefore been deployed in this study as a lens to explore how professional identity can be harnessed to create and sustain teaching professionals within schools in England and Scotland. Analysis of the findings using Foucault's writing suggest that increasing the support afforded to beginning teachers to understand their ethical motivation for entering the profession and providing increased time for reflection would be beneficial in the creation and early developmental stages of teacher professional identity. In addition, discussion through a Foucauldian lens indicates that redistributing power within the teaching profession could lead to a greater sense of agency and enable teachers to reclaim their position within society.

This study has implications for the way that teachers in the UK are supported at the beginning of their careers, but also may be relevant to leaders responsible for professional development in schools who are looking to improve retention.

Although this research was carried out in the UK, the findings of this study may also be applicable to other contexts where there are concerns about teacher retention. My findings suggest that greater support is needed to enable beginning teachers to develop professional identities, and that this support needs to be carefully planned to ensure that this support is implemented successfully. By supporting beginning teachers to develop secure professional identities, I argue that teachers can gain greater power and agency over their own sense of self, thereby providing them with opportunities to influence how the teaching profession is shaped.

Contents

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Author's declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rationale for study

As a senior leader currently responsible for the professional development of school staff, and with previous experience of supporting beginning teachers across schools in my local area, I have experienced how the support given to beginning teachers varies across different providers. I have also seen recruitment and retention within the teaching profession become an increasingly worrying problem with teachers leaving the profession within the first five years of their career (Hampshire, 2019) and teaching positions in schools remaining unfilled (Lough, 2019). In Scotland, the situation is similar, with the number of places filled on secondary PGDE courses falling from 92% in 2020 to 61% in 2022 (Seith, 2022), suggesting that teaching is becoming a less popular career choice. The recruitment and retention crisis led me to question why we are continuing to struggle to find teachers and keep them, and to question whether there is anything that we can do to change the situation.

In England, collaborative planning and changes to data reporting should have, in theory, reduced workload and helped to make teaching more attractive. In my experience these strategies seem to have had little impact. But perhaps we have missed the point? If beginning teachers who have successfully completed their ITE year and are trained effectively in the technical aspects of the role are leaving the profession, there may be another reason. In an article in *Tes Magazine,* it was reported that 'trainees often feel compelled to perform throughout training' (Hampshire, 2019), conveying the idea that trainees are unable to present their authentic selves during ITE, which may lead them to struggle to define their professional identity in the first few years of their career. This line struck a chord with me and made me think about the professional identity of beginning teachers and whether we, as a profession, are doing enough during the beginning years of a teacher's career to develop a sense of professional identity that enables beginning teachers to go past the stage of 'perform[ance]' (Hampshire, 2019) and begin to develop a professional identity that allows them to sustain a long-term teaching career.

For this study, professional identity is defined as 'an individual's dual perception of himself or herself, who, as a member of a profession, has responsibilities to society […], other professionals, and to himself or herself' (Crigger and Godfrey, 2014:377). The formation and development of a professional identity, however, is not one that is straightforward; it is a 'dynamic process' (Crigger and Godfrey, 2014:376). My experience as a senior leader has shown me that many beginning teachers struggle to understand who they are as professionals, and I wonder the extent to which this leads to their early exit from teaching. For me, professional identity is significant. It is the thing that keeps me going when workload becomes too much. It is the thing that guides me when faced with ethical dilemmas. It is the thing that guides me in all I do as a teacher. By carrying out this study, I have sought to provide answers about how we can support beginning teachers so that they can also develop professional identities that support them over the duration of their careers.

As someone who has spent most of my career in England, I am acutely aware of the way that beginning teachers in England have been supported over the past 14 years. Equally, though, I have been aware of how Scotland has often chosen its own path when it comes to developing education. From the perspective of a teacher in England, I have heard Scotland talked about as having better teacher retention and a greater focus on professional development. Yet recent data on teacher retention from both countries shows that both England and Scotland have seen an increase in teachers leaving the profession (Hepburn, 2021; Ward, 2019), with England struggling to keep teachers for more than one year after qualifying (Ward, 2019). The alarming statistics reported by the media made me question why both countries are struggling to retain teachers, but also whether comparing the two countries' approaches to beginning teacher professional identity development could help me identify support that could be effective in the future. Professional identity and teacher retention are also not unique to either country. The findings of this study, therefore, may be useful to other countries where teacher retention is a concern.

I have chosen to use a Foucauldian lens to explore the data I gathered. Foucault's writing on identity and power led him to conclude that the two are interlinked (Foucault, 2000:300). Although I had encountered Foucault's writing during my previous studies, it was not until the EdD that I began to reflect on the significance of his work within education. Foucault's writing on the Panopticon (1991; 2008) and his ideas about how power is distributed (1991; 2000) initially made me reflect on the surveillance systems used within the English education system and the impact that this level of control has on the professional identity of beginning teachers. But it is his writing on the care of the self that provided me with an understanding of why reflection and the ethical self (Foucault, 1986) are crucial to the formation and development of professional identity. When applied to my own experiences as a beginning teacher, and as a senior leader who supports beginning teachers, I realised that Foucault's writing could provide a theoretical lens for my research that enabled me to discuss how beginning teacher support could be improved to help them develop a more secure sense of self, empowering teachers to improve their understanding of who they are as professionals, and potentially helping the profession as a whole by providing a different perspective and highlighting the importance of developing the self so that power can be distributed more equally.

1.2 Purpose of study and research questions

The main purpose of this study is to gain a greater understanding of how professional identity is created and developed during the beginning years of a teacher's career. Professional identity has been recognised as significant to the development of successful teachers (Gerwitz et al., 2008; Forde et al., 2012), with research being carried out previously into beginning teacher professional identity development (Gu, 2011; Pillen at al., 2013; Assen et al., 2018). As part of this study, I have, therefore, carried out interviews with beginning teacher participants and university ITE staff from England and Scotland.

My motivation for carrying out this study stems from my own experiences as a senior leader responsible for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in

schools in England, as well as the two years I spent abroad in Malaysia teaching in an international school. In both England and Malaysia, I have had the responsibility of supporting beginning teachers. The contrasting experience of supporting staff in both countries led me to question what my own professional identity was. My experience abroad suggested that in Malaysia, teachers had less understanding of what their professional identity was, yet they appeared to be respected more as professionals. However, in England, the societal expectation to behave as a professional within teaching did not seem to be matched by levels of respect and opportunities for teachers to truly understand what their professional identity is. The differences between these geographical locations led me to question who I was as a professional. Furthermore, over my career, I would also argue that my professional identity has developed and my appreciation of the importance of who I am as a professional grew upon beginning the EdD. The initial modules of the EdD gave me the opportunity to explore my professional identity in a space that was not connected to the school where I was employed, and I found myself developing into a senior leader who reflected continuously and appreciated the significance of my work in a different way that was not necessarily linked to student outcomes.

The realisation that my own professional identity had developed substantially, making me more committed to the profession, resulted in me wondering whether I would have been able to achieve greater clarity about my own professional identity earlier in my career if I had been given greater support that enabled me to understand who I was as a professional in the beginning years of my career. For example, the opportunity to reflect on who I was and who I wanted to be as a teacher following the completion of my ITE year was only discussed in relation to promotions and I found that my identity began to be defined by student outcomes. This resulted in moments of self-doubt early in my career that led me to consider leaving the profession. I therefore began to think about what I could learn from beginning teachers about this issue. By giving beginning teachers the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences, I have sought to understand how their professional identity is supported and how it can be better supported.

To ensure that my participants' voices were prioritised, I carried out a thematic analysis of the interview data gathered, before using Foucault's writing on power (1991:2000) and the care of the self (1986) as a theoretical lens to explore the following research questions:

- How do teachers at the beginning of their career define their professional identity?
- How do beginning teachers develop their professional identity?
- How are beginning teachers currently supported so that they can develop their professional identity?
- How can we improve the support given to develop beginning teacher professional identity?
- By understanding how beginning teacher professional identity develops, how can we empower teachers so that they are able to improve the teaching profession?

By exploring these questions, I have been able to gain a greater understanding of the way that professional identity is presented and developed during the initial years of a teacher's career. This greater understanding - viewed through a Foucauldian lens - has enabled me to make recommendations for how to support beginning teacher professional identity development in the future.

1.3 Overview of dissertation

In chapter 2, I provide a recent history of how professional identity has been addressed in both Scotland and England before comparing the ways that each country has attempted to meet the demands of the profession. I consider key policy changes that have affected how professional identity is viewed within each country and how these policy changes have been interpreted within each context.

To understand previous research that has been carried out on professional identity, my literature review in chapter 3 considers a range of literature that has explored the facets of professional identity within education. I consider

studies that have looked at professional identity development in general, as well as those that have utilised Foucault's writing as part of their study to gain insight into previous findings and explain my choice of focus for this study.

In chapter 4, I explain the theoretical framework that has been used to explore my data. As well as providing an overview of Foucault's writing, I look closely at how power and the care of the self were addressed through his thinking, relating these two themes to professional identity.

My research methods are explained in chapter 5. For this study, I carried out semi-structured interviews before conducting a thematic analysis so that my participants' voices were allowed to speak for themselves. I then used a theoretical lens to gain greater insight into professional identity by considering participant responses in relation to Foucault's writing on power and the care of the self.

The data gathered during my interviews with beginning teacher and ITE staff participants is thematically analysed in chapter 6. For this chapter, I have analysed responses that relate to professional identity even if they do not link to the themes of power and care of the self, as I have prioritised my participants' thoughts and experiences.

In chapter 7, I have used a Foucauldian theoretical lens to discuss my interview data and how professional identity development is connected to the care of the self and power. I have looked at what my interview data suggests about the creation and development of professional identity at the beginning of a teacher's career, using Foucault's writing to gain clarity about the impact of current practices on professional identity, and to begin to develop some suggestions about how professional identity can be addressed.

Finally, in chapter 8 I return to my research questions to review my study and reflect on how Foucault has helped me to understand professional identity development for beginning teachers. Based upon my findings, I make recommendations for further research and for actions that could be taken based upon my findings. I conclude my dissertation by discussing how I have developed personally and professionally, relating these changes to my professional practice.

Chapter 2: A Tale of Beginning Teacher Experience in Two Countries

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I outline how the narrative of professional identity development for beginning teachers has developed in two different contexts: England and Scotland. By tracing developments in policy in both nations over the last 20 years, I will provide information that will be significant in helping me understand the data I gather about professional identity for beginning teachers in each location. In doing so, I have provided a summary of how beginning teacher experience has been shaped by policy within each location.

I found that England and Scotland, while being close geographically, have narratives that vary because of differing government agendas. Keep (2006) points out that there has been a trend of growing state intervention and control in education and training since the 1980s in England. Keep (2006) points out that, while England's government has increased its control, most countries in Europe have decentralised and increased the role of local authorities. The use of government to control education (Keep, 2006; see also Lather, 2004) suggests that an understanding of context is required to understand how beginning teachers are supported, because government-level involvement often dictates how teachers are supported.

In this chapter I will explain the historical and political contexts of Initial Teacher Education in Scotland and England including key policy shifts that have influenced how beginning teacher identity is perceived (with particular relevance to the time that the interviews were carried out between 2018 and 2020). I first trace the recent history of each nation's approach to beginning teachers' professional development and support before exploring how this might influence how beginning teachers perceive their sense of self. I have found that the rhetoric around teacher professionalism is presented more significantly in Scottish policy. However, in England, a technical approach has been taken to teacher development that continues to dominate how ITE and beginning teacher development is perceived.

2.2 The History of ITE in England

Over the past 40 years there have been significant changes in the approach that the English government has taken to ITE and beginning teacher support. Until 1984, universities in England had responsibility for ITE, with the government taking on the role of recognising qualifications (Furlong et al., 2008). Up to this point, the government commented and made recommendations on how teachers should be trained but chose to leave the content of training to ITE providers. A change, however, came in 1983 when the White Paper entitled *Teaching Quality* stated:

> Qualifications and training alone do not make a teacher. Personality, character and commitment are as important as the specific knowledge and skills that are used in the day-to-day tasks of teaching. (DES, 1983:8).

This excerpt highlights a change in Conservative government rhetoric around ITE. Rather than trust universities to guide student teachers and the teaching profession to address professional development, the government at the time wanted to have a greater say in how teachers were trained, in order to have greater influence over how young people were educated (Hunter et al., 1985). Over the next ten years, the Conservative government and universities fought for control over ITE, with the government ultimately gaining greater power and introducing school based ITE programmes from 1994, before New Labour took power in 1997 and increased control within ITE and education to an even greater extent (Furlong et al., 2008).

When the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition came into power in 2010, a notable change in approach occurred in how decisions about education were made; the coalition government sought to use selective evidence to justify their approach, but as Helgetun and Menter (2020) point out, only evidence that favoured their political agenda was cited, whilst opposing evidence was not acknowledged. A key policy document from this period, the 2010 White Paper demonstrates the reliance on evidence to inform decisions within ITE in England. The 2010 White Paper uses England's fall in PISA rankings to justify the changes the government made. These changes included: an increase in focus on practical

skills for teachers; greater autonomy being given to teachers and schools, through systems like academies and free schools; and increasing the presence of school based ITE providers like Teach First and School Direct (DfE, 2010). As a result, since 2010 the English government have increasingly favoured school centred ITE and sought ideas for education reform abroad by looking to countries like Singapore and Finland, which score highly in the PISA rankings (House of Commons Education Committee, 2012). McIntyre et al. (2017), argue that, in the move to school based ITE, universities have been silenced by the English government and that the use of terms like 'apprentice' and 'trainee' de-professionalises teaching as part of the government's neoliberal agenda.

Despite changes made following the 2010 White Paper, ITE in England has continued to be perceived by politicians as an ongoing problem. This perception led to the *Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training* in 2015. Carter reported on all aspects of ITE in England, making key recommendations, including recommending partnerships and quality mentoring as central to successful ITE (2015). Carter's review presented little that was new but did discuss the concept of 'professionalism' as a dominant factor in the development of beginning teachers. Carter defines professionalism as: the understanding of 'wider responsibilities'; 'working with parents and carers as well as other professionals'; showing 'resilience'; and having good 'time management'; as well as stating that the profession is based on 'pride, 'motivation', a 'strong ethos' and 'values'; and that teachers have a responsibility to adhere to dress code, use social media responsibly, and promote fundamental British values (2015:24). The detailed components that Carter says professionalism comprises imply the complex nature of teacher professional identity. Carter, though, goes further in his comments, stating that the teacher standards only imply professionalism: ITE should seek to cover professionalism explicitly (although he gives) no precise guidance on how this can practically be achieved (2015).

At the time that the interviews for my study were carried out (2018-2019), no significant changes had been made to ITE or NQT provision in England for several years. Plans were, however, underway to reform the NQT programme. From

September 2021, all schools in England implemented the new Early Career Framework (ECF) for newly qualified teachers (ECTs). The new programme is run over two years and uses the ECF to support training and development but keeps the teacher standards for assessment purposes. It also guarantees additional CPD time for ECTs and weekly guided mentor meetings. Schools in England have been given the choice of using the ECF to design their own ECT programme or using external providers. No matter which route schools take, they must ensure that they meet the requirements of the ECF. The participants in this study did not experience this new programme, but I will refer to the new ECT programme when discussing my findings in the concluding chapters of this dissertation. The recent decision to reform the ECT provision in England does also suggest that the English government have acknowledged that the beginning teacher support provided historically has not sufficiently met the needs of those entering the profession and shows that they recognise that the initial years of a teacher's career are significant to retaining teachers and helping them develop as professionals.

2.3 Recent history of ITE in Scotland

Historically, the Scottish education system has been distinctive from the English system, even before devolution in 1998. Policies that the English government tried to introduce before devolution were resisted, resulting in a strikingly different approach to ITE (O'Brien, 2012). ITE in Scotland has consequently remained within the domain of seven Scottish universities and, to date, there are no school based ITE programmes. In addition, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) was established in 1965 - 35 years before the English equivalent was created (Menter and Hulme, 2008). The GTCS has produced standards that are used as a framework for initial teacher education and continuing professional development (Menter and Hulme, 2011; O'Brien, 2012).

Two key documents have been produced in the last twenty years that have influenced ITE in Scotland: the McCrone Agreement (2001), and the Donaldson report (2011). The McCrone Agreement – *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* (2001) - was written in response to the report written by McCrone in

2000 that evaluated Scotland's ability to prepare for the challenges of the 21st century. Two main recommendations were made that directly impacted beginning teachers in Scotland. The Agreement stated that a review of ITE should be carried out and that there should be a one-year induction for all newly qualified teachers with additional support provided (2001). The recommendations made led to a new induction programme for teachers being launched in 2002, which provided structured mentoring and additional CPD time (McNally, 2002). Additionally, the McCrone Agreement (2001) introduced a new approach to professional development that called for greater autonomy and greater collaboration within the teaching profession (O'Brien, 2012).

The Donaldson Report, *Teaching Scotland's Future (2011),* made around 50 recommendations covering the full gamut of teaching and education in schools (Kennedy and Doherty, 2012; O'Brien, 2012). Amongst these recommendations, Donaldson called for greater collaboration and partnership between universities, local authorities and placement schools, and a more integrated approach to ITE and induction (2011). Some academics, however, have been critical of Donaldson's review. For example, Smith (2011) has criticised Donaldson's review for being too narrow, claiming that it fails to go far enough in its recommendations. Smith's comments echo other academics like O'Brien (2012), who argues that education in Scotland has suffered because policy recommendations have traditionally been too vague and improperly funded.

Menter and Hulme (2011) point out that the lack of change that education in Scotland has undergone may be the result of a predisposition within Scottish education to celebrate the system that exists rather than critique it honestly. While this may have meant that Scotland has managed to resist school-based ITE, along with recognising the importance of research and professional development within teaching, it may also have inadvertently stifled provision for beginning teachers because it failed to identify opportunities for growth by focusing on the strengths of the system rather than looking for areas that could be improved. Furthermore, in his report, Donaldson mentions 'professionalism' 28 times. Whilst this focus may be a recognition to the fact that teaching is now

viewed as a 'profession', Kennedy and Doherty (2012) interpret Donaldson's comments on the need to change 'professionalism' as an attack on the profession – they argue that the report is an attempt by the government to more directly shape the teaching profession by telling teachers that their current conception of professionalism is not suitable.

As a result of the Donaldson Report (2011), the education system in Scotland has sought to involve a wider range of stakeholders in reviews and to extend the use of partnership models within ITE to ensure greater collaboration (Humes, 2020). There has also been a push to transform teaching into a Master's level profession through the opening of Master's funding for teaching graduates (Menter and Hulme, 2011). Scotland has also continued to locate its ITE provision within universities but with a greater focus on school partnerships, whilst the GTCS continues to play a significant role within the profession.

2.4 Comparing Scotland and England

In their paper comparing Scotland's Donaldson Report (2011) and England's White Paper (2010), Menter and Hulme (2011) explain that the Donaldson Report seemed more interested in teachers and how teachers are professionally developed over their career, while the White Paper focused on increasing government control by focusing on the practical aspects of teaching and encouraging school-based training. Menter and Hulme note that both papers use similar language when discussing teaching, with both using words like 'flexibility, autonomy, accountability and responsibility' (2011:87), but that these terms are used to imply different things. While Donaldson (2011) uses them to recognise the complexity of the profession, Menter and Hulme (2011) suggest the White Paper (2010) focuses on accountability within a centralised, market driven system. Menter and Hulme (2011) conclude, therefore, that the two countries perceive teachers and the teaching profession in very different ways. I have considered the impact of accountability on how beginning teachers perceive their own professional identity in my study: all the beginning teacher participants are from England. When interviewing the beginning teacher participants, I also had to be mindful of the fact that they were unlikely to

appreciate the nuances of professional identity in relation to their effectiveness as teaching professionals because their role has not been defined in this way. On the other hand, I carried out the interviews with staff participants in England and Scotland aware that as ITE staff and, in most cases, academics, they would have an appreciation of professional identity and a stance on whether they felt the existing support provided to beginning teachers was sufficient to help them develop a professional identity that could enable them to thrive within the teaching profession.

England appears to change the requirements of beginning teachers and the teaching profession frequently – unlike Scotland where there is relative stability. Although it may be interpreted that England's penchant for change shows a willingness to admit when things are not working and strive to improve them, there is also a danger that change is enacted too quickly, resulting in little time for new approaches to be successfully implemented. Interestingly, both governments have responded to external pressures like PISA and carried out reviews of teaching, but the rate of change in Scotland seems to be slower in comparison to England's reforms. Although both countries perceive teaching as being significant to the development of society, in England prospective teachers complete 'training', suggesting a skill-based programme, but in Scotland they partake in an 'education', which implies an academic approach, further highlighting the different perspectives that the participants of this study may demonstrate. The beginning teacher participants in this study, all of whom are situated in England have therefore been shaped by an approach to beginning teacher education that is founded upon a 'training' model that is based on developing technical practice rather than understanding who they are as professionals. In comparison, the staff participants are from England and Scotland, so present two different approaches that provide insight into how each country supports beginning teacher professional identity development that I will contextualise before analysing.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

While England and Scotland both appear to respond to external pressures to develop beginning teacher support, Scotland appears to recognise the complexity and significance of professional identity for teachers. In England there has been a deliberate attempt to move ITE from universities to schools, which has led to greater instability within the profession and lack of focus on what it means to be a teaching professional.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

In the last 20 years, the professional identity of teachers has become a significant research area (Beijaard et al., 2004). Neoliberal reforms have resulted in the role of the teacher undergoing various changes that have resulted in the questioning of what professional identity means within teaching. Despite the quantity of literature now available on this research area, as Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contend, there remains very little agreement about what professional identity is. This, they argue, can be attributed to the myriad of external and internal factors that influence what a teacher's professional identity is, whilst simultaneously overlapping and forging a complex web of individual and collective identity.

To understand how professional identity is positioned within existing literature, in this chapter I review existing writing about professional identity. I begin by looking at literature that has helped to define what teacher identity is and why it is important before considering the factors that help to shape teacher professional identity. I will then look at studies that have explored two significant themes within professional identity: understanding the self, and power and agency. These two themes emerged in my research as significant within the field of professional identity. I will then discuss some of the tensions in relation to professional identity that previous studies have addressed, before finally, providing an overview to key recommendations made by other studies. I will conclude the chapter by summarising my findings and explaining how my review of literature helped me consolidate my research focus for this study.

3.2 What is teacher identity and what shapes it?

Definitions of professional identity vary within existing literature (Beijaard et al., 2004), however, common features of professional identity include:

- The idea that it is not fixed and may change over time

- That it is made up of smaller identity components that work together to make up the overall identity of a person
- That individuals needs to actively create it by using their agency (Beijaard et al., 2004).

While Forde et al. (2012) consider how personal and social interactions contribute to professional identity formation and development. Sikes (2009) discusses how previous research into professional identity has found that professional identity is constantly changing, with teachers having to shift and reconfigure their identities in response to context. Clarke and Newman (2008) propose the concept of a knowledge-power knot based on Foucault's theories that depicts the knowledge that professionals hold as being in competition with institutional power, but also tied together and difficult to untangle. Clarke and Newman's (2008) metaphor reflects the interweaving, messy nature of two concepts that are crucial in the formation of professional identity, thus highlighting how the potential unravelling of the 'knot' could provide clarity in the study of education by enabling professionals to understand how their identity is influenced by both professional knowledge and the institutions that employ them. Clarke and Newman (2008) argue that those who work in public service, like teachers, have been left in a vulnerable position because they are unable to untie the knot, highlighting how susceptible teacher professional identity is to change because of the context that teachers operate in. By increasing our understanding of how professional identity is formed and influenced, Clarke and Newman (2008) suggest that we will be able to regain professional control.

Professional identity in recent years has also become relevant globally because of issues around teacher recruitment and retention (Williams et al., 2022). A recent paper by Hadley, Dunn and Downey (2018) reported on research carried out in the USA on the impact that teacher investment into extracurricular activities has on professional identity. The study found that the pressures placed on teachers to take on extra roles outside of the classroom could have profound effects on the identity of teachers and whether they remain in the profession. Whilst one participant was found to have had success in investing his time in a

student's development outside of lesson time and therefore felt his identity was reaffirmed, a group of teachers who had attempted unsuccessfully to enact institutional change were reported as having had their identities shaken to the point that all planned to leave the school, and some even decided to leave the profession. The extreme reaction of the group of teachers in the study prompted Hadley, Dunn and Downey to urge for more research and greater awareness of 'the more human side of teachers, as people with lives, dreams, and limits' (2018:226). Their recommendation here highlights the need to recognise the heterogenous nature of teacher professional identity so that we can fortify the profession through increased awareness of its potential and limitations, rather than diminish its value by placing individuals under increasing pressure with little support.

From these studies, we can see that professional identity is multifaceted and plays an important role in motivating teachers to remain in the profession. But that it is not a simple concept because it links to factors that can help to shape how a teacher develops. Existing research evidences a range of factors that can affect the formation of professional identity. Olsen and Buchanan (2017), for example, chose to focus on three factors that are dependent on how individual past experiences influence identity: biography, educational studies, and career history. In their study they focused on the professional identity of teacher educators rather than trainee teachers, but the decision to look at retrospective influences is still relevant to my research, as consideration of how previous experience may impact the formation of identity may be significant in understanding how different participants construct their identity.

Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) propose the use of an 'onion model' to explore the identity of teachers. They argue that this allows us to understand how our core effects our identity and consequently how we behave as professionals. Importantly, Korthagen and Vasalos' research focuses on internal factors and how we as individuals choose to control the formation of our own identities, whilst still addressing the effect of contextual and external factors. Other research has identified the limitations that external factors impose upon

identity. Cohen (2010) asserts that the formation of identity can be constrained by other issues that are beyond individual control. Thus, socially and professionally accepted ideas of what it means to be a teacher can restrict the formation of identity (Forde et al., 2012:8). Similarly, the resources and environment that a teacher experiences may also dictate how a professional creates their identity – for example Cohen (2010) acknowledges that over the course of time, identities can shift even when restricted by external concerns. This he attributes to changes in, for example, public perception of what a teacher should be, or if a teacher works in a different school and is therefore exposed to different ideas about teacher identity. According to Cohen then, teacher identity should not be looked at in isolation, but rather should be examined within its context, if it is to be fully appreciated.

Cohen (2010) also looks at how identity at an individual and group level is collectively created and argues that close examination of conversations between teachers can allow greater appreciation of how professional identity is developed, suggesting that identity formation does not happen in isolation but is a dynamic process that occurs during a range of interactions. Cohen (2010) provides curriculum discussions as an example of one such interaction that may on the surface present itself as unrelated to professional identity yet contributes to the formation and development of professional identity. In her study, Cohen (2010) found that participants used points of contrast in their discourse to help develop a sense of professional identity, suggesting that differences between identities can contribute to identity formation as well.

The idea of identity being context dependent has been more recently researched by Sardabi et al. (2018). They found in their study involving EFL teachers in Iran that participants were initially compliant and adopted passive identities as teachers because they felt that this would help them in their career progression. The authors of this paper propose that this belief is the result of cultural attitudes to teacher identity. After participating in activities during the study, which encouraged them to reflect on their identity and practice, they reported that participants seemed to become more active and reflective in the

construction of their own identity, suggesting that internal conceptions of identity can influence and change identity even when external factors have previously been dominant. These findings therefore support the argument that beginning teachers can develop their own sense of professional identity through a process of active self-reflection rather than externally imposed factors.

Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) explored how ITE students interpret and view their own professional identity, arguing that initial teacher training is an ideal time to begin to explore identity formation, as it is the beginning of the journey of becoming a teacher, when students have to take new and/or different contexts into account. Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) recommend that further research is carried out into how professional identities are formed, so that greater support can be provided for teachers in the early stages of their career that can help them to develop professional identities, thus enabling them to cope with the demands of the teaching profession.

Gerwitz et al., (2008) and Hodkinson (2009) also stress the importance of initial teacher education as a context for identity formation. The initial years for a teacher in the UK involves a combination of university based learning and school practice. The two different contexts that provide the backdrop for teacher training are significant to the development of trainee teachers' professional identity because of the context nature of professional identity construction (Gerwitz et al., 2008 and Hodkinson, 2009). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) argue that the university and school environments that student teachers experience during their training can be decisive in their professional identity. Their study found that student teachers found it difficult to explain and describe what their identities were as teachers upon completion of their ITE course in Canada. A suggestion is also made that the emotional aspect of teacher identity is not fully explored during training. For Beauchamp and Thomas, this is considered to be a failure of the university-based system. Hence, they propose that more time should be allocated for school practice during ITE. In their study, however, they do not fully explore the impact that unregulated school contexts can have on a trainee. For example, if a student teacher is placed in a

challenging school with inexperienced or unwilling school mentors, they may find that their professional identity is adversely affected.

One of the most striking factors that has been shown in previous research to effect professional identity is the top-down control that is often exerted by governments. Sikes (2009) explains that changes to policy and government initiatives within education have resulted in greater regulation and control of ITE, but that these reforms, whilst dictating the content of training, also has put greater emphasis on the role of research in ITE, which is, she argues, helping to improve teacher education within universities. Pressure from the government to meet targets and expectations has been found to have negatively impacted teachers' professional identities and practices (Barrett, 2009). The impact that government interference has on education does not just affect the teaching profession but can also filter down and affect students. Barrett's (2009) research demonstrates the concern surrounding this issue, as the findings suggest that changes to policy creates tension for teachers, as they are forced to act in ways that go against their personal beliefs. Barrett uses the example teachers having to spend too much time preparing students for tests because of the pressure to get results (2009:1023), which, I would argue, is comparable to the effect of examination performance leagues tables in England. Barrett proposes that considering these external factors, teachers who are new to the profession may not recognise how their identity has been affected by external factors, as they have no comparison to draw upon, and consequently may struggle to negotiate their professional identity.

While some academics have perceived government involvement as an unintended factor in the formation of professional identity within teaching, others, like Lipman (2008) have argued that professional identity is being deliberately controlled by governments and other external agencies through systems like performance management. Lipman explores how accountability has been utilised in Chicago schools to manipulate staff for political and social means. This, Lipman contends, has led to teachers leaving the profession because they feel they are being asked to behave in a way that is contradictory to their own values and beliefs. It is also argued by Lipman that the increase in

accountability has forced those who remain in the profession to self-discipline; thus, the professional identity of these teachers is over time altered to adhere to external forces. The scrutiny that professionals face results in doubt being cast over the role and identity of teachers (Clarke and Newman, 2008) and may produce professionals who are exploited by external agencies to promote an agenda that runs counter to their purpose as educators (Evetts, 2008) and limits their autonomy (Gerwitz et al., 2008). Jones (2008) similarly discusses the loss of identity that teachers have experienced in the face of neoliberalism. The difference between the two studies can be found in the geographical location. Whilst Lipman focused on the USA, Jones addresses issues of professional identity in England and cites the Education Reform Act of 1988 and introduction of the National Curriculum as being the beginning of a reduction of teacher influence in education. Jones (2008) contrasts the erosion in teacher professional identity in England with the Scottish education system, where, it is suggested, teacher professionalism has been maintained to a greater extent, resulting in teachers having more influence in how policy is developed and implemented.

So far, I have considered literature that has interpreted the impact of external factors on professional identity as being largely negative. Black (2008), however, presents an argument that runs in opposition to this trend. He proposes that greater external agency involvement in the teaching profession may accelerate the construction of professional identity within education. Black (2006) cites the Nuffield Project, which he was part of, as helping him to develop his sense of professional identity in relation to practice. Black's experience of working with an external agency to develop his teaching practice, he argues, was instrumental in the development of his professional identity. In his study, Black consequently recommends that external agencies that go beyond the government should become involved in education, and that intervention by such groups should be encouraged and welcomed by teachers. Black (2006) makes these assertions because he felt that involvement in the Nuffield project gave him the opportunity to reflect on his work, experiment with new ideas and develop a network of professional support, all of which helped him to secure his place within the profession. Equally, he acknowledges that many teachers are

hesitant to become involved in such schemes but argues that those within the profession need to open themselves up to opportunities where they could be provided with support beyond the place where they are employed so that improvements can be made by those within the profession.

3.3 Self, power and agency

In the previous section, I considered literature that examined how professional identity can be shaped by different external factors. However, in this section, I will look at how studies have explored the importance of developing professional sense of self that is in keeping with one's beliefs and values. For example, Evetts (2008) and Cribb (2008) both explore the moral role of professionals; both conclude that ethical beliefs shape the way that professionals view themselves. Cribb, however, argues that ethics and professionalism form a reciprocal binary. To be able to explore the changes to identity that ethics and professionalism cause, Cribb (2008) suggests the use of a value axes where the degree of impartiality, impersonality, instrumentalism and specialisation can be measured. The use of this axes in Cribb's (2008) paper supports his assertion that professional responsibilities alter and shape our ethical viewpoint and interpretation, in the same way that ethical ideas influence the way that we view and construct our professional identity.

Newburgh (2019) carried out research in the USA into how teachers in the first year of their careers developed their identities in relation to Sartre's 1966 existential concept of good faith. Newburgh carried out semi-structured interviews with participants from four schools in Denver every four to six weeks to explore how philosophies on entering the profession changed in response to external influences presented within each school, linking the results to issues around teacher retention (2019). Newburgh concluded that 'deep supports' (2019:1249) are needed within the first year of a teacher's career so that they can cultivate an identity that enables them to thrive in the profession: one that is 'reflective of her own inner values and beliefs' (2019:1238). In her paper, Newburgh states that failure to provide appropriate support may lead to teachers exiting the profession, as they feel ill equipped to cope with the

challenges that they face in their role (2019). Apple (2008) however argues that further research and analysis needs to be carried out into current professional identity to ensure teachers understand and are able to become 'respected, responsive and critical professional[s]' (xvii).

Hadley Dunn and Downey (2018), in their paper, consider the importance of reflective practice in increasing teacher awareness of the work that they do. Hadley Dunn and Downey (2018) suggest that teachers are not always aware of how much they have invested in their profession and have not always had the opportunity to think about what will happen if their investments do not lead to the desired outcomes. Hadley Dunn and Downey's (2018) research may consequently imply reflection should be used to help teachers navigate their way through the profession and increase self-awareness, which may help them form a longer lasting professional identity.

Thus, previous research suggests that professional identity needs to align with an individual's ethics and beliefs, and that the ability to reflect can help teachers to develop a professional identity that endures. Mockler (2011) also contends that professional self-identity can be used to develop the profession as a whole. For Mockler, professional identity is defined as the way that teachers see and comprehend themselves as individuals and as part of collective (2011:519). She discusses how teachers are not given 'a scaffold for effective reflective practice' (Mockler, 2011:524), but that if this problem was addressed there could be the potential to draw professional identity and practice together to create change that is actively constructed by teachers themselves, simultaneously considering external political factors. In her paper, Mockler (2011) also criticises governments for being overly concerned with roles and ignoring identities because, she argues, identity is too complex a concept. Mockler (2011) concludes that greater time and attention needs to be given to support teachers in understanding their identities so that they can use their identities politically to improve the profession.

Vähäsantanen (2015) examines how policy reforms that are enacted top down affect the professional identity of teachers. Vähäsantanen points out that agency is not always a good thing if you are trying to change a system, as it can lead to disparity between different sections of a profession, but that not enough agency can lead to professionals who are not invested and feel demotivated. The way in which a balance can be achieved between external agencies and those within the profession, then, is significant to ensuring quality education for students that is delivered by professionals who feel valued and supported. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) also discuss agency as significant in how teachers shape their identity and how they behave as professionals as a result. The idea that agency can help to mould a teacher's identity may suggest that by distributing power amongst many, a greater sense of responsibility and professionalism can be developed, which may be beneficial for the individual and for the profession.

Lingard (2008), however, argues that teachers are often unable to use their agency because neoliberal trends dictate pedagogy rather than allowing teachers to utilise their own professionalism by developing pedagogy that is appropriate for their own context. Lingard (2008) consequently suggests that there is a separation between pedagogy and teacher identity that needs to be resolved by increasing agency in this area. Similarly, Lipman (2008) discusses the lack of freedom and choice that teachers have in the USA due to the prescribed pedagogical practices, which result in teachers facing a moral dilemma about whether what they do is right for the students they teach. Whilst Vähäsantanen's (2015) research found that vocational teachers experienced a disparity between their collective and individual agency. Vähäsantanen (2015) concluded that this created issues for the research participants because it led to their professional identity being conceptualised differently within their own profession over time and that greater negotiation was therefore needed to avoid any negative effect. Similarly, Gerwitz et al. (2008) use Friedson's analysis of professionalism as 'The Third Logic' to argue that teachers need greater autonomy and power as individuals and as a collective if they are to work successfully as professionals. Cohen (2010) contends that teacher voice needs to be used in policy to help improve retention rates by utilising discourse analysis

to improve professional identity. For Cohen (2010), listening to teachers in this way is viewed as beneficial because it may lead to greater satisfaction for those in role and result in fewer teachers exiting the profession.

Foucault's writing on power has proved helpful in exploring power and agency in the teaching profession. Zembylas (2005) used Foucault's writing on power to interpret a case study for one teacher over three years, focusing on how emotion contributes to teacher identity by engaging teachers in 'complex webs of power relations' (2005:937). The study found that emotion played a critical role in the formation of identity, which was then subjected to disciplinary systems at local levels and resulted in resistance that helped to shape teacher identity and practice (Zembylas, 2005). Zembylas (2005) contends that by understanding teacher identity in terms of emotion and power, we can begin to appreciate the impact that individuals can have on the teaching profession and use this to improve the work that teachers do.

Sherman and Teemant also explored the relationship between identity, power and agency in their paper by presenting their 'agentive triad' (2022:1469), in which they argue that agency can only be understood in relation to power and identity. They refer to Foucault's writing on power, applying his theory that power only exists when it is exerted. Sherman and Teemant (2022) conclude that agency can act as the link between power and identity that can then produce agentive action, but that power can restrict identity and agency, and that identity can influence the roles that people take on and their actions. Mifsud (2018) also used Foucault's work to research how ITE students in Scotland experienced school practice, finding that power flowed between theory and practice for ITE students, but that they placed a greater emphasis on practice while on school placement, leading her to conclude there was 'a battle between the discourses of autonomy, empowerment and teacher leadership, and those of efficiency and efficacy' (2018:179). Mifsud highlights how beginning teacher experiences when on practicum can result in the uneven distribution of power, as schools can regulate power and consequently influence how teachers interpret their identities and their ability to act with agency (2018).

Hall and Noyes' (2009) used Foucault's theory of 'regimes of truth' to interpret interview data and found that Ofsted's systems of judgement and comparison had been normalised within one of the schools that they carried out their research in to such an extent that it had shaped the professional identities of the teachers who worked there (Hall and Noyes, 2009). The study found that the dissemination of disciplinary systems through schools led to the spread of government power that was either enacted, reinforced, or resisted by individuals, demonstrating how professional identity can be affected by power in ways that are almost unnoticeable (Hall and Noyes, 2009).

Power can therefore affect teacher professional identity in different ways. It can enable teachers to act authentically, enabling them to develop as professionals, or it can stifle their professional development depending on whether it is done to them, for them or by them. The way that power is experienced in relation to professional identity will be significant when discussing my findings.

3.4 Professional identity tensions

Pillen et al. (2013) carried out research in the Netherlands into the tensions faced by teachers early in their careers, whose personal beliefs did not match the ideas of the profession. They provide an example of a teacher who experienced conflict with their mentor regarding their personal beliefs and the tension that they felt in negotiating their professional identity as a result. This study foregrounds how the experience of trainee teachers whilst on school placement can have a significant impact on how professional identity is constructed. The authors also draw attention to the similarities between the issues faced by teachers and other professions like nursing and social work. The comparison made here suggests that the research in this paper may also be relevant to the study of professional identity development in other disciplines. The paper, however, focused on the transition from student to teacher and the conflicts that arise as a result of this change, whereas my study will focus on how professional identity is constructed over the course of teacher training, and

will look at the various internal and external factors that may shape beginning teachers' identities.

Recent research into how teachers negotiate tensions that are experienced because of external factors that affect identity has been carried out. Vähäsantanen (2015) and Thi Kim Anh (2013) both explore how identity tensions can be created when internal beliefs and ideas are in conflict with external issues. Thi Kim Anh takes Vygotsky's perezhivanie concept and ZPD from its original child development context and uses it to examine how teachers interpret their professional identity and development. Based upon this framework, the argument is made that trainees face added tension in comparison to qualified teachers because they have to negotiate their identity as a student and a teacher during their training. Thi Kim Anh found in the study that two student teachers (Hien and Chinh) on a paired school practice placement in Vietnam developed identity differently, despite being in the same context. As the placement progressed, Hien took on the identity of a teacher, as well as a mentor and colleague, whereas Chinh identified as a teacher and student. These differences created contradictions, which the trainee teachers had to negotiate. Rather than inhibit the participants' professional identity development, however, the tensions experienced are reported to have supported development for both, and to have consequently enabled them to develop unexpected facets of their identity. Although, the authors argue that these changes were only made possible by the resolution of contradictions and warn that failure to resolve issues can result in identity being impeded.

Sutherland et al. (2010) found from their research that online discussion forums can provide a space to work through tensions for student teachers. Forums can be utilised to develop student teachers' identities when away from a university environment: the online forum discussed in their paper can be interpreted as providing an alternative space for trainees to work through the tensions that they encounter between theory and school experience. By providing space and guidance online for student teachers to negotiate the mismatch that they experience during ITE, trainees were able to develop a more secure sense of

professional identity. The authors did, however, recommend that further research be carried out into whether trainees felt encouraged or inhibited to explore their professional identity on online forums to ensure that any introduction of online communities to ITE courses is beneficial to student teachers.

3.5 Other considerations for identity development

Sardabi et al. (2018) and Fomunyam (2016) both note the importance of identity development in ITE. However, Olsen and Buchanan (2017) found that a lack of formal training for those training teachers may result in ITE programmes that are unable to support student teacher professional identity creation. Olsen and Buchanan (2017) suggest that universities need to improve the training teacher educators have, so that they are equipped with the knowledge and understanding necessary to help beginning teachers as they start to develop a sense of their professional self.

Fomunyam (2016) proposes close scrutiny of the courses provided by the university and the school practice that trainees participate in, to ensure they adequately support the formation of professional identity that is able to sustain trainees not just during ITE, but also once they become qualified teachers. In contrast to Fomunyam's recommendation, Barrett (2009) warns against increasing the focus afforded to professional identity by university based ITE courses. Barrett argues that ITE courses may suffer if additional pressure to support professional identity is forced onto them, as they may need to change content and pedagogy to better prepare teachers for life in schools. Moreover, Barrett's (2009) perspective, highlights how different strands of education are interlinked, and that any alteration may potentially be detrimental because other areas would need to be reduced, or, at the very least, altered to create space for any new components.

Additionally, there is a wider discussion that needs to be acknowledged when considering how professional identity develops not just during ITE, but also in the first few years of a teacher's career. For example, Evetts (2008) discusses the impact of management on early teacher professionalism and found that

further research needs to be carried out in this area. This point is particularly relevant to my study, as I have interviewed beginning teachers who are either on an ITE course or are in the first year following achieving Qualified Teaching Status (QTS). Who they are managed by and how they are managed within their first salaried post and/or whilst on school practicum during their ITE year consequently has an impact on their professional identity as much as the way that their ITE provider supported the creation and development of their professional identity during their training year.

Within the existing literature about professional identity within teaching, a number of academics argue that reflective practices are central to beginning teachers developing a successful professional identity. Sardabi et al. (2018), Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) and Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) all propose that during ITE more time should be dedicated to reflective exercises that enable beginning teacher professional identity to be developed. In doing so, all three papers suggest that student teachers will be better prepared for the challenges of the teaching profession post qualification. Cohen (2010), however, goes further in her study by demonstrating the significance of reflection to professional identity by centring her focus group questions around reflection. Through her focus on reflective questioning, Cohen (2010) presents teacher professional identity as being bound to the concept of the reflective practitioner, implying that the ability to be reflective is inherent to teacher identity. Her research also found that teachers who are reflective are analytical thinkers and often project their reflective practices to encourage the students that they teach to reflect on their own learning (Cohen, 2010). Thus, teachers who employ reflection may have a significant impact on how their students develop their own sense of identity as well.

3.6 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided a summary of the key literature that relates to professional identity development in teaching. By looking carefully at existing literature, I have been able to identify key themes that relate to my study. The papers that I have reviewed and written about demonstrate that work still needs

to be carried out within teaching to fully understand how professional identity can be used to support the development of individual teachers so that early in a teacher's career they are able to respond to the challenges of the profession without losing any sense of their self. The key literature has shown that me that professional identity is important because it influences how teachers behave and that understanding it is important because it is highly susceptible to internal and external factors.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

4.1 Introduction

In my research I have used Michel Foucault's concepts of power, discipline, and care of the self to interrogate ideas about professional identity for beginning teachers who have studied or are studying initial teacher education courses in the United Kingdom. Foucault's theories are particularly relevant to my analysis for several reasons.

Firstly, Foucault wrote extensively about the concepts of power and discipline within society. In an interview that was published in 1977, Foucault stated: 'What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no; it also traverses and produces things…' (Foucault, 2000:120). The idea that power can impact upon different things in different ways and does not always have to be perceived as a negative force, has relevance for my study, as the neoliberal policy context in England sets out frameworks created by various governments in Westminster to shape the education system in which teachers work. Teachers also, as public servants, are expected to answer to society and the institutions that employ them. Therefore, the formation of professional identity for beginning teachers may be influenced by the different sources of power that are present within their respective educational contexts. As a result, Foucault's writing on power, can provide a different way to examine the professional identity formation of beginning teachers, as it encourages and enables us to look at things through a theoretical lens that can enable us to recognise how power is experienced.

Secondly, in *The Care of the Self*, Foucault maps the development of the individual within Western society, examining how specific practices that relate to the care of the self, emerge, and develop. Foucault defined the care of the self as:

> the development of an art of existence that revolves around the question of the self, of its dependence and independence, of its

> universal form and of the connection it can and should establish with others, of the procedures by which it exerts its control over itself, and of the way in which it can establish a complete supremacy of itself (1986:238).

For Foucault, then, the care of the self was not just a way of thinking, but also a process and an action that individuals were involved in, which helped them to construct their identity internally and externally. Part of that process involves, not only an ability to reflect, but also a willingness to react and potentially modify. The care of the self also relies heavily upon context and the relationships that form and exist within different contexts because it acknowledges a sense of self that is not fixed. This is pertinent to my study, as beginning teachers negotiate the construction of their own professional identity in the early stages of their career. The practices outlined and explored by Foucault in his writing, therefore, are useful in exploring the early career identity formation of my participants. For example, the influence that a beginning teacher's ethical stance prior to entering the profession has on how they construct and develop their identity as a teacher was considered when designing this study, collecting data and analysing the data collected.

Finally, Foucault's writing has been used as a theoretical framework for this study because it is so open to interpretation. Although this may make Foucault a more challenging theorist to understand, it also encourages questioning and reinterpretation of his thinking. During his life, Foucault consistently defended his thinking by discussing how it was not something that would remain the same, but rather be constantly modified depending on context. While other studies on beginning teacher identities therefore have been situated in different contexts, my study is considering the professional identity development of beginning teachers in the UK, which considering the constantly shifting landscape of education in the UK in recent years, needs to be examined within a theoretical framework that is willing to explore differences as much as it seeks to examine similarities. By questioning and reinterpreting the beginning teacher experience and comparing this to the experience of teacher educators, I have begun a

different dialogue around ITE in the UK. Foucault stated in an interview that 'there is always the possibility of changing' (Fornet-Betancourt et al., 1987:167). Although Foucault was discussing the concept of resistance in relation to power and identity in this quote, his view that change is always possible for me also is indicative of his approach to his work, and consequently how we should never stop questioning or reinterpreting the world that we exist in.

4.2 The development of Foucault's approach

Foucault was born in 1926 in France and his thinking developed across his academic life. In the 1950s, Foucault, like many others in France at the time, became a member of the French Communist Party (Foucault, 2000). Foucault then left France and went to work in universities in Uppsala, Warsaw and Hamburg, as well as visiting Tunisia during the Algerian war. Foucault would later refer to his experience of the war as being significant in shaping how he viewed events and developments in the world around him, as his time as an outsider in a place of political uncertainty and conflict made him realise the importance of pursuing work that had personal relevance, which he did upon his return to France in 1968 (Foucault, 2000:258). Foucault became a fellow of the Collège de France in 1970, where he would continue to deliver lectures and seminars until his death. By the time he died at the age of 57 on the 25th of June 1984, he had influenced thinking across a wide range of academic and professional fields. Fully aware of criticisms of his work, he was often noticeably unapologetic about his approach to his writing (Foucault, 2000:261). His last published book was volume three of the *History of Sexuality*, and in line with his wishes, no further texts have been posthumously published (Rabinow, 2000).

Foucault's thoughts have lived on, however, as scholars within a wide range of fields have read, used, and built upon his writing. His ideas have remained prominent in academic and professional discourse perhaps because his approach embraced difference and ambiguity. Foucault himself stated: 'I am sure I'll never get the answer; but that does not mean that we don't have to ask the question' (2000:311). His approach to his work rested on a willingness to amend his ideas, including moments when he seems to almost contradict himself as his

thinking emerges in his writing and lectures. Foucault argued that this constant re-evaluation was crucial to his way of working. During a lecture on 'Truth and Judicial Forms' in 1973, Foucault explained that his ideas were a work in progress and invited those present to help him formulate them. Describing his work as being a hypothesis that is yet untested, Foucault seemed unafraid to open his work to criticism (Foucault, 2000) and, I would argue, that it is this open acknowledgement of vulnerability that continues to make his work so attractive to people. For Foucault there are no definitive answers but rather a multiplicity of perspectives that need to be considered at any given point in time.

In his writing and interviews, Foucault explained that his intention in examining history was not to record the past for posterity, but rather a means to understand the present. This, he believed, separated him from historians (Foucault, 1991:31). By using actual situations from history as examples to interrogate ideas about areas like sexuality and power, Foucault sought to gain greater understanding of complex ideas that were prevalent in the contemporary world. For example, in 'The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century', Foucault sought to use the health system to look at how power has been exerted at different times in history. From these case studies, Foucault was able to identify areas of concern (2000), which he would then go on to interrogate in subsequent projects. In an interview in 1978, Foucault justified this approach by saying that his ideas were not complete or definite, but rather intended to open discussion (2000) and be modified. Much of his work thus follows on from earlier ideas, creating a sense of an intricately woven tapestry that is never complete, in which specific threads are integrated or pulled at different times across his academic career.

Foucault stated in the 1978 interview that he was interested in looking at how people relate to each other and to the concepts and ideas that frame the world we live in. As a result of these relationships, he argued differences come into existence that need to be examined to fully understand why and how people behave the way they do, as well as the effect these actions have (2000). His

responses during this interview reveal how he approached his work within texts like *History of Sexuality*, where he explores the development of prevalent attitudes in different historical contexts primarily through how figures related to the world around them before comparing some of these different attitudes. An example of Foucault's comparative approach can be seen early in *The Care of the Self*. Foucault uses Artemidorus' writing on sexual dreams and how this linked to the lived experience of a subject, as a comparative point, to then discuss how Plutarch looked at sex in relation to how individuals govern themselves regarding their sexuality and sexual practices (1986). By doing this, Foucault was able to explain how morality began to be used to motivate and control individuals within certain societies.

In the same interview, Foucault chose to defend his work by discussing how he felt people were critical because it was hard to categorise his writing, as he was not cataloguing historical events, trying to prove existing ideas or attempting to invent new theories (2000). Foucault did not want to be viewed as a political commentator or activist (Gordon, 2000) because his aim was not to provide solutions or support a specific system, but rather to 'generate doubt and discomfort, and to help stimulate a wider process of reflection and action leading to other and more tolerable ways of thinking and acting' (Gordon, 2000:xvii). Gordon explains how Foucault did not write from a political perspective, but that, ironically, his writing has been influential in left wing political thought (2000). His influence in this area, however, does stem from the fact that Foucault advocated for rights of individuals as well as rights of relationships (Gordon, 2000). Gordon writes about Foucault's concern for the state of relationships in modern society; this concern, for example, can be seen clearly in Foucault's examination of marriage in *The Care of the Self* (1986).

Furthermore, although Foucault did not view himself as writing from a political viewpoint, late in life, he did call for academics to take a more active role in life outside of academia, so that they could support society by enabling people to reflect on issues that the academic has problematized for them (Gordon, 2000), suggesting that he did have an interest in other areas like politics. For

Foucault, though, it was not his job to tell people what to think or to present solutions, but rather to draw attention to issues by presenting them in new ways that prompted people to think. While Foucault dismissed any deliberate connection between his work and politics, he embraced the idea that his work was personally significant: 'I write in order to change myself and in order not to think the same thing as before' (2000:240). Here we see Michel Foucault as someone who believed that each individual experience a person has is unique and that it is therefore constantly changing. For Foucault, then, the truth is not something definite, but rather infinite because it is constantly changing.

Starting in the early 1970s Foucault began to look at power and technologies of power (Rabinow, 2000). It was not, however, until the mid-1970s that Foucault decided to centre his work around power. He argued that power had previously been overlooked in other scholar's work in favour of concerns like economics, which seemed more relevant and tangible. For Foucault, though, power was at the core of all issues (2000) and consequently needed to be given greater prominence. Foucault continued to explore the issue of power for the rest of his life and by end of the 1970s, he was re-examining ideas of power and looking at whether methods used to explore these issues were suitable (Rabinow, 2000).

Foucault's work was criticised for lacking continuity, for failing to provide definite answers and for refusing to fit neatly into a school of thought, such as structuralism. The laissez-faire attitude that Foucault exhibited when facing negativity about his work, Gordon admits, was one of the reasons that Foucault's work was often problematised by people during his life. By refusing to provide a definite answer about issues like what constitutes a just resistance, Gordon notes that Foucault encouraged readers to view his work as being evolutionary, and this was problematic at times for those who sought to engage with his writing (2000). Foucault's response to those who criticised his work can be found clearly in an interview that he gave in 1977. During the interview, Foucault defended his writing against criticisms that had been made that his work lacked continuity by stating: '…the rhythm of transformation doesn't follow the smooth, continuist schemes of development which are normally accepted'

(2000:113), and went on to describe his work as 'interwoven and overlapping' (2000:266). Readers of his work consequently cannot read them in isolation, but instead should look at his ideas in each text in relation to other texts that he wrote on the same subject. Furthermore, in the same interview, Foucault defended his work by saying he intended to find problems, not solutions (2000). Here, again, we see a man who is concerned with disrupting ideas rather than providing neat and tidy answers.

4.3 Power and discipline

Foucault viewed power as central to everything that we say and do. In his essay *Lives of Infamous Men* (2000) Foucault contends that power causes us to do things and say things, and that understanding power is therefore crucial in our ability to understand ourselves and the world we live in. But it is in *Discipline and Punish* that Foucault's ideas about the discipline society are conveyed in the greatest detail. In his book he explores how disciplinary power is based around the idea of invisibility. For Foucault, what was most interesting about the development of discipline, was that over time the need to visibly exert power became less important, and instead the need for self-examination and self-regulation began to be embedded into networks that infiltrated society (1991). Identity and discipline consequently become intertwined, as the way that a person views themselves and acts becomes part of the power mechanism itself. Foucault discusses how this happens beneath the surface as people internalise rules and concludes that the display and exertion of power cannot be determined by a society, but rather by individuals (2000). The nature of power and how it is exerted, therefore, became a central focus in his thinking. For example, Foucault argued that power could only exist if resistance to it existed as well (2000).

In the late 1970s Foucault began to explore, or rather re-explore, power relations, but admitted that he could not settle on whether power was infinite or whether power was only concerned with victory at any cost (Rabinow, 2000 check ref). Additionally, between 1975 and 1976, Foucault began to look at how power and violence connect (Rabinow, 2000).It is Foucault's interest in how power is exerted in a network, however, that I will be focusing on in my

research. Foucault discussed how 'one exercises power within a network in which one occupies a key position' (1986:87). Continuing, Foucault explains how leaders, like kings, demonstrate that they can control their desires and can manage their own morality and practices in order for people to be able to trust them (1986). This specific idea, I am going to argue, is crucial in identity formation for beginning teachers, as it is the negotiation, regulation and self-regulation that teachers in their early years within the profession have to grapple with in order to create a professional identity that enables them to become successful within educational settings.

Foucault's most direct address to the issue of power can be found in *Discipline and Punish*, where Foucault examined the history of punishment and discipline within societies from the classical period all the way through to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (1991). In doing so, Foucault explores various issues within society that relate to power. For example, in *Discipline and Punish* he charts the development of punishment from spectacle to hidden act (Foucault, 1991). Foucault examines the prison system in detail in this text: he looks at how prisons seek to control, but he also recognizes the issues that have been, and continue to be, created by a system that prevents individuals from changing by removing them from society and impacting on the families that they leave behind when they are incarcerated (1991). The alternative viewpoints summarised here highlight how Foucault's approach to issues around this text sought to consider different viewpoints and consequently open discussion on the topic.

In Discipline and Punish (1991) Foucault discusses his ideas about technologies of power. He separated technologies of power into three distinct areas:

- Mark, sign, trace.
- Ceremony, representation, exercise.
- Tortured body, soul with its manipulated representations, body subjected to training.

By examining these three technologies, Foucault laid out his ideas about how power is exercised in different ways. As a result of this, he explored the idea of 'docile' bodies in *Discipline and Punish* by examining how control mechanisms were used to exert power over different people in different environments, including schools, where he claimed to have found the presence of these mechanisms in early educational contexts (1991). His understanding of the technologies of power within human sciences led Foucault to suggest at the end of *Discipline and Punish* that the human sciences have, in fact, enabled power to be dispersed through networks (1991), suggesting that complex structures are created and enacted in order for power to be exerted. Power and knowledge, Foucault contends, are interconnected and co-dependent (1991). In fact, Gordon takes Foucault's ideas about power further and argues that Foucault presents power in *Discipline and Punish* as coming from below rather than being top-down (2000). Gordon's interpretation of Foucault's ideas will be of interest to me in my research, as I will seek to find out whether the power experienced by beginning teachers comes from the bottom up, from the top down, or from networks that exert power in multiple directions, and to explore the impact that these powers have on professional identity formation.

4.4 Power and Education

Some parallels can be drawn between Foucault's examination of the Western prison system and schooling in the Western world. From early in his career Foucault's ideas about power often referred to Nietzsche. Foucault explains in a series of lectures given in 1973 that he could not understand why schools continued to operate on a system of punishment and reward. He argued that if Nietzsche was able to imagine different systems, then surely something else was possible (Foucault, 2000). Yet, to this day the education system in the United Kingdom has continued to use sanctions and rewards as the basis of education for young people and adults alike. Students are often motivated by the promise of a certificate for their hard work, whilst they are punished through systems like detentions and exclusion from the school system. Similarly, many teachers are motivated in the UK by performance related pay and promotion, countered by the threat of formal warnings that may lead to removal from the profession if they fail to fulfil their duties and responsibilities. Moreover, some language used by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* can still be found in the current

Western, and more specifically, English, education system. For example, Foucault discusses how disciplinary systems used the objective of 'knowing, mastering, using' (1991:143). These terms are, in fact, still used in schools and within the wider education rhetoric, having become commonly used in England as part of the assessment process.

Foucault explores the role of Panopticon architecture in exerting power over people in different settings. In *Discipline and Punish*, he explains how the Panopticon system has been used in schools, hospitals and factories to standardise by creating a 'norm', so that people within these institutions self-regulate (Foucault, 1991). He refers to the example of hospitals, where frequent observations were introduced and utilised as power practices (Foucault, 1991). I would argue, however, that this system of control can also be identified in the English education system as well, where teachers are now experiencing constant observation by a number of different groups, such as Ofsted, senior leadership, student, and parent surveys. Thus, Foucault's assertion in his 1973 lectures on 'Truth and Juridical Forms' that Panopticism underpinned contemporary power relations because society worked on a system of supervision, control, and correction (2000) can be seen in action in UK schools today. Foucault also discussed how this observation is not limited to physical observation, but also expected to be evident in material objects such as paper records that prove a person is behaving as expected (1991:186). This, again, clearly mirrors the UK education system, where staff are expected to create documents that justify their job as part of a process of ongoing self-regulation. Interestingly, although Foucault's commentary on Bentham's Panopticon is largely critical because it 'automatizes and disindividualizes power' (1991:201), simultaneously he is complimentary towards Bentham's Panopticon, as he describes it as 'a marvellous machine' (1991:202).

In Discipline and Punish, Foucault considers early apprenticeships and how time is used in a different way as a form of power by creating three phases that separate the time an apprentice trains for so that they can be easily assessed (1991). Foucault's commentary on how time is interpreted to enable the

training process to progress in a linear fashion can be linked to ITE in the UK. Foucault's consideration of time in relation to apprenticeships is significant to my research, as when exploring the professional identity of beginning teachers, the time allocated and expectation of how student teachers will develop may impact how beginning teachers perceive and experience their own professional identity.

Overall, Foucault explored how schools function within different societies as a disciplinary tool. Using Jean-Baptiste de la Salle's ideas about schools to illustrate his understanding of how schools are employed as a 'learning machine, but also as a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding' (Foucault, 1991:147), Foucault developed a range of ideas that connect the theme of power to education, and therefore make his writing relevant to my study. Jean-Baptiste de la Salle proposed that space within a classroom be used to categorise students according to factors like academic ability and social class. De la Salle believed that space could be used to control how students behaved and to condition them to act in a way that the school master deemed appropriate. Foucault used de la Salle's approach to classroom space to highlight how schools develop disciplinary processes that are embedded in the system and consequently normalised (1991).

4.6 Connecting to my study: power, care of the self, and ethics

Kirk's (2004) writing was helpful to my thinking on how to inform my study using Foucault's theories. Kirk (2004) used Foucault's writing on biopower to examine the change in Australian schools from games to sports and how this was used to simultaneously control and liberate. He argues how the use of sport uses rules to control (for example, how sports in boys' schools was used to prevent homosexuality by giving male students an outlet for their sexual energy that society viewed as masculine), but also blurs the lines of social order (for example, by placing students of different classes within the same team). Kirk's application of Foucault when conducting his analysis, held potential relevance to my own research. His decision to use Foucault's ideas within a different context when looking at how sports have been used as a control mechanism made me realise that I could interrogate a text without the fear of needing to find the

'right' answer, because, as Foucault acknowledges in his writing, all ideas are open to interpretation and need to be reviewed. When selecting Foucault's writing on power as a theoretical framework for my study of ITE in England and Scotland, I consequently felt that I could explore the ideas that Foucault put forward about power in relation to prison and government, but consider them within the context of beginning teaching in the United Kingdom.

Initial Teacher Education in the UK, like other systems in the modern world, is governed by rules and procedures that control and regulate how it operates. Key documents that are examples of this are the Teachers' Standards (2011) in England and the GTCS Professional Standards (2012) in Scotland. Foucault argued that each discipline creates rules that control the discourse within their field, and that it is through this discourse that power is created (Foucault, 1970:17). Indeed, the fact that standards within ITE are set by a government agency in England and a regulatory body in Scotland could suggest that these guidelines exist for political reasons rather than to serve the needs of future teaching professionals or the students they educate. Foucault stated that 'Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it' (1970:19). The controls that are used within education to regulate teachers may therefore be intended to make teachers behave in a specific way. If this is the case, it may be even more important that teachers are able to engage in the care of the self so that they can 'attain to a certain mode of being' (Marshall, 2004:414) and be able to negotiate the regimes of power that inevitably exist within the profession.

In the years before Foucault died, he turned his attention to identity and power, stating: 'What I am working on now is the problem of individuality – or, I should say, self-identity in relation to the problem of "individualizing power"' (Foucault 2000:300). Here, we see how Foucault recognised the interrelated nature of some of the key concepts that his work had focused on previously. His thinking on these areas came together in his last published works, Volumes One, Two and Three of *The Care of the Self*. Foucault's writing during this period of his life is

relevant to my study because it relates to some of the key areas that I explored during the interviews that I carried out. The idea of '"individualizing power"' suggests to me that Foucault was looking at how each person has control over their own identity and role, but also how this identity may be an articulation of the power felt and exerted upon an individual by different forces, for example, the way in which an ITE provider may influence the identity of a beginning teacher.

Marshall's (2004) article highlights the importance of care of the self for Foucault's discussion of how power acts on the individual. Foucault says that care of the self is 'to work on the self, but which one attempts to develop and transform oneself, and to attain to a certain mode of being' (in Marshall, 2004:414). Marshall writes that care of the self 'is not a selfish or narcissistic enterprise but involves a highly personalised approach to philosophy – that philosophy is concerned with the self and with how the self is to be conceived and perceived, and with how, for Foucault, it is to exercise its freedom' (2004:414) from forms of governance. Foucault's theories of the self are useful for my study because, as Weir (2009) argues, they are useful in unmasking people's identities. Weir's reading of Foucault suggests that there is no pre-given central identity, which implies that individuals have control over how their identity is constructed and perceived (Weir, 2009). Identity is therefore dialogically formed (Howe, 1998), but as Niesche and House (2012) explain, Foucault represents identity formation as a continual process of negotiation between the different elements of identity and how they interact with contextual factors.

Smeyers (2006) interprets Foucault's care of the self as showing us that a person's identity does not vanish, but rather is fragmented so that it becomes part fiction, part reality and partly free, partly controlled. The range of interpretations on Foucault's theories of self imply to me that, by undertaking using Foucault's writing as a theoretical framework for my analysis, I will be able to explore how and why different professional identities develop, as well as

examine how the development of these different identity strands enable or inhibit the construction of a beginning teacher's professional identity.

St. Pierre (2004) explains how Foucault's writing in *The Care of the Self* begins by reorganising his previous system and then developing technologies of the self that he believes may enable us to govern ourselves and seek happiness/wisdom. In *The Care of the Self*, Foucault spends a considerable amount of time discussing how 'Around the care of the self, there developed an entire activity of speaking and writing in which the work on oneself and communication with others were linked together' (1986: 51). This assertion implies that in order for a person to develop their own identity, they must first engage in reflective dialogue with themselves. Unlike other ideas about identity that view it as isolated, Foucault is proposing that the self is shaped by external forms of power: power and identity therefore cannot be separated in his thinking.

Foucault discusses the role that regular self-examination played within the development of individuals from a historical viewpoint; he tracks the development of self-examination through the ages and explores how the need to review our sense of self daily as part of an ongoing regime became increasingly significant in the Classical age (Foucault, 1986). Using the example of Seneca, Foucault discusses how care of the self through dialogue had been extended to include the use of a trusted adviser (1986). Foucault took this idea further by explaining the concept of parrēsia in Greco-Roman thought as the right to speak freely, but how this extends within some texts to the practice of being able to speak freely about the self and about others. For Foucault, this translates into an action that enables people to break with norms and create new discourses (Foucault, 2015). From an analytical perspective, this idea is particularly important for my study, as it sets up the possibility that reflective dialogue may help to develop individual beginning teachers in unique ways because discourse that is unregulated may provide opportunities for unexpected professional development. My understanding of Foucault's discussion in *The Care of the Self* on the use of reflective discourse to develop a person's sense of identity is further evidenced in Rabinow's argument that Foucault believed identity and the

problems that a person struggles with are interconnected and dependent on each other (1997:xix). Based on Foucault's ideas, therefore, an individual's ability to engage in reflective dialogue either as a solitary activity or with other trusted persons can become significant in how they construct their own personal and professional identity.

Foucault links a sense of self to an ability to control desire in *The Care of the Self* (1986). In his earlier work, Foucault discussed desire in relation to madness and sexuality, also considering how desire links to what people want and how they rationalise these intentions. In an interview with Jonathan Simon, Foucault discussed how society decides on whether someone is dangerous if the person cannot rationalise their actions. This relates to his earlier thinking in *Madness and Civilization* (1965), for example, Foucault discusses how madness is in relation to the individual's perception of the world and himself. Foucault suggests that madness is used to control individuals when he writes how in the nineteenth century 'The madman is not the first and the most innocent victim of confinement, but the most obscure and the most visible, the most insistent of the symbols of the confining power…' (1965:225). Madness is used in the nineteenth century to ensure that individuals act appropriately and as a remedy for desires that go against societal expectations.

McWilliam (2004) uses Foucault's theory on desire in *The Care of the Self* along with Peter Cryle's ideas on desire to explore teacher motivation. Unlike Foucault, McWilliam uses the term 'motivation' instead of desire, choosing to use this terminology to avoid any sexual connotations being attached to her study. Her focus instead is on why teachers do what they do. She concludes that teacher motivation is not fixed and that we should consider how individuals are affected by power-knowledge at any given time and in any given context. McWilliam's study highlights the usefulness of Foucault's theories in *The Care of the Self* when looking at the role of the teacher. This relates to the reflective elements associated with teacher training (2004) but also to the requirement to meet the teaching standards and be socialised into the profession. To be deemed 'outstanding' a teacher at any stage in their career must be able to

articulate their intentions and reflect on whether they have been successful in achieving them. In other words, they must be able to demonstrate that they are able to control their 'desires'. Furthermore, Karnovsky et al. (2021) use Foucault's writing in their paper to argue that pre-service teachers need to learn to regulate their desires and emotions to be able to develop professional identities within teaching. Therefore, it can be argued that induction into the teaching profession requires beginning teachers to demonstrate the right type of 'desires' that help to present them as capable of taking on the trusted position of teacher within society.

In *The Care of the Self* Foucault explains how the concept of an ethical self has developed, relying on the idea of a person being able to act in ways that align with their ethical ideas so that their existence could have purpose (1986). He discusses how there was 'a difficulty in the manner in which the individual could form himself as the ethical subject of his actions, and efforts to find in devotion to self that which could enable him to submit rules and give a purpose to his existence' (Foucault, 1986:95), clearly recognising how as far back as the classical period, the ethical self was identified as significant to a person's ability to act appropriately. By tracing the development of the care of the self through different periods in Western history, Foucault was able to explore how ethics has been used to shape individuals and the societies that they belong to.

In his interview with Jonathan Simon, Foucault also suggested that a person's rights can be used to help form critical discussions about disciplinary systems. As such, rights can become a tool that can be used to help liberate people and thoughts from systems that would seek to control them (2017). In this interview, Foucault once again demonstrates how his thinking evolved, as he had previously discussed how ethics was used to shape individuals in *The Care of the Self*, but during his interview, he suggests that ethics can create space for individuals to free themselves from oppressive powers.

My reading of Foucault's ideas about ethics in relation to identity formation link then to where the ethical obligation comes from. I would argue that if ethics are imposed by an external force, for example a government mandate, then it can be restrictive, but if it is developed through close examination of a person's individual beliefs and experiences then it can be used to counter dominant practices and create new ideas. For example, Harwood and Rasmussen (2004) use Foucault's Ethics of Discomfort (1997) in their paper to explore LGBTI adolescent experiences in the USA and Australia. By questioning things that seem to be familiar, Foucault contends that new understanding can be developed. This is then translated by Harwood and Rasmussen in their study so that they can examine current practices in schools that have been deemed appropriate rather than accept these practices just because they are already being used.

Similarly, Clarke (2009) used Foucault's ideas on ethics to develop an ethico-political axes of identity that has since been used and modified by Gu (2011) to explore how trainee teachers in Hong Kong develop their own professional identity. Clarke's framework focused on four key areas: the substance of teacher identity, the authority sources of teacher identity, the self-practices of teacher identity and the telos of teacher identity to examine how trainee teachers are involved in an ongoing process of teacher identity construction and development (2009). Clarke and Gu's use of the same framework that is based on Foucault's writing on ethics to explore different areas shows how Foucault's writing can be used in different ways and in different contexts. This further supports the relevance of Foucault's work on ethics within my study on beginning teacher professional identity development.

Although Foucault did not address the issue of professional identity in his writing, a number of academics have utilised Foucault's work in their own papers to explore how professional identity is developed, demonstrating the connection that Foucault's ideas have to this area. Two in particular have influenced my thinking on the importance of context to identity development:

Lisa Weems and Thomas Popkevitz, and I will conclude this section by briefly discussing their work.

Weems (2004) draws on her understanding of Foucault's writing on power to explore how professionalism has developed at different points in time and in different places during the progressive era. Weems' analysis of professional identity in teachers finds that teacher identity is constantly in a process of negotiation, which is subject to discourses of power. Weems uses the example of how female teachers were not allowed to marry or have children until the 1950s. From this she determines that female sexuality was seen as dangerous during this period, and that, to regulate desire rules were enforced that prevented women in teaching from having any sense of sexual identity. This restriction Weems states was most likely lifted because of changing social attitudes like the rise of feminism. Similarly, she argues that the status of teaching as a profession did not increase as quickly as other professions, like medicine, because it was associated with women and therefore not given the same respect. This was reflective of the sexist attitudes that were prevalent at the time.

Thomas Popkevitz explains how Foucault positions the individual as someone who interiorises social rules and then acts with autonomy (2004). This idea, Popkevitz goes on to state is contrary to late 19th and 20th Century ideas about identity, as previously identity was thought to be formed as part of a responsibility to the community. Popkevitz highlights that Foucault perceives identity as being a product of context rather than being created for context. Context, therefore, for Weems, Popkevitz and Foucault is key to the development of identity.

4.7 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter I have identified and discussed the ideas from Foucault's writing that I have used to frame this study. Foucault's approach to this work has been influential in my thinking in this study because, like him, I am not necessarily trying to find a solution or to prove a theory, but rather explore the different

perspectives and experiences of my participants. I do not intend for this study to be used to exemplify the experiences of all beginning teachers, but rather to provide snapshots of experiences so that greater understanding can be gained about how beginning teachers conduct their professional identity and possibly how their professional identity development can by supported in the future.

Although, during his lifetime, Foucault wrote extensively about a number of topics, it is predominantly his work on power and the care of the self that I have drawn on to design, implement and analyse my research. Foucault's ideas around networks of power and how they link to identity have been used in this study to examine significant influences to beginning teacher identity formation, as well as the ways that these networks feed into the approaches taken by teacher educators at universities in the United Kingdom. Foucault's extensive discussion of the Panopticon and technologies of power have enabled me to look at the current educational context for beginning teachers in Scotland and England from a different perspective, and importantly, have enabled me to identify the rhetoric of power in the language currently used within the education system. Foucault's writing on the significance of time in relation to power was an area that I had not initially perceived to be significant, however, during the interviews that I conducted, the issue of time repeatedly was discussed, and so his thinking on this subject became significant when analysing data and further evidenced the relevance of his work to my own.

The attention that Foucault pays to identity in *The Care of the Self* by examining case studies throughout Western history where reflective practices have been used to develop an individual relate to the beginning of a teacher's career because they explore how free speech and mentorship can play a significant role in how a person develops. By tracing the historic developments of some of these methods of identity formation and development, Foucault provides a point of comparison that has been used in this study to elicit appropriate questions during interviews and to enable analysis that seeks to go beyond the surface to interrogate how and why professional identities develop within the education sector.

Chapter 5: Methodology

5.1 Chapter introduction

Ruitenberg (2009) proposes that research needs to be framed within a methodology that is relevant to the subject, content, and purpose of the study, and consequently uses research methods that directly relate to the research question. Ausband (2006) also discusses the importance of the research process and espouses that the methods and order of a study cannot be rushed and must be carefully planned. She argues that researchers must always be ready to adapt and change as the study develops. I therefore made every effort to plan the research methods that I employed in a systematic and logical manner, whilst simultaneously reflecting on the effectiveness of the methods that I have used, so that I could amend the study if necessary. By critically reflecting on research that has been carried out previously, and by referring to my methodological and theoretical framework, I have endeavoured to design and implement a study that can contribute to the study of professional identity in education. The opening section of this chapter explores the methodological approach that frames my study; I then explain the methods and theory that grounds my study in detail.

5.2 Methodological approach

This is a qualitive, interpretivist study. Weaver and Olsen (2006) describe the interpretivist paradigm as relating to the understanding of meaning that individuals assign to actions and reactions. I have chosen to do an interpretivist study because, as Berliner (2002) explains, education is difficult to research and use in real-life scenarios, because it deals with people working in different institutions whose experiences vary and are context dependent and consequently unique.

One of the main reasons that the interpretivist paradigm is appropriate for the examination of professional identity is that, as O'Donoghue (2007) argues, interpretivists believe that meaning is constantly being created through individuals' experiences. Dean (2018) notes that interpretivists view reality as being different to each individual and therefore 'reality' has multiple versions.

Soğanci (2013) argues that interpretivist studies do not search for one truth, but rather explore multiple truths. The concept that any findings should be open to alternative readings means that meanings can and should be challenged (Soğanci 2013). If research is open to ongoing interpretation, then the potential for complexity is accepted and encouraged, which is apt when exploring ideas about the complexities of individual professional identity.

By conducting an interpretivist study, I acknowledge the multi-faceted nature of professional identity within initial teacher education. Rapley (2018) discusses how interpretivist studies recognise that meaning is not fixed and is open to interpretation and change. This fluidity of meaning has enabled me to explore different perspectives that may expand the thinking within this area of education. Using methods drawn from the interpretivist paradigm has enabled me to reach an in-depth understanding of how the ITE courses and early career support in my study contribute to identity formation. I have also chosen to work within the interpretivist paradigm because the idea that there is a multiplicity of meanings is in keeping with Foucault's theories, which underpin my study theoretically, as Foucault believed in embracing different perspectives and was willing to change his stance on his theories over the course of his life (2000:1).

5.3 Recognising the role of the researcher and participant voice

A defining feature of interpretivist studies is the recognition of the role of the researcher in the construction of meaning. When designing, carrying out and analysing my research into the professional identity of beginning teachers, I acknowledge that my own axiological position has had an impact on my interpretations of the data. This is because I have approached my research from a set of values and experiences that are unique to my own personal and professional sense of self. Rapley (2018) discusses the role of the researcher as being vital in the construction of meaning. Dean (2018) extends this idea further in her study about one PhD student's experiences by discussing how within interpretivist research, the researcher and researched are interlinked, which implies that the researcher's role and perspective is just as significant when exploring findings as the participants. I have tried to consider my own role within the research that I have carried out carefully, as well as being mindful of

exploring alternative interpretations that may have seemed counter-intuitive to my own view of the subject matter. As a Deputy Headteacher in an English school who has responsibility for supporting beginning teacher development, the research carried out and my subsequent findings are significant to my role and may help me to support beginning teachers. Yet, I also need to acknowledge the part that I have played in supporting, or not supporting, beginning teachers appropriately so that they can develop their professional identities. To overcome this, I have used my research as an opportunity to review how professional identity is defined and developed in my own school setting. However, I have also had to be careful not to project my own experiences when interviewing and analysing. It became important to me, therefore, to allow my participants' voices to be speak for themselves by including their verbatim responses in my analysis rather than paraphrasing.

The data gathered for this research study was collected from participants during semi-structured interviews. Becker's (1996) ethnographic study warns that interview data that involves people whose experiences and feelings are constantly developing and consequently changing can lead to instability because their recollections can change over time depending on what has happened to them since. This means that their views may at times have seemed illogical or unsubstantiated to me, but that I still accepted that their perspective needed to be acknowledged before being contextualised. I therefore tried to be sensitive to each participant's voice by allowing them the space to discuss their experiences and thoughts, but also encouraged them to explain each response as a means for them to clarify their thoughts so that I could then use their clarification to support my interpretation.

White and Drew (2011), however, warn against the voices of participants being presented as truth. Instead, they suggest that we need to recognise the role that theoretical analytical tools and the research have in creating alternative meanings. My understanding of this is that, as the researcher, I need to recognise the importance of my role in interpreting the data. Krauss (2005) also explains how the researcher is actively involved in the construction of research

data throughout a study. As I conducted the interviews and analysis for this study, my role in the creation of data and of attributing meaning is significant. When discussing my findings, I have, therefore, tried to remain open to the myriad of interpretations available, whilst also utilising individual and collective contexts to ensure my findings are rigorously interrogated. Yet, simultaneously, I have tried to embrace the fluidity of meaning that Loeventhal (2003) argues is inevitable in research that draws its data from a range of voices. Thus, it has been important to me to foreground my participants with their contribution through the consistent use of excerpts from their interview transcripts that I have then analysed.

5.4 Ethical considerations

The idea that research 'is neither a neutral nor innocent practice' (Sikes, 2006:105) has been at the forefront of my thinking when planning and carrying out this research study. In her paper, Sikes (2006) called for researchers to question their own work and the impact that it has on themselves as well as their participants and the community at large. Similarly, St. Pierre (1997) suggests that we all need to be cognisant of the significance of ethics, whether we take on role of researcher, researched or reader. In her paper, St. Pierre (1997) argues that ethics in the postmodern world is influx and needs to be reconsidered and reconstructed to ensure our practice as researchers and educators is ethical.

I have kept ethical considerations at the forefront of my mind throughout this study. Prior to collecting data, ethical approval was sought from the UK universities where I carried out the research and from the University of Glasgow. In these early stages I submitted exemplar interview questions and an exemplar vignette, in addition to administrative forms like the participant information sheets and consent forms. During data collection I followed Sikes' (2006) advice about being sensitive to participants when collecting and re-presenting research: she specifically highlights the need to try to give something back to participants. For this reason, at the end of each interview I allocated some time for participants to discuss any issues that they felt were relevant to my study. This provided each participant with space to question or discuss aspects that they

felt were significant to them, rather than simply being guided by my research questions.

Prior to beginning this study, I received ethical approval from the University of Glasgow ethics committee. I ensured that I followed ethical requirements throughout my research. King and Ross (2004) use pseudonyms in their paper to ensure the identity of their participants is protected, as well as changing the names of places. Given the small-scale nature of this study, I could not guarantee complete anonymity of my participants, but I chose to use pseudonyms to try to protect my participants identity and enable them to respond to research questions as honestly as possible. Hammersley (2005a) also warns of the social responsibility that researchers have to the public to ensure that their research is not only ethically carried out, but that any recommendations or conclusions that are borne out of a study are clear. Therefore, I have tried to be careful in the analytical phase of my study to ensure my research is presented accurately and clearly, so that others can access it.

5.5 Participant selection

Hong (2010) illustrates the importance of selecting participants whose experiences may be indicative of the group being studied. Hong's (2010) paper states that a disproportionate participant selection in terms of gender resulted in gaps in the data gathered for their study about beginning teachers' professional identity in relation to drop out rates. To avoid this happening in my study, I tried to include participants from across the gender and age range. Day et al. (2006) discuss how the age of teachers has been found to affect how professional identity is constructed. In my research, I have consequently aimed to have participants from across the gender and age range of beginning teachers, so that I could explore how this may impact the construction of professional identity during the early years of a career.

After offering the opportunity to participate in my study to all secondary ITE students at two UK universities, only one student teacher came forward. As a

senior leader in a school in England, I knew that we had newly qualified teachers on the staff and sought permission to contact them and ask if they would be willing to participate in this study. After submitting and being granted an amendment to my ethical approval from the University of Glasgow, three Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) who were employed in my school agreed to participate in my study. The participation of these three NQTs presented an additional ethical issue of a dependent relationship because I am the senior leader who oversees professional development at my school. To ensure that my working relationship with these participants was not compromised, I created an additional participant information sheet that was submitted to the ethics committee and approved, which stated that participation was voluntary and that their participation or non-participation in this study would not affect their employment, and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point. I also assured them that pseudonyms would be used, but that I could not guarantee complete anonymity and confidentiality because of the small-scale nature of this study. The inclusion of NQTs introduced a new dimension to my study, as all three had obtained their Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) by completing school based ITE. My study consequently became broader in terms of participants and shifted to consider beginning teacher professional identity rather than just focusing on university ITE students. I also interviewed teacher educators from the two UK universities to gain an insight into the approach used within universities to support the development of professional identity for beginning teachers.

As my study drew from a wider pool of beginning teacher participants than initially anticipated, the scope of my research changed from being based entirely in university ITE programmes in England, to having to consider the different pathways currently available to enter the teaching profession. Beginning teacher participants from England and ITE staff in an English university were therefore interviewed for this study. In contrast, I was unable to recruit any ITE student participants from Scotland but was able to recruit ITE staff from a Scottish university. Consequently, the data gathered from the ITE staff in Scotland was used as a point of comparison in this study to elicit discussion around how professional identity in ITE is developed in one Scottish TEI.

Although the lack of student participants from Scotland was disappointing, the complexity and richness of the interview responses from the other participants allowed me to explore how professional identity development is being supported in specific ITE contexts and consider how it could be improved in the future in teacher education in England.

One other aspect to note is that the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, shortly after I had finished interviewing my participants. The pandemic resulted in schools and universities being closed around the world, meaning that beginning teachers would have experienced differing levels of support to those described by my participants as schools were closed and all support was provided online. The findings from this study may therefore be less relevant to beginning teachers who qualified during the pandemic because their access to school mentor support and university teacher educator support may have been limited, which may have resulted in differing approaches to professional identity development than described by my participants.

5.6 Interview approach

Interviews are an appropriate and highly effective research method when working within the interpretivist paradigm. Dilley (2004) discusses how interviews should be used in research to explore participants' detailed understanding of a subject, but also to examine the researcher's perspective. Soğanci (2013) states that interviews should be dialogical to ensure they remain within the interpretivist paradigm and suggests that each interview carried out is unique in its representation of a participant's experiences, and that it therefore cannot be repeated or recreated by others. Interviews are also commonly used to research education and professional identity – indeed most studies on identity use interviews as a research method (Opdenakker, 2006; Izadania 2013). Izadania (2013) found that researchers tended not to carry out observations of trainees' teaching to avoid making participants feel uncomfortable but have often combined interviews with other research methods, such as focus groups, to ensure that rich data is produced (Izadinia, 2013).

The acknowledgement made within the research community of the appropriateness of using interviews within interpretivist studies has resulted in discussion about *how* interviews should be used, rather than why. The specific features of interviews are often debated within academic writing. Discussion around how interviews should be conducted, the order, style and subject of questions, and whether comparisons can be drawn between data that is produced in different studies is presented in a number of papers. I will now explain how existing research has influenced my approach to conducting interviews within this study.

My study was restricted by geographical location: interviews were carried out in person when possible, or over Skype to ensure that I was able to still see and hear the participants, which would have not been possible if I had decided to use Instant Messenger or email. Opdenakker (2006) explains how asynchronous forms of communication for both time and place can be difficult to manage as delay can lead to participants giving up quickly, thus, given the circumstances, Skype presented the greatest level of synchronicity for my study when interviews could not be conducted face-to-face. Opdenakker (2006) also warns that face-to-face interviewing can require the researcher to have 'double attention', which can create issues, as they may miss important moments during the interview because they are trying to make notes whilst carrying out the interview. To offset this problem, I audio recorded interviews and focused on taking notes about ideas for follow-up questions. In this way, I have limited the division of my attention to the participants.

A common variation between interviews that can lead to issues during data collection and in the analysis phase of a study, arises due to how questions are structured, uttered, and developed by researchers. Farrall et al. (1997) contend that closed questions have been found in studies to restrict participants' responses, which could in turn inhibit the complexity of any data collected. In Owen's (2014) study on higher education policy, main questions, follow-up and probe questions were used as a strategy to produce in-depth responses from participants. When conducting my interviews, I therefore used open questions

throughout and endeavoured to use follow-up questions to ensure participants explained their thoughts and ideas in detail. The questions that I used were also based on themes derived from my literature review that linked to professional identity. For example, the idea of autonomy in relation to the construction and development of professional identity was discussed during the interviews for both course leaders and student teachers, as the concept of autonomy is often connected to theories around identity (Aviram and Yonah, 2004).

5.7 Student interviews

This study was carried out over the course of academic years 2018/19 and 2019/20 at two UK universities and at one UK school. Postgraduate initial teacher education courses in the UK typically have a duration of one year. Two interviews were conducted with the student teacher participant, so that I could track any development in professional identity over the course of ITE, but also so that the participant was given the opportunity to reflect on his experiences during the training year. The NQT participants and teacher educator participants were interviewed once because they were asked to reflect on their past experiences.

To devise questions that might prompt student participants to explore the formation and development of their professional identity, I referred to previous professional identity literature to identify areas that were relevant to my research. Sammons et al. (2007) found that teacher resilience, well-being and student attainment are linked to retention and commitment. The connection that was identified in their research assisted me when writing potential initial questions for my interview. Sammons et al.'s (2007) study, therefore, incited me to ask my beginning teacher participants about why they became teachers, which, the study argues, connects directly to commitment, as well as whether their course or school placements had discussed resilience as part of their training, and finally, how big an impact student achievement had on how they viewed themselves as professionals. By including questions that built upon previous research, I planned to develop the previous literature whilst simultaneously add new academic commentary of my own.

I conducted two interviews with my one student teacher participant so that changes could be mapped in relation to the formation and progression of their professional identity. Once I had decided, however, that I was going to utilise a double interview structure, I quickly realised that I would need to plan how these two separate interviews would be structured. Rapley (2018) describes how she used interviews that were semi-structured in the early phases of her study, but longer and less structured interviews later to provide opportunities for participants to discuss their own experiences. The initial interview I conducted with my student teacher participant was used as a baseline and the follow-up was used for reflection and comparison. The second interview that was conducted with my student participant was thus used to follow-up and draw comparisons and consequently required less questions. Both interviews were semi-structured to ensure participant responses were focused on professional identity, but that my participant could also discuss issues that were specific to him that I did not expect to find.

Levitan et al. (2018) discuss the use of Pragmatic Identity Analysis (PIA) in their paper. They explain how a three-step method is used: narrative life-story interview, follow-up interview and finally collaborative analysis with each participant, which is used to create and agree on an identity profile for each participant. This method, they argue, facilitates collaborative enquiry, and can help participants and researchers alike engage in a reflective process. For my research, I have used elements of the first two steps in PIA. My follow-up interview was aimed at reflection, whilst my initial interview was used to establish participant ideology and past experiences.

5.8 Course leader interviews

To add another perspective to my study, I decided to conduct interviews with course leaders from each of the UK universities that took part in my study so that they could discuss how professional identity is currently being addressed in ITE. By interviewing course leaders from two UK universities, I have attempted to explore how course leaders' understanding of professional identity affects beginning teacher identity construction and development.

In contrast to the semi-structured interviews used with the beginning teacher interviews, interviews that were conducted with course leaders tended to be less structured, providing greater scope for course leader participants to introduce additional relevant discussion points. I decided that I would plan for greater flexibility when interviewing course leaders because, as Vaughn and Turner (2016) explain, semi-structured interviews can be used in a study to imbue the researcher with greater space and flexibility to let conversations develop naturally, whilst at the same time using a clear objective so any interviews do not lose focus.

5.9 Use of vignettes for student interviews

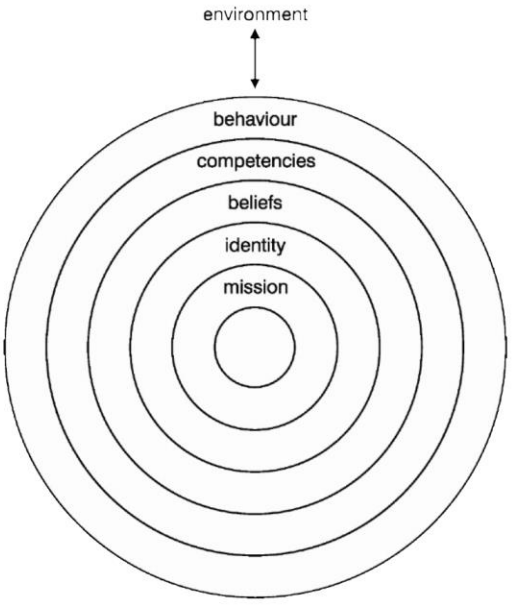
When selecting the research methods that I utilised within this study, I decided to use vignettes as part of the interview process. I set out to develop a system of data collection that could enable interview responses from participants that were in-depth and relevant to the research question. Vignettes were used at the beginning of my student teacher interviews only to put my participant at ease. I initially planned to use vignettes with all beginning teacher participants but decided not to use them with the NQTs as they already knew me.

Vignettes can make use of taken for granted assumptions that enable participants to predict responses to scenarios based upon the synthesis of past experiences or reveal important insights into how participants interpret their own experiences (Jenkins et al., 2010). I presented scenarios to my student teacher participant and asked him to discuss which of the teachers depicted in the scenarios he most aligned his own professional identity with and why. The open nature of this question meant that he was able to discuss all vignettes or focus on one. Consequently, the discussion that followed was focused on professional identity.

Jenkins et al. (2010) explored the use of the same vignettes in multiple interviews with the same participants. They found that some participants reacted differently to the same vignettes the second time round. The difference in response exhibited in this study (Jenkins et al., 2010) and in Rizvi's (2019)

research explains that the use of the same vignettes with different participants can be beneficial as it enables comparisons to be made between their responses. I therefore read the vignettes to my only ITE participant in the initial and follow-up interview. His response to these vignettes enabled me to understand how his sense of professional identity developed over the course of ITE.

It was in Korthagen and Vasalos' (2005) paper that I found guidance on how to structure my vignettes. My initial research highlighted the need to include scenarios that were plausible, but fictional (Jenkins et al., 2010; Rizvi, 2019). This was important to my research question, as I wanted participants to be able to relate to the scenarios they were presented with, but at the same time be aware that they were fictional representations of professional identity. I also wanted to draw on how professional identity construction can be influenced by different factors. In their paper, Korthagen and Vasalos develop the onion model, which is based on Bateson's model (2005):



Korthagen and Vasalos (2005)

This model represents how professionalism is affected by environment, which is pertinent to my study, as beginning teachers experience different contexts and are exposed to different situations through university and practicum. So, when writing my vignettes, I tried to include at least one detail that related to each of the "layers" depicted in this model to provide opportunities for my participant to reflect on different aspects of their own identity construction and development (see Appendix A).

By using vignettes alongside other methods, Rizvi (2019) argues that the credibility of findings can be increased. Therefore, by reading the same vignettes, which depict plausible fictional scenarios that related to Korthagen and Vasalos' (2005) onions model, to my student teacher participant at the beginning of interviews, I was able to increase the richness and authenticity of my data.

Furthermore, Barter and Renold (1999) express how vignettes can be used to obtain responses from participants that would otherwise be hidden, as well as being potentially used as an icebreaker to help participants feel more able to discuss sensitive issues. I used vignettes at the beginning of my student interviews to help my participant feel comfortable and to frame discussions so that they were focused on the research topic. Horsfall and Titchen (2009) cite Mary Maynard as saying that an issue with interviewing as a research method is that an assumption is made that participants will want to talk. Given the fact that my student teacher participant was early in his career when I interviewed him, I needed to be sensitive to the fact that he may have been reluctant to talk. Vignettes thus acted as an ice breaker and allowed him to discuss his experiences in a way that avoided too much emphasis being placed on personal or sensitive matters.

5.10 Data analysis process

Cook argues that data 'does not give out its own meaning, finding that meaning is the researcher's art' (1998:107). Comparing the meaning making element of research to an 'art', suggests that there is something unique and inherently creative about the task of analysing research, which thus makes it a crucial stage in the research process. Similarly, Mellor (2001) discusses how data is something that is stable yet moving, and that we, as researchers must determine meaning. Again, here we see the role of the researcher as a creative and interpretive force is being emphasised. In this final section of my methods discussion chapter, I will consider the significance of analysis to the construction of meaning in interpretivist research studies.

5.10.1 The transcription process

Tilley (2003) warns that researchers can become distanced from research if the transcription process is delegated. For this reason, although the process of transcribing is time consuming, I transcribed all interviews myself manually following each interview by listening to the audio recording and referring to my notes. By engaging in the process of transcription, I have attempted to gain closeness to my research data that, I would argue, would have been lost if I had employed the services of a transcriber. Additionally, Rhodes (2000) takes this idea further and postulates that the researcher, as the creator of the transcript leaves their trace upon it. Rhodes (2000) concludes that decisions made during the transcription process impact how the interview is interpreted and that this makes the act of transcription important to the understanding of data. Consequently, when transcribing my interviews, I tried to be sensitive to my role in this process and attempted to accept the subjective nature of my involvement in transcription. Transcription has been used within this study as part of the analytical process because, as Lemke (2012) explains, the act of creating a transcript of an interview results in the production of an entirely new text, which must be considered in its own right during the analysis process.

5.10.2 Coding

While some research studies advocate the use of computer assisted qualitative data analysis, Sammons et al. (2007) discuss how in their study, NVivo's limitations and the lack of complete data sets meant that the use of the software created challenges. Their study used data from a wider sample than mine, so the use of computer assisted analysis may have seemed appropriate, but I have focused on manual coding so that I can explore subtle nuances. Lemke (2012) also warns that computer analysis programmes are flawed, as they can report back on frequency of data, but not on interpretative meaning. Consequently, meaning may be lost. I would argue that the transcription and analysis process are just as important as the collection of data and that greater closeness to the data can help elicit significant findings that could be lost if software was used. So, instead of using analysis software like NViVo, I have employed a system of emergent and a priori coding as suggested by Blair (2015), who recommends using emergent and a priori coding simultaneously so that the process of coding and analysis is context and subject specific.

Inductive analysis has been used in this study in a similar way to Hong's (2010) study, in which constant comparison was used to explore data produced from questionnaires and interviews on beginning teachers' professional identity and how this related to retention rates. To code my data, however, I coded each interview transcript in isolation first. This helped me to focus on each of my participant's individual experience of how and why their professional identity developed during ITE courses in UK universities. Bailey (2015) and Campbell et al. (2013) contend that inductive and deductive approaches can be used simultaneously when analysing data. For my study, however, I chose to use inductive coding first for each transcript. I then looked at all transcripts and compared the themes that had emerged to ascertain whether there were any similarities or differences between them.

Braun and Clarke discuss how: '…thematic analysis can be both a method which works both to reflect reality and to unpick or unravel the surface of 'reality'' (2006:9). The idea of unmasking that is described here fits within the Foucauldian framework that I have specified earlier in this chapter. Thus, I have used inductive coding to explore my transcripts and find patterns of meaning that occur repeatedly, and then used a deductive approach to look at my data in relation to Clarke's (2009) model.

5.11 Applying the theoretical framework to analysis

When analysing my data, Cook's (1997) argument that conceptual frameworks are necessary to avoid vague or superficial analysis being produced was taken into account. The volume of the data that was likely to be produced by conducting semi-structured interviews suggested to me that there may be complex issues raised that I would not necessarily be able to predict, but that I would need to have a method of sorting my data that would enable me to focus rather than being overwhelmed and distracted by irrelevant data. This led me to think that using a combination of inductive and deductive coding would be beneficial to my study. St. Pierre and Jackson (2014) recommend using theory to first decide what data is relevant to the research question before using

inductive coding to explore it. By doing so, St. Pierre and Jackson (2014) argue that complex data can be analysed in a way that is relevant to the study.

Using a theoretical framework when analysing my data also helped prevent me from getting lost in the local value of the data and helped me to consider the wider significance that my study has. Hill's (2001) paper on state theory, schooling and teacher education warns of this danger, and that the use of a theoretical framework can help to mitigate the risk of this happening. By applying a Foucauldian theoretical lens to discuss the findings of my data analysis, I was able to look at individual contexts, but also recognise similarities and differences that helped generate recommendations that could be used to help beginning teachers in the future construct and develop their professional identities.

I use Foucault's concepts of power, discipline, and care of the self as a theoretical lens to explore how professional identity develops and is important in preparing beginning teachers for the profession. Power is central to who we are and how we behave (Foucault, 2000) because it proliferates throughout society. This concept was important to my analysis as it allowed me to understand how my participants' professional identity is affected by power during their beginning years as a teacher. Power can be also be viewed as being all around us: it is exerted on us and by us, as we internalise it (Foucault, 2000). Yet, at the same time, power cannot exist without resistance (Foucault, 2000). Networks of power are consequently formed that influence how we behave (Foucault, 1986). The result of these networks of power can lead to the development of 'docile' bodies, where individuals internalise power and discipline themselves (Foucault, 1991). Foucault's ideas about how discipline and power can be internalised by individuals enabled me to interpret my participants' responses and consider whether it helps to shape professional identity or to inhibit the development of professional identities by leading individuals to conform to external pressures rather than develop their own sense of professional identity. The idea of resistance led me to explore how my participants responded to the power they experienced and discuss whether it

can be used to empower professionals, contributing to the teaching profession by helping them to shape it now and in the future. I also use Foucault's writing on the care of the self, particularly Foucault's examination of parrēsia, to explore how reflective exercises enable beginning teachers to develop a professional identity that is ethical (1986). Foucault's ideas about how individuals need to work on themselves have been used to allow me to interpret how beginning teachers view and understand who they are as professionals and how they can develop a sense of professional identity at the start of their careers. By utilising these concepts, I explore whether power influences how beginning teachers construct and develop their professional identities, and whether beginning teachers need to question their own identities to regain agency, as well as discussing how this might be achieved.

5.12 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter I have explained the methods that I used to collect and analyse data for this study, as well as the rationale for each method. I utilised semi-structured interviews when interviewing my participants, with vignettes at the start of my student teacher interviews to clarify that the interview was about professional identity. Following each interview, I manually transcribed the audio recordings and then conducted manual inductive coding of each transcript and analysis of key themes, before applying Foucauldian theory to help me interpret the data. In the next chapter I will analyse the interview data from this study to explore my participants' experiences of professional identity development in the beginning years of a teacher's career.

Chapter 6: Data Analysis

6.1 Chapter introduction

In this chapter I analyse my interview data by looking at five themes that emerged. I first consider why professional identity is important based on participants' responses, before looking at how professional identity develops and how this development is supported. I then move on to consider how the state influences professional identity for beginning teachers. My participants spoke about the challenges beginning teachers face when developing their professional identity; I explore this in my fourth theme. Finally, I consider suggestions made by my participants about how they would like professional identity to be developed.

The table below provides information about each of the participants (see also Appendix E and Appendix F):

Participant pseudonym	**Gender**	**Role**	**Significant background details**
Beginning teacher participants			
Daisy	Female	Beginning teacher at beginning of NQT+1 year in a school in England	Mature student teacher. Married with children. Worked in private sector before beginning ITE.
Florence	Female	Beginning teacher at beginning of NQT+1 year in a school in England	Began ITE year immediately after finishing undergraduate degree.

Samuel	Male	Beginning Teacher studying PGCE at university in England	Interviewed twice during PGCE year. Only male participant. Worked in a university as an academic and has a PhD.
Sylvia	Female	Beginning teacher at beginning of NQT year in a school in England	Worked in HR before beginning ITE year.
ITE staff participants			
Arabella	Female	ITE staff at university in England	Leads ITE at university in England. Primary specialist. Works on partnership programme.
Evie	Female	ITE staff at university in England	Secondary specialist. Leads on secondary subject PGCE.
Blair	Female	ITE Staff at university in Scotland	Programme leader and teaches on range of undergraduate/postgraduate courses and worked on partnership programme at university in Scotland.
Helena	Female	ITE staff at university in Scotland	Worked on secondary/primary ITE and partnership programme at university in Scotland.

Ophelia	Female	ITE staff at university in Scotland	Secondary specialist. Teaches on range of undergraduate and postgraduate educational courses at university in Scotland.
Tess	Female	ITE Staff at university in Scotland	Education lecturer at university in Scotland.

6.2 Theme 1: The importance of professional identity

In this section I look at the different factors that contribute to professional identity and consider why professional identity is important based on my participants' responses. I begin by considering how the experiences of beginning teachers before entering the profession can influence how their professional identity emerges. The values and beliefs that beginning teachers base their professional identity on are then identified and discussed. I then shift focus and consider the responses of my teacher educators when discussing the suitability of ITE applicants in relation to professional identity, before considering how personal and professional identities are connected. I find that my participants expressed that successful teachers develop identities where the personal and professional intertwine. In the last sub section, I look at how autonomy can help or hinder professional identity development for beginning teachers.

6.2.1 Life before teaching

In the interviews that I conducted, seven out of ten participants discussed the significance of the experiences of a beginning teacher before entering the profession in the formation of a professional identity. Whilst Samuel chose to focus on his background in academia, Daisy explained how she felt her experience of employment prior to embarking on her year in ITE meant that she had to reconceptualise her identity. The idea of needing to reflect and reconstruct a professional identity was also explored by Evie, who drew on her own experiences training secondary teachers, in support of her observations. In comparison, staff participants Tess, Helena and Blair explored the role that

familial background and a beginning teacher's own time in secondary school can have on how they form their sense of self as professionals. Ophelia, however, presented conflicting ideas about the importance of a beginning teacher's academic record in the formation and development of a professional identity. In the following sub sections, I will examine the responses that the participants in my study gave when asked about how a beginning teacher's life before entering teaching can affect how their professional identity is created and develops in the early years of their career.

Only one beginning teacher participant chose to focus on their academic record as a relevant factor in the development of their professional identity. His academic background consequently seemed to underpin his decision to enter the teaching profession. When asked to think about how his previous identity as an academic related to his time as a PGCE student he said:

> I wrote an essay for the PGCE that everybody read and commented to me that I should publish […] I mean when I left my previous career…when I quit academia…it was kind of very sad for me because I feel…I felt that I failed and teaching was kind of my plan B originally, which now it doesn't feel like that at all. And after this writing, it was like, oh, that's still there. It's still kind of coherent in my career and my personal development.

Samuel's previous academic career, here, is communicated as being significant to how he now develops as a secondary teacher. In this, his second interview, the idea that he initially viewed teaching as something that he chose because he had 'failed' in the world of academia was something that he implied had changed. He uses the verb 'quit' when describing how he left his previous role, suggesting that he felt as though he had given up the academic part of his identity when he decided to become a teacher. Samuel's linguistic choice here could suggest that he does not perceive teaching as being a career that is suitable for highly educated individuals, which may be interpreted as ironic, given that the teaching profession in the UK requires postgraduate qualification. By the time, however, that I interviewed Samuel following the completion of his PGCE, he had begun to recognise the interconnectedness of his previous identity

as a scholar, his personal identity, and his new professional identity as a teacher. Samuel clearly stated that he intends to use his academic background going forward within his new career as a teacher. Although Samuel did not, at first, recognise his strong academic background as being a strength, by the end of his year in ITE he had begun to consider ways that his scholarly perspective and knowledge could be used within the educational field.

When considering the impact of personal identity on professional identity, several participants spoke about how family background influenced their decision to enter the profession and their consequent development. Helena expressed how she 'swore she would never be a teacher'. The lack of interest that she had in teaching as a career path during her youth is perhaps indicative of the way that the teaching profession has been historically viewed. For Helena, growing up in a house with teachers made her initially turn away from the profession, yet the fact that she chose to discuss that her parents were teachers, suggests that her opinion of the profession has now changed, and that she is now proud to continue in their footsteps.

Blair's experiences, however, of how personal background impacts professional identity development may indicate that there is space within the teaching profession for people from a range of backgrounds. In her interview, Blair explained:

> that somebody coming from…um…um…a strong, maybe academic background…um…comes in with maybe a belief in themselves…um…the…possibly have had an offer of other options, not just, well I'll just go into teaching. Um…and possibly that can shape how they view themselves within the profession.

In this passage Blair's comments show how her experience of highly educated student teachers has suggested that an 'academic background' may result in greater confidence in their own ability and identity early in their career. The 'other options' that she says they had, implies that the teaching profession is well respected because it is something that is chosen. Blair's experience and

views on this subject contradict Samuel's views in his first interview but align with his thinking by the end of his PGCE, on how his academic background has impacted his professional identity as a teacher.

Blair also went on to express how the absence of education in a beginning teacher's home can help them to develop a sense of professional identity, but in a different way to those who have strong personal educational backgrounds because:

> They hadn't considered themselves as professionals, but because they've had to fight for it, they've got a very strong sense of professional identity. I think that is very true of some of our young people that come through to university to undertake ITE where maybe they lack confidence because maybe they're the first person to come to university in their family, but I think they very, very quickly…want to fight for it. They want to be part of that profession and I think they're quite proud…um… and quite determined.

By repeating the word 'fight' in this excerpt, Blair is suggesting that those who come from less academic backgrounds may develop a stronger sense of identity because they have had to actively, and possibly even aggressively, pursue their career. Although Blair's views here present two opposing perspectives on this subject, it may show that there is no ideal familial or academic background that student teachers should have, and that it is the way that professional identity is developed that is more significant to whether a beginning teacher is able to develop a strong sense of professional identity.

When asked about previous employment and how that had or had not impacted the development of a professional identity, the beginning teachers interviewed had a range of responses. Florence had come straight from her undergraduate degree and therefore had no experience of previous employment to draw on. Sylvia in comparison had worked in HR, which she described as a 'professional' role, but did not express any ideas about how this had impacted her role as a

teacher. Samuel, as previously discussed, had a background that was grounded in academia and focused on how this presented its own issues. Only Daisy, however, related her previous employment to her beginning teacher experience. She explained how her role as a kitchen designer for a large company created issues that she had to overcome at the start of her training:

> I've never been around young people quite a lot because my work was mostly with adults when I was in ----. I'd work with adults and I'd go to their house and I'd design their kitchen, and so on. But it took some time to actually…you know…open up to young people and I was…I came across as really strict, and because I was strict, I came across a bit negative, and I was very concerned with more of the subject knowledge.

Daisy's acknowledgement of her lack of contact with young people demonstrates the difference in skills needed to work within the teaching profession. For her, a career change later in life meant that she had to learn how to build relationships with students in school, rather than exert her power as a teacher. Describing her initial approach to her professional identity as 'strict' and 'negative', she highlighted how her ability to work within the profession required her to reconsider how she presented herself as a professional within a classroom to ensure she was able to support students in their learning.

6.2.2 Confidence/natural personality

One of the subthemes that emerged in the interviews that I conducted for this study was the idea that innate confidence is a preferable quality in beginning teachers, but also that a trainee's confidence is something that needs to be developed as part of their professional identity. Attention was also given by some of the ITE staff participants to this theme. Out of the beginning teachers interviewed, Samuel and Sylvia chose to speak about how their level of confidence at the beginning of their ITE year influenced how they developed their professional identity. Florence and Daisy, in comparison, did not explore this theme at all in their interviews. Ophelia, Arabella and Tess were the only staff participants that addressed the issue of confidence, but their exploration of this theme was dominated by the idea of confidence being intrinsically linked to power.

Sylvia, for example, conveyed her thoughts about how she had struggled to develop a confident persona during her ITE year, and how this uncertainty had persisted as she began her NQT year: 'That's how I saw it, and I think, god, the way I speak, what if I've got to meet their parents, they might see me as like less of a teacher because I'm not…not your typical teacher looks like or sounds like'. Here we can see how Sylvia's apprehension stemmed from how she felt she might be perceived by parents. Her comments centre on the idea that she believes that there is a 'typical teacher', but that she does not fit into that mould, and therefore may be viewed as 'less of a teacher'.

Arabella's ideas on the importance of a student teacher's personal identity prior to beginning their ITE year, reinforce the idea that it is crucial in the development of a professional identity. Speaking about the selection process that is used for the ITE course that she works on, she said:

> so it's all about them being able to talk and express who they are because actually that's the big indicator of how…about how they'll be like in the classroom. It's recognising again that…that grounded feeling…that there's actually a person there. We can't just go from nothing. We start from where the student is…

In this excerpt we can see how Arabella has made a connection between a person's pre-teaching identity and the identity that they develop once they enter their training year. Her comment that, as course leaders, they 'start from where the student is' suggests that professional identity is dependent on any previous notions of identity. For Arabella, this needs to be communicated during the selection process through the candidate's ability to 'talk and express who they are', as it gives her a sense of what they'll 'be like in the classroom', Her comments on how they 'can't just go from nothing' implies that the personal identity of beginning teachers forms the foundation of their emerging professional self. Her use of the word 'grounded' also suggests that the personal identity that beginning teachers have before beginning ITE needs to be stable if they are to succeed within the teaching profession.

While Samuel expressed some uncertainty about his professional identity in his first interview (conducted shortly after he had begun his second school experience placement), by the end of his ITE year he expressed a certainty about who he was. Reflecting on his professional identity after completing the course, he said, 'I knew already what type of teacher I was'. His repetitive use of the personal pronoun 'I' in this quotation suggests how self-assured he was by the time he achieved QTS, although, his reduction of identity to a 'type' might suggest that he felt professional identity was a generalised concept that could be easily defined. This may represent his confidence in his own ability or may suggest that he felt his personal identity was not that different to his teaching persona, but it may also reveal that Samuel believed he was already capable of being a teacher, and that his year in ITE did not actually support him in the development of his professional identity.

In her interview, Ophelia drew on her experiences to interrogate the importance of personal identity for beginning teachers. Ophelia contended that a student teacher's 'personal identity is massive in the mechanics in driving and now they're kind of starting to relax into…um…you know, they can be more creative and they can…allow themselves to relax a bit and be less of the teacher and more of this is me…'. Ophelia's perspective on why personal identity is significant in this comment refers to how personal identity can be beneficial to the creation of professional identity. She suggested that by utilising personal identity to form professional identity, beginning teachers may be able to be more innovative in their role. She also states that this may enable them to reveal more of who they are.

While Ophelia suggested that personal and professional identity are interlinked, she presented the idea that it is necessary for beginning teachers to forge a new identity to be successful as teachers:

> Um…yeah…it…so much depends on the personality…um….we have some that need a lot of support to help them construct…um…a

> professional identity, which is based on the personal identity, but just a bit more assertive, a bit more…um…a bit more…not controlling, although I suppose controlling is kind of what we want in their identity…a bit more managerial. That's a better one. You know, so that they are able to manage the resources, the planning, the….um…classroom organisation etc, etc, etc. Some students take to that very quickly and others need a great deal of support both from us in the university and from the schools as well.

Ophelia's frequent hesitations reveal an uncertainty about how professional identity develops during the ITE year. Using words like 'controlling', 'assertive' and 'managerial' to describe the professional identity that beginning teachers need to construct, she creates an image of a teacher who is concerned with power above all else and suggests that this is possibly an intentional feature of ITE support. She does, however, go some way to recognise the diverse needs of individual student teachers by acknowledging that the level of support required during ITE can vary depending on what a beginning teacher's personal identity is before beginning the course.

Later in the interview, Ophelia's responses show that, despite discussing her ideas about how personal and professional identities relate, she still had no fixed ideas about how they connect. Ophelia said: 'you may have a different professional identity…um…with one set of learners than another you…you know you're…I think it's a very difficult one to answer…so I'm not sure that I have answered it that well or that I can answer it because it's so personal'. Ophelia's concession here that it is 'personal' and therefore 'difficult' to answer signals a recognition that whilst personal identity may be important to some beginning teachers, for others it may have little significance. Thus, Arabella's comments about how personal identity before beginning ITE is significant, when used in conjunction with Ophelia's interview responses, may be interpreted as an indication of the need to help student teachers develop a professional identity that is analogous to a beginning teacher's professional identity.

6.2.3 The importance of values

In the interviews that I conducted with Florence and Samuel the idea of ethical values was discussed. Both participants referred to their values before entering the teaching profession, and both spoke about how they felt these pre-formed values were significant in their creation of a professional identity at the beginning of their careers.

Florence's ethical background led her to seek her first teaching position after leaving ITE in a school in England that appeared to support her ideas about education. Florence discussed in her interview how she had been attracted to the school because the school's core values were coherent with her own. When I asked her whether she felt her values had been influenced by the school that she is currently employed in, she said, 'but I don't think if I went to another school it would necessarily change to align. So, with that, I do think my sort of personal opinion of things, it wouldn't change necessarily'. Her repetition of the word 'necessarily' suggests that her ethical stance is established but may be subject to modification. It may also be an example of hedging because she is early in her career and accepts that values, like identity can be modified as a person develops. Yet, simultaneously, her use of imperative in 'I don't think' implies that Florence sees no need to change her ethical position. This could also show that Florence's ability to fit within a school and develop outstanding teaching practice could be inhibited if she were to be employed at a school that threatened her ethical position.

Samuel, like Florence, expressed how his ethical stance has played a significant role in the formation of his professional identity as a teacher. He explained in his second interview how he has 'always tried to be very coherent in my life with my politics and my ethics and my practices and….you know most of my political training was in feminism, so it's a lot about self-reflection and…and self-correction as well, so from that discipline, perhaps I've never…it was not that radical…so the coherence was always the thing that was always up in front of me every single step…'. The idea that his work has always been 'coherent' to his values provides some guidance as to how he has approached his work as an

academic and as a beginning teacher. Rather than separate out his new role in school from his previous work within academia, he is therefore clear in his objective to align his personal values and previous experience with his practice as a teacher. He does concede though that his ideas are 'not that radical' because his interest in 'feminism' focuses on the ideas of 'self-reflection' and 'self-correction', which are all qualities that are encouraged within the teaching profession. From his responses, it could also be interpreted that his focus on feminist politics fits comfortably within a profession that has been traditionally perceived as feminine. Yet, at the same time, it may be inferred that he has deliberately chosen the teaching profession because it centres around these qualities, which are coherent within his ethical point of view. Either way, Samuel's discussion around this topic suggests that for him, personal ethics were an important consideration when deciding to begin ITE, and that they have helped him to establish his role as a beginning teacher without having to abandon his personal beliefs.

In their interviews, both Samuel and Florence chose to expand on their ideas about how gender and sexuality needed to be addressed in schools, and how they felt that their personal values were crucial to their identity and ability to explore these issues in schools. Florence spoke about how '…Things to do with gender and sexuality, as well. That's something that I feel it's really my job to educate people…the kids on because it's changed so much now and I have the opportunity to say and do things that actually people needed when I was at school…' and how 'that really sort of aligns up with my sort of beliefs, and everything, yeah. That definitely is merged in'. Florence, here, clearly specifies her personal belief that 'gender and sexuality' should be explored within the classroom, and that it is her responsibility to address these issues. Her use of the word 'personal' and repetition of personal pronouns shows that she has taken ownership of these topics in her classroom because she feels they are significant, but also her reference to her own experience of school as a student suggests that she feels the current education in schools is failing in this area. Consequently, her personal sense of ethics has been 'merged' with her professional identity.

Florence's ITE year was spent training in schools rather than undertaking a PGCE that was run by a university. She may therefore have felt more able to incorporate her personal values and interests into her role as a teacher. On the other hand, Florence may have felt that she needed to draw upon her individual values more because she was not supported by a university ITE course in the same way that someone like Samuel was. Thus, her personal identity in terms of her ethical beliefs may have been more prominent in the development of her professional identity because she developed her beginning teacher self in a more isolated environment and consequently needed to develop 'rules of conduct that were more personal'.

Samuel also spoke about how he felt strongly that sexuality needs to be explored in schools, however, his commentary was directly related to his sense of ethics within academia. In his interview, he explained how he felt there was a 'lack of language' that could be used to discuss sexuality with students in schools. Samuel's responses within the interview on this subject presented his ethically formed reflective nature:

> only because I have had more conversations perhaps, because, as I say, I have had the time, which some teachers don't do, of talking in academic spaces, in more sexual spaces about why people want this education to be there, but not always listening to the parents about why they don't want it to be there. You know, this is why I say we do not have any language in between. It's like either they're homophobic of they're not, or they're indoctrinating us, but what's happening in between, and what happens in a school that not everybody knows. I think that one thing that I learned…

Samuel's discussion here about this topic needs to be considered from different angles so that a 'language in between' can be found, reveals how his ethical position is open to different viewpoints. He attributes this to his academic experience working in a university in England because he argues that this has allowed him to have 'more conversations' and 'time' to develop his appreciation

of this topic. Samuel's use of the word 'indoctrinating' also infers a strong ideological position, or at the very least, an acknowledgement of the role of ideology in schools. Simultaneously, Samuel demonstrates how his sense of ethics has developed in his role as a beginning teacher. Saying 'I think that one thing that I learned', Samuel is implying that his understanding of how ethics fits within schools has evolved since beginning ITE.

Although Samuel and Florence both felt that their ethical values were significant in their professional identity formation, there are key differences between how each has translated their sense of ethics into their roles as beginning teachers. Samuel's experiences have helped him to realise that his approach to the topic of sexuality is different to others within the profession, but this has helped him to open himself to alternative viewpoints. In comparison, Florence seems to have embraced the idea that her professional identity is her personal identity.

6.2.4 Deciding on the suitability of ITE applicants

In my interviews with ITE staff, discussion around the application procedures employed, and how these potentially related to the personal and professional identity of beginning teachers was discussed. Ophelia's discourse highlighted that, within her university, ITE staff are looking for specific personal qualities during the interview process:

> I think it may be dependent on the kind of character the person has going into teaching. We try very hard in interviews to look for people we kind of think we can see in front of the class. Um…in the interviews, sometimes we have people who are very quiet, but you just get a sense that they're…that they're comfortable in their own skin and that's really important for a teacher.

Her initial comment on how they focus on the candidate's identity 'going into teaching' suggests that previous personal identity has an impact on whether they will be able to successfully enter the teaching profession. Ophelia, however, is careful not to be overly specific in her expansion of this, and instead, she describes the quality that is looked for as being 'comfortable in their own skin'.

This vague description implies that an ideal beginning teacher is someone who has a stable sense of self. Whilst this may be because teachers are expected to be capable of dealing with change and maintain a calm exterior for their students, it could also suggest that there is a myriad of different personal identities that suit the profession. Ophelia's comment that even 'very quiet' applicants can be accepted onto an ITE course, further implies that there is no ideal identity for a teacher. Her explanation of how they aim to find people who they 'can see in front of the class' though suggests that there is some sort of predetermined expectation of what a teacher is that underlies their search for student teachers. This predetermined image may result in a specific kind of person being given a place on ITE courses and potentially link to society's perception of what a teacher's identity should be, rather than what their professional identity could or should be.

Helena's discussion around the admissions process for ITE courses in Scotland further support Ophelia's assertion that something specific is being looked for during the interview process. Helena stated that she 'can tell within five minutes of meeting a student whether they will make it as a teacher', conveying her belief that there is some sort of innate quality that is desired. Her use of 'five minutes' emphasises how quickly a decision is made regarding applicants. Helena's use of the phrase 'make it' suggests that she is measuring the applicants against a set of criteria that she has determined in advance of the selection process, but she does not explain what this criterion is based upon.

Evie shared her thoughts about the application process utilised within the university in England that she works in; her comments may imply that she is trying to protect the student teachers she works with from the 'dangers' that the teaching profession in England may be seen to present. In her interview, Evie states: 'I find that those I interview, I usually recruit. I look very carefully at the personal statement, and there are certain signs in the personal statement'. The written statement required within the application for ITE courses in England is then used by Evie to determine whether a candidate is suitable for the profession. Evie continued her comments on the personal

statement and discussed how ‘well meaning’ and ‘laudable’ ideas often signal to her that student teachers are ‘going to be very disappointed in schools’ due to the reality of education in England, where everything ‘has to be done within a certain framework…about…over which we’ve got very little power’. Whilst Evie’s acknowledgement of the lack of power that teachers have within schools in England and her belief that she is in some way protecting student teachers from being ‘disappointed’ may be indicative of her desire to ensure beginning teachers can cope in a challenging profession, it may also signify how government led strategies are so embedded within teaching that those within the profession are now no longer able to recognise them.

6.2.5 Intertwined personal and professional identities

Florence said that she thinks ‘that in your personal life what you do…you do have to consider what you do more carefully because you have a responsibility to be a role model and you…there’s no way that that wouldn’t cross over to your personal life’, later adding that ‘It should be seamless’. The sense of responsibility that Florence conveys in this quotation by recognising how she needs to act ‘carefully’ demonstrates how she has connected her personal and professional identities. She also recognises that as a teaching professional she is ‘a role model’ to young people, and that her thoughts and actions can therefore be subjected to scrutiny. Florence’s response to the marrying of her personal and professional identities is positive overall, as she comments that ‘it should be seamless’, suggesting that she thinks the professional identity and personal identity of a teacher need to be interconnected.

Daisy, like Florence, thought that her professional identity had merged with her personal identity. When asked in her interview about how she would introduce herself to people whom she met outside of work, she responded by saying: ‘I would introduce myself as a teacher’. Daisy’s decision to define her identity outside of work as a ‘teacher’, suggests that she is not only proud of her professional status, but also that she views her role as a ‘teacher’ as the most dominant aspect of her identity. Her profession, therefore, can be viewed as significant to her personal and professional identity, showing how the two have

integrated in response to her entering the teaching profession. It may, however, be argued that this is not necessarily to do with teaching, but rather an indication of Daisy's commitment to employment, as we do not know if she would respond in a similar way if she had a different job.

Helena's personal and professional experience of the professional identity of teachers likewise indicates that professional identity and personal identity often become one and the same thing:

> I think it is…I think if people….if you go on holiday and you're lying at the pool in Marbella or wherever you are, and you get talking to somebody beside you and you discover that you're both teachers, you end up talking about teaching. And, I think that's partly because it does become a part of your personal identity as well.

Helena's experience of how professional identity can dominate a person's sense of self is illustrated by the image of how teachers 'on holiday', in her experience, end up meeting and talking about teaching with other teachers. This supports the idea that professional identity and personal identity can become inextricably linked 'because it does become a part of your personal identity as well'. Whilst the idea that teachers spend their 'holiday' time fixating on work, may imply that work-life balance can become difficult in the profession, it also suggests that professional identity can help teachers to develop relationships with others in unusual places based upon their shared identity features.

Samuel's comments around how a teacher's professional and personal identity connects, though, raise a variety of points. As the only beginning teacher interviewed twice, his perspective on how his personal identity has connected with his professional identity represent a progression that is not as apparent in the other interviews I conducted. In Samuel's initial interview he spoke a lot about his plans outside of schools. For example, he explained his predictions for his future professional development: 'To teach teachers or something…'. Samuel states here how he thinks he will not remain a class teacher long term.

Yet, at the same time, Samuel conveys that he will stay within education in some way because he thinks he will 'teach teachers or something'. He continued in the same interview to say: 'I would still see myself somehow going back to the academic element of pedagogy'. Samuel's personal background as an academic seems here to be connecting with his professional identity as a teacher; it appears that he wants to combine the two as he gets older by 'going back to the academic element of pedagogy'. His belief that he will take on a role that combines teaching and academia demonstrates how his personal and professional identities have begun to feed into one another.

Samuel seems to have found the ability to connect his personal and professional identities early in his ITE year, as he discussed in detail how he was able to cope with a challenging second school experience placement because 'I already recognised myself as a teacher'. His lexical choice of 'recognised' infers a strong sense of personal identity that has enabled him to stay strong, but his use of the personal pronoun 'I' could suggest that he felt others did not see him as a teacher. Samuel's confidence though could reveal that his strong sense of personal identity is dominant in the formation of his professional identity. Furthermore, Samuel's discussion in his second interview of some of his peers on his ITE course, support the view that personal and professional identities need to intertwine for student teachers to succeed in the profession: 'There were two who decided not to do NQT, which I think was good. One thing that you learn is that it is such a vocational job. It's the best job in the world if you put your heart in it. Otherwise, it's the worst'. His view that teaching is a 'vocational job' suggests that it is something that will be dominant in your personal life as well. Samuel positions the teaching profession as being a calling by explaining how you must 'put your heart in it'. The metaphor used by Samuel presents teaching as an emotive career choice that requires complete commitment, but also as something that you can love because of the romantic connotations of 'heart'. His acknowledgement that the profession can be 'the worst' if you are not able to commit to it fully shows that he has realised that teaching needs to fit personally and professionally with a person.

Samuel's experience of his ITE year has helped him to appreciate how a teacher's personal and professional identity are interconnected:

> Yeah, my first placement, I realised how emotional this was going to be. You know, whenever I hear an inspiring teacher talking to a group, I just end up on the edge of crying. It really touches me and it feels…it's amazing, you know. I think this is what other teachers describe as the moment that makes it worth… you know when you see teachers being very…really, really meaning what they say…so many inspirational things to kids…you know….there's….I think that was one of the biggest learning points…it made me realise how beautiful this job is going to be. You know…and again the type of staff that I want to work with and the school that I want to work with. I think it's not about the difference with the type of kids, it's the type of staff…you know, everybody really committed that personal level.

Samuel's description of how emotive he has become about his professional role and the impact that it can have is highlighted by how he feels 'on the edge of crying' at times. The positive adjectives of 'amazing', 'inspirational' and 'beautiful' in this quotation show how Samuel views his profession with high regard and creates an image of a meaningful career that is hugely rewarding. The suggestion that teachers need to relate and be 'committed' at a 'personal level' imply that the personal and professional sides of a teacher's identity are crucial to developing a successful working environment. It may, however, suggest that Samuel has unrealistic expectations when it comes to the staff that he works with, as not everyone may share his level of commitment to the profession. Samuel does, though, recognise that appreciating the emotional side of teaching has been 'one of the biggest learning points' for him during his ITE.

Samuel's recognition of the importance of his personal identity within the formation and development of his professional identity is also apparent in his growing sense of responsibility: 'So, I think it's making more responsible and the way I see the world…whatever…even whatever critic I do…whatever conversation I have…I want it to be relevant for someone. It makes me think that every single step that I do there is someone behind me'. Samuel's explanation here shows

how his professional identity is influencing his personal identity because it is making him 'more responsible' in terms of how he sees 'the world'. By applying his new perspective to things outside teaching, he is implying that his personal and professional identities are now interrelated. Samuel repeats the word 'whatever' twice, which foregrounds how his professional identity effects all facets of his life now. The final image used by Samuel in this quote of how 'there is someone behind' him all the time represents how the expectations of teaching professionals and the power that influences teachers extends beyond the school gates and therefore impacts the personal identity of teachers as well. In his interviews, Samuel posits this influence as a positive factor, but this may not be the case for all beginning teachers, who may prefer to have a defined separation between their personal and professional identities.

Sylvia's discussion around the relationship between her personal and professional identity contrasted Samuel's in some respects. When first asked about whether the development of her professional identity had impacted her personal identity, she said:

> Um…nuh…I don't think so. I don't think it's affected my personal identity because I do think I am the same in that sense. Er…yeah, I don't think it's affected my personal identity. I just think that sometimes I want my personal identity to come out more through my professional identity…through my professional identity more when I'm teaching.

Sylvia's response to this question shows that she believes the two are separate. She states that her personal identity is 'the same in that sense', inferring that her personal identity is different to her professional identity. Sylvia's frequent hesitations and use of fillers, such as 'Um' and 'Er', however, suggest that she is still working through her thoughts on this subject. As her thinking progresses in this excerpt, she expands by saying that she 'sometimes' wants her 'personal identity to come out more through' her 'professional identity'. This could signify a change in her views on how personal and professional identities connect, and may suggest that as her career progresses, she may begin to merge the two together more.

However, Sylvia also presented tension between her personal identity and professional identity in a negative light. When discussing the behaviour policy at the schools she has worked, she expressed some antipathy:

> See, I…see, it kind of goes against everything because I feel like…I almost sometimes feel sorry for children because I feel like they're going from class…they've got six lessons, five lessons a day where they've just got to sit down and be quiet, and I feel like that's not what kids are supposed to do. So, I…I always thought that, you know, you need to let them, you know, they need to talk, they need to be able to just…the off task chatter…it's natural.

Her comments here demonstrate that she does reflect on her role as an educator and consider the impact of her action from different perspectives. Sylvia clearly displays empathy for students, yet her personal identity is seeping in here to her professional role, as she is beginning to question aspects of the systems that exist in schools which 'kind of goes against everything' and that she feels 'that's not what kids are supposed to do'. These comments may be a result of inexperience in the profession, but they may also be an indication that Sylvia is struggling to align her own personal identity with her professional identity as a teacher. She repeats the word 'need' three times ('you need to let them, you know, they need to talk, they need to be able to just…') implying she thinks it is imperative that schools change their approach to behaviour management. Her use of the verb 'feel', when discussing this subject, suggests that she is approaching the topic emotionally. Thus, her use of emotive language indicates that she is drawing on her personal identity more than professional identity in this excerpt.

The tension between Sylvia's personal and professional identity is communicated later in the interview as well, when she says: 'See, I think…I think most teachers…well no, probably not most teachers, probably just me, actually. I would want them to see me as a…you wanna say fun…'. Sylvia's realisation that she wants to be perceived by students as 'fun', and that this is not likely to be the same for 'most teachers', signifies that she does not fully associate herself

with the profession. In the quote, she foregrounds her difference by saying 'just me', and therefore isolates her professional identity. This may reveal that she has not accepted her role as a teacher. The difficulties that Sylvia faced in aligning her personal and professional identities may also have been an early indication that she would leave the profession within three years of qualifying.

Evie's comments about how she asks student teachers to think about themselves and their own professional identity to avoid them being 'swallowed up'. Evie explained:

> when they come on the course, I try to swivel that around a little bit, so that they start thinking about them, which might sound…less laudable, but they have to start thinking about their own professional identity in order to have some kind of rein on that situation. Otherwise, they run the risk of being swallowed up by this massive need in the system.

There is a sense from her words that the education system in England can pose a threat to beginning teachers who do not have a strong grasp of their own identity. Her belief that this is 'less laudable' shows that she feels some may criticise her approach because it places the individual above the work that they do, but it also reflects a concern about how teachers are often subject to power mechanisms that may not be in their best interest. The fact that she asks student teachers to be confident about their own identities may imply that understanding their personal identity and professional identity, and how they interlink, can help them to create and sustain a sense of self as they progress in their careers.

6.2.6 Autonomy and identity

Florence explained in her interview how in her current school, as an NQT, she has 'quite a lot of autonomy'. The word 'lot' suggests that the level of autonomy afforded to her as a beginning teacher is reasonably high. Yet, when asked about whether this was the same during her ITE year, she said: 'it was just so structured in the first year, and I can see why because lots of people, I think, really need that every single…every single week, every single lesson, but I don't

think it works for everyone'. Her comments on her year in ITE suggest that the 'structured' approach did not suit her, as she quickly changes the discussion from one that is about her personal experience to a more general discussion about 'everyone'. The repetition and hesitation of 'every single…every single week, every single lesson' may have been used to exaggerate the level of control and lack of autonomy because it infers a system that is based around micromanagement.

Later in the interview, Florence chose to elaborate on her points on autonomy when she explained that she preferred working in her current school as an NQT because 'teaching is not straightforward, it's not a straight line. It happens differently, and learning happens differently, and there's no pressure that it's happening a certain way, and I think that's what makes it easier'. Florence's final comment on autonomy shows that the freedom to dictate how learning happens in her classroom has given her greater confidence, as the lack of 'pressure' to conform has made her life 'easier'. Florence appreciates that learning is 'not a straight line', implying that she recognises that each student is unique, and that her job as a teacher is to ensure varying needs are met.

Sylvia's perspective on the need for autonomy as a teaching professional, in comparison to Florence's, suggest that she is uncertain of whether a sense of autonomy is beneficial to beginning teachers. When asked about whether she felt a sense of autonomy was important to the development of her professional identity she said: 'Well, I think…I think that you should…like thinking about it, yeah, you should…you should. It makes sense. It's your classroom, but then I guess it all depends on the school'. Sylvia's hesitations, repetition of the words 'like', 'think' and 'should', and use of the hedging phrase 'I guess it all depends' imply that she is still trying to form her opinion on this subject. It may be that Sylvia has never thought about whether autonomy is relevant to professional identity. Or it could be that she prefers to have less autonomy in general. Her comment that 'It makes sense' may reveal that her ideas about professional identity are different to Florence's. It is apparent from this quote, that Sylvia is keen to follow the instructions given to her by the school that she works in, as

she says, ‘it all depends on the school’. This final comment may infer that Sylvia’s professional identity is more malleable than Florence’s. Thus, Sylvia may find that her professional identity varies depending on context, which could be useful if she works in a range of schools. It could, however, prove challenging, if she is employed in a school that is founded on a system of teacher autonomy because she may not be able to cope with greater independence.

In Tess’s interview, she explained how the development of beginning teacher autonomy is addressed in the ITE courses she is involved in: ‘I do support the development of autonomy…um…that is huge in my agenda and I want those skills to grow and develop…and really…um…flourish, I guess’. Tess was clear that she did not feel able to speak on behalf of others involved in ITE but articulated that it ‘is huge in’ her ‘agenda’, highlighting that she prioritises this area when working with ITE students. Her use of the verbs ‘grow’, ‘develop’ and ‘flourish’ suggest that the work that she does is only the beginning of the process, and that her input is designed to facilitate autonomy. Tess’s comment that ‘skills’ are needed also implies that autonomy is not something that can be taught, and that she recognises the need for different ‘skills’, which can then enable an autonomous professional identity. She does, though, convey a sense of doubt about how she supports autonomy when she says ‘I guess’, which could relate to the abstract nature of the concept of autonomy, or could be linked to the fact that she, herself, does not have complete freedom over how student teachers are educated.

Tess discussed the methods that she uses to encourage autonomy during the ITE year. Speaking about how she approaches supporting student teacher autonomy she said:

> ‘I don’t prescribe for them…um…they have pretty much free reins in terms of what they can do…what they want to teach. All the same, it depends on what the department wants as well. I don’t prescribe…and I think I do that because I want to see who they become’.

Tess's description demonstrates how she relates greater autonomy during ITE to the development of a professional identity because she explains that she tries to give student teachers greater freedom in terms of what they do so that she can 'see who they become'. Therefore, a correlation between autonomy and identity can be drawn. Her decision to give them 'free reins in terms of what they can do' may suggest that she is trying to empower student teachers, so that they feel able to act autonomously at the beginning of their career as a qualified teacher. Tess's attempt to develop autonomy, however, is countered by 'what the department wants as well', possibly showing that she, like the student teachers she educates, is restricted to some extent by the expectations and requirements of the institutions and stakeholders involved in ITE.

Helena's experiences of autonomy when supporting beginning teachers suggest that some may find it difficult to develop this aspect of their professional selves:

> I think for teachers who struggle with the idea of autonomy, if they're really good teachers they find a way to make it work. They…they speak to an experienced mentor, or their headteacher, or their principal teacher, or colleagues and friends at the school and they say, how do you do this…or how can I do this? They then maybe get themselves involved in a working party so that they influence the thinking or they…they make something work in the classroom. They bring other people along with them so that there's a change in the school.

What Helena describes here implies a journey that beginning teachers need to embark on. Rather than finding the concept of autonomy easy to grasp, she talks about how 'they find a way to make it work', inferring a sense of struggle that involves them seeking support from their 'colleagues'. Her assertion that 'if they're really good teachers' they will succeed, seems to suggest that those who are not 'good' may be unable to develop an autonomous professional identity. Based upon Helena's observations, autonomy, therefore, can be interpreted as a complex set of skills and characteristics that is only accessible to the best in the profession. A willingness to actively seek assistance, work with others and reflect in this process is also suggested when she says that they

ask questions. Helena's excerpt ends with a sense of hopefulness, as she explains how those who manage to develop a sense of autonomy use it to influence 'change in the school'.

Daisy's experience of autonomy during her ITE year contrasts with the other participants. I asked Daisy to specifically think about her training year and how much autonomy she had, and she responded by telling me that 'It was regimented'. The military diction of 'regimented' indicates that Daisy felt she had no say in how she taught or what she learnt as a student teacher. It could, however, also imply that her ITE course was meticulously planned. Whilst Daisy did not appear to feel that this level of control was an issue for her personally, for other student teachers it may have felt restrictive. Also, although Daisy did not perceive the 'regimented' nature of her ITE course negatively, it may have impeded her progress as a teacher without her realising it because she may not have been given the opportunity to learn by taking risks.

Interestingly, Samuel also recognised a lack of autonomy in his ITE course, but, unlike Daisy, he felt that this was detrimental to his progress as a beginning teacher. In his first interview, Samuel elaborated on his view that the ITE course he was enrolled in was, in his opinion, not supporting the development of his autonomy as a professional. He explained how the university he was attending insisted that all student teachers were 'being pushed to master the methodology' that the ITE course focused on. The methodology that was being espoused by his course teachers was 'heavily based on singing'. This presented an issue for Samuel because: 'I hate singing…I really hate…and I when I got observed at points I got marked down because I do not sing'. Samuel's experiences therefore led him to conclude that his ITE course was 'very authoritarian'. His assertion that he 'really hate[d]' the methodology reflects the extremity of his reaction to this methodology being forced upon him. By stating that he was 'marked down' because he failed to conform to his university ITE tutor's methods, he is presenting his opinion as fact. Although this may be the case, it may also be that there were other issues with the lesson observed that he did not recognise.

In his first interview, Samuel did, however, further justify why he was unhappy with the approach taken by his ITE provider:

> so I said that there were parts of methodology that I don't feel comfortable with…and she said like…yeah…but it works for the kids…you know I think having done all the experience of pedagogy, I was like, no…you are wrong…if you cannot depart from methodology it's just like the teacher becomes this blank…white canvas…that's just reproducing the methodology.

Samuel's 'experience of pedagogy' as an academic made him feel confident enough to question his mentors and tell them they are 'wrong'. While Samuel's experience in this respect is unlikely to be shared with other beginning teachers, it does suggest that the level of autonomy allowed across ITE courses may be inconsistent. In this excerpt, Samuel comes across as being forceful in his refusal to comply with the methodology, stating that he does not 'feel comfortable', and clearly articulating that he will not employ the methodology in his lesson by saying 'no'. At times, this may make Samuel seem like he is arrogant because he is unwilling to take the advice of his tutor, but the imagery used to describe why he feels this way helps to support his responses. The idea of a teacher losing their identity is represented by the image of a 'blank…white canvas', suggesting a professional who has nothing to give to the profession, someone who can even potentially be manipulated. Samuel seemed to desire greater autonomy and was not afraid to voice this. While his tutor's view that 'it works for the kids' may be an accepted rationalisation on Samuel's ITE course, Samuel's refusal to use it may help create change and 'determine the conduct of others', including his tutor's. Consequently, it may create space for other methodologies that may be beneficial to beginning teachers and the students that they work with in schools.

When reflecting on his school experience placements, Samuel explained that the level of autonomy given to him differed between schools. At his first placement he said he 'had a lot of freedom' that led him to 'kind of improvise', but in his second school, he stated: 'I did not have a lot of freedom of who I wanted to be

as a teacher…but it did feel like they were lending me their classroom, but they were not going to take risks'. Samuel conveys in this quote that he had greater autonomy in his first school, however, the word 'improvise' implies that he was not given guidance and was almost making things up as he went. Samuel made it clear in the interview that he felt that this improvisation was positive. Although this may have helped him to find his own identity as a teacher, it may have also led to lessons that were less successful where he was learning through error rather than developing successful practice. His perspective on his second placement captures the temporary nature of his placement by referring to 'lending'. However, it may also reveal that the teachers he was working with did not want to risk their students' progress by allowing him to take risks. Samuel's desire to 'improvise' may indicate that his professional identity at this stage of ITE was centred around taking risks, which may have been important to his identity development, but may have also posed a risk to the learning of the students in his classes. Samuel's view that his time there was finite could also be a way for him to distance himself from his role as a teacher. His comment that 'they were not going to take risks' may also link to the limited time that he was present at the school. The second placement is completed in the final term of the school year – in many schools the pressures of public examinations and target setting may have been prevalent and may have influenced his school mentors to not give him as much freedom for fear that results may be affected negatively.

In his second interview, Samuel discussed how his feelings about autonomy had changed. He said: 'I feel very proud, but also very scared about the ownership of the culture of my classroom', and that the 'uniformity' that his new school had was 'brilliant' because it would allow him to 'get a grip of the school', so that he could then 'contribute' 'a lot of things' when he was ready. His acknowledgement of the need for some sense of consistency across a subject area is a shift from his previous thinking. His use of the word 'scared' shows that the responsibility that he now has as an NQT has made him rethink how much autonomy he has. Rather than want to enact change immediately, Samuel talks about how he needs to find his way first and 'get a grip'. Samuel's experience of autonomy demonstrates a narrative that describes his learning

journey. He has progressed from a beginning teacher who longs for complete control to someone who appreciates the need to conform, so that they can then begin to develop and 'contribute' to their school appropriately.

6.3 Theme 2: The development of professional identity

In this section I analyse data that relates to how beginning teachers develop their professional identity over the course of their ITE and their initial years as qualified teachers, but also how this change can have wider implications for those that educate and mentor them. I first look at interview responses that discuss the idea of a caring professional, before considering how reflection and dialogue help them develop professional identity, and then explore how an evolving sense of professional identity emerges for beginning teachers and those that support them. I find that, while the idea of the caring professional seems to develop organically, reflection and other support systems put in place by schools and ITE providers can help to develop beginning teachers in different ways.

6.3.1 The caring professional

While the image of teaching as a caring profession is by no means new, the way that it is integrated into the development of beginning teacher professional identity was discussed in several of the interviews I conducted, and is therefore worth analysing in this sub-section, as it may be of interest to teacher educators who provide support for teachers at the start of their career.

Daisy spoke about how she hoped her future development as a teacher would be focused on how she could 'support young people'. This marked a change for Daisy, as she had initially become a teacher because she was passionate about her subject. Daisy's new perspective, therefore, may indicate that her experience as a beginning teacher has helped her to appreciate how important the pastoral care that she delivers is to the 'young people' that she teaches. Her construction of professional identity may consequently have shifted focus from academic subjects to pastoral care.

Florence similarly expressed that she was focused on the caring side of her role but appears to have been drawn to this aspect of her identity at an earlier stage. Florence stated: 'what I've realised…what I did realise during my training year is that I really do want to actually be a part of that change in the young people's lives that I didn't have, and that's what's more important to me'. The way professional identity is addressed during the ITE year is therefore of importance to a beginning teacher's identity, perhaps more than any other period. Florence's reflection that she wants to 'be a part of that change in the young people's lives' could imply that she appreciates the influence that a teacher can have on students' futures, suggesting a positive view of the impact that teaching professionals have. Furthermore, she acknowledged in her interview that she 'didn't have' this support when she was at school: her experience as a student is now causing her to rethink how a teacher's professional identity is constructed rather than base her identity on other teachers. As a secondary subject specialist, however, her comment that pastoral support is 'more important' could suggest that her motivation and purpose as a teacher has developed significantly, which could affect her role as she progresses. Florence may find, in time, that she moves away from her subject specialism towards more whole school, pastoral roles that enable her to prioritise student welfare.

Sylvia's comments on the caring aspect of professional identity related to the need for teachers to take on the role of carers or trusted advisors for students who lacked parental support:

> Like, I feel like, for their sake, sometimes they need…they need someone that they can like…I'd say get on with…they're obviously here to learn, but I just feel like relationships with some of them are important, and then obviously you know that some of them don't have great relationships at home.

Sylvia's idea that 'relationships' are often 'important', highlights the social and emotional capability that may need to be incorporated into a beginning teacher's professional identity. Sylvia does, however, imply that her main role as a teacher is to help students 'learn', but simultaneously addresses the need

for teachers to draw upon their caring side when dealing with students who 'don't have great relationships at home'. For Sylvia, then, the caring part of her professional identity may be reserved for specific students who require greater attention.

Tess also recognised the need for 'an emotional connection' to be established by beginning teachers. Yet, she added an additional layer to this aspect of professional identity by suggesting that 'it's not just with pupils that we learn this, it's with human beings'. By saying that a teacher's 'emotional connection' is with 'human beings', she may be implying that this facet of professional identity is developed through all aspects of human interaction, and also, possibly that teachers can use this quality to develop relationships within the wider community. Interestingly, out of the beginning teachers interviewed for this study, only Samuel explicitly discussed how his role as a caring professional led him to reconceptualise his position within society: 'I am in, and am contributing, and really working hard to make things better in my community'. His new teaching career has helped him develop an identity that is not only recognised by the 'community', but also able to give back to it. He uses the personal pronoun 'my', implying that he now has a feeling of belonging. Alternatively, 'my' could suggest that Samuel is empowered by his role as a teacher, and therefore, he feels a sense of ownership over the 'community'. Samuel also says that he is 'really working hard to make things better'. This may suggest that he thinks teachers have a responsibility in society to improve things.

Later, in his first interview, Samuel provided some explanation as to why he thought the caring side of professional identity was significant. Reflecting on his experiences in schools and in his local community, he said:

> I am…I am working…with society. You know at my first school, teaching is part of the…of the machines of…like a clock…so everything's working together. You're never isolated as a teacher because if you're isolated, you're going to have a miserable career.

This comparison between teacher identity and 'a clock' creates the image of a system that is reliant on cooperation to function efficiently. His comment on how his first school functioned follows on immediately from his statement that he his 'working…with society', which may suggest that he believes the way that teachers function in society is similar to the way that they function in a school. Teacher professional identity seems to extend into personal identity, almost as if the two are inseparable. Additionally, Samuel contends that 'you're never isolated as a teacher', and that teachers who are isolated 'have a miserable career'. The word 'isolated' means to be remote and alone, either physically or mentally. Samuel's inclusion of this word in his description may infer that he thinks the ability to relate to others and take advantage of the social aspects of the profession are vital in developing a lasting professional identity.

6.3.2 The importance of reflection and dialogue

Daisy, in her interview, directly spoke about the importance of reflection in the development of her professional identity:

> And…but…as I got into the training and the career, I realised that I need to kind of find myself, if that makes sense. To find some kind of identity – who am I and how do I present myself to my students, and things like that. I would say it's quite important. Um…at this stage of my career I'm always checking myself whether…um…you know, how do I present myself? How am I presented to others and so on…to be honest, I am yet to find myself…if I'm answering the question correctly…and I'm always learning and finding my way. I'm really understanding who I am and what I generally need to be in the classroom in terms of the career, I think.

Daisy's discussion implies a clear focus on identity development, with her presenting her own professional identity as a work in progress. Her inclusion of the rhetorical question 'how do I present myself?' suggests that she is still developing her professional identity as a beginning teacher, and possibly that she does not yet know what kind of teacher she wants to be. The idea that she is always 'checking' herself may show that she feels there is a preferred

professional identity for teachers, but that she thinks she does not always fit within this mould. Alternatively, the word 'checking' could reveal that she takes responsibility for her own identity and recognises that she must self-regulate by reflecting. Daisy's statement of 'I am yet to find myself' may also suggest that her personal identity has not been defined yet. Furthermore, her initial comments about how she was prompted to explore her identity because she began ITE may position teaching as a profession where reflecting on identity is highly important, as Daisy does not appear to believe that she thought about her identity prior to entering the profession. Stating 'I am yet to find myself', Daisy presents herself as someone who is actively trying to establish a professional identity: the creation and development of a professional identity in teaching is something that needs to be consciously worked on as part of a cycle of reflection.

Over the course of her interview, Daisy also spoke about how her ITE had helped her to become a more reflective practitioner. She explained how her ITE provider had utilised different methods to encourage student teachers to develop their ability to reflect. For example, Daisy told me that they would often be asked to write a 'reflection note' and that they also did 'quite a lot of roleplay' that prompted them to think about 'how we should be reacting as teacher, how we should be acting as professionals generally'. Daisy's use of the words 'reacting' and 'acting' in her description of these activities highlight the sense of performative response that is needed within the teaching profession. It may also show that the development of a professional identity relies on context and relationships, and can therefore, not be easily defined. In her interview, Daisy also spoke about how she 'had lots of discussions' with her mentor about 'identity as something you need to reflect on yourself and you learn from experience'. These comments present identity construction as something that is progressive and develops in response to other factors. Daisy's acknowledgement of the methods utilised to develop her ability to reflect suggests that a conscious effort was made by her ITE provider to develop student teacher's professional identity through reflective practice, thus highlighting reflection as something that is instrumental in the development of the professional self for beginning teachers.

In his second interview, Samuel discussed how he felt reflective practices would extend into his beginning years post ITE and help him develop as a professional. Samuel explained to me how he had been told by his new school that he would be a mentor to student teachers during his NQT year, which he was 'really excited' about, but also conceded: 'it is intimidating, of course, because it's more work, but I do think it's going to push my self-reflection to a different level'. Samuel's comments on the impact that acting as a mentor would have on the development of his own professional identity reveals that he recognises his identity as a work-in-progress and potentially thinks that taking on a mentor role will enable him to reflect on his own practice as well as support other beginning teachers. The fact that he views this as 'intimidating' may infer that he appreciates that guiding a student teacher means that he will be taking on additional responsibilities, but also that he takes this new role seriously. The word 'intimidating' conveys a sense of apprehension over whether he will be able to be a mentor that can support a student teacher. Continuing to discuss this, he said: 'I'm hoping that I will be able to do that. To just be generous enough to do that observation for the person, not for me'. This quotation highlights how Samuel believes teaching professionals need to be selfless in their interactions with other staff. His explanation of how he needs to be 'generous' suggests that he thinks that after completing ITE teachers need to begin to think about how they serve others, but paradoxically may imply that he has felt that he has acted selfishly during his training year. Samuel's ideas here present a beginning teacher who is starting to embrace a level of reflection that is more in keeping with ideas of the selfless educator who puts other's needs ahead of their own. It also indicates that he is now willing to adapt, so that his professional identity remains appropriate as he moves forwards in his career as a teacher.

While Samuel explained how the next stage in his career would allow for greater reflection, Florence spoke in her interview about how she felt as though the focus on reflection during her ITE year had turned into a meaningless exercise:

> Yeah, there was a phrase that we had in the teacher training when we said that we reflected so much, we feel like we're turning into a mirror because we had to reflect on every single observation. I remember my mentor saying that he had to reflect on every single lesson that he taught, and we…but it got to the point where we having to reflect so much it felt…not laborious, but it felt like we were just waffling…because there was just…if it had just been you reflect when you feel it's necessary, it would have been a lot more meaningful because it was just rushed….

The simile utilised, here of 'turning into a mirror' suggests that she felt too much emphasis was placed on the act of reflecting, but that this did not necessarily help her to actually understand their practice. Rather than using reflective exercises to understand, the students almost become desensitised and instead reflected back their findings in a superficial manner. This consequently seems to have devalued the reflective exercise. Alternatively, the frequency of reflections may be indicative of the practice reaching saturation level, as conveyed by Florence's repeated observation that they reflected 'so much'.

In contrast, Florence also discussed how she felt the reflections required during her NQT year were more helpful in developing her professional identity. She explained how 'It was more of a termly reflection' and that this meant 'it was just more meaningful', as she 'sat down and thought about it'. The time allocated to each reflection, in Florence's opinion, correlated with the effectiveness of the reflective practice. Without this time, Florence felt that reflection took on more a 'tick box' exercise that only scratched the surface, and therefore failed to help her develop as a beginning teacher. Florence's comments may, however, additionally suggest that she appreciates the importance of reflective practice now that she has finished her ITE year. It could, then, be argued that without overt, constant reflective practices during the ITE year, she would not have been able to reflect effectively during her NQT year. Thus, frequent reflective practices during the ITE year may be a necessity that prepares student teachers for the demands of their beginning years as qualified teachers, whilst imbuing them with the skills necessary to reflect ad hoc, and therefore prepare them for the demands of the profession. In

Florence's case, her ability to reflect seems to have now become something that is 'more like fine tuning'. Florence's assertion that she is 'fine tuning' may imply that she is now able to focus on the nuances of her teaching practice because she has gone beyond the point where she is struggling with the role of a teacher and is now trying to become a successful teaching professional. The image of 'fine tuning' can be linked to car mechanics, suggesting that she is improving incrementally, so that she can achieve an optimum level of performance as a teacher.

Sylvia spoke about how her mentor during her ITE year had been instrumental in her reflective practice. She told me that she thinks teachers need to find their own 'style' and how 'you can't look at teacher A and just do everything that she does because that's not you'. Sylvia's recognition of the unique nature of identity formation shows how her ITE mentor's efforts to support her were effective because she is now able to recognise that teacher professional identity is unique to individuals. She said how 'reflecting on my own practice and then speaking to other teachers', helped her to develop a professional identity that enabled her 'personality to come through'. For Sylvia, then, 'conversations' with her mentor appear to have provided time and space for honest reflective dialogue that gave her the confidence to establish and subsequently develop a professional identity. Her use of the word 'conversation' may also show how she viewed the process as something that was less formal and where power was equally distributed.

As a member of ITE staff, Tess, like Sylvia, recognised the importance of creating opportunities for beginning teachers to reflect on their professional identity. In her interview, Tess explained how she used 'core reading…to open up discussions and debates…have a Socratic dialogue as the course progresses' that is based on 'reciprocity' where students are also able to suggest reading and topics that can be explored with the rest of the group. She also described how 'social networking' has become an increasingly effective way of supporting beginning teacher professional identity development. Tess's methods demonstrate that ITE providers are aware of the importance of a reflective

dialogue in the formation of teacher identity, but Tess also explained that she has had to develop opportunities for reflection that are conducted on virtual platforms because they only 'have a half day back in university for the term' and she does not feel this time is sufficient as it has to be used 'for the purposes of assessment and trying to set standards'. Online reflective exercises have therefore been incorporated into the courses that Tess is involved in to ensure additional time is dedicated to reflection. This final comment may suggest that more time may need to be given within ITE courses for reflective dialogue to happen face-to-face, so that beginning teachers' professional identity formation is supported and recognised as significant to professional identity development.

Ophelia and Arabella, like Tess, discussed how virtual platforms are used in ITE courses to develop reflective practice. Ophelia explained how tutors tried to 'encourage [student teachers] to discuss with their peers' how their professional identity was developing. Ophelia, in her interview expressed that she felt this could be done on 'a Facebook page' or via 'Whatsapp', but that she also recognised that 'if [student teachers] want to rant, they can go to the pub or the coffee shop'. Likewise, Arabella explained that 'Whatsapp is a little bit of a blessing and a curse at the same time, I have to say. It's very good for them developing communities of practice', but Arabella expressed her concern that it can become a cause of stress if used too frequently or at stressful points in the year.

For Helena, face-to-face discussion provided the best environment for reflective discourse with beginning teachers. Speaking about one of her recent ITE students, Helena explained how, despite having a doctorate prior to beginning ITE, the student teacher 'struggled with some of the assignments' because 'she's quite a linear thinker'. Helena conveyed that she believed the 'logical' approach the student teacher had was at odds with the 'reflective element…required by teachers', but that discussions that she had with the beginning teacher had helped her to work through this problem and develop a new, reflective approach to her teaching. Helena's acknowledgement that even highly educated individuals can struggle with ITE highlights the importance of

reflective practice during ITE. Helena's account of this student's journey indicates that personal guidance that is led by a mentor on how to reflect as a professional was necessary for the student teacher to work through her concerns and suggests that without time and space being created for reflective dialogue, she may not have been able to complete her ITE year.

Helena also explained how reflective exercises were implemented and why, for all beginning teachers, they form an integral part of the ITE experience. Helena said that 'their weekly reflections […] demand[ed] that they look at theory and practice'. In this quote, Helena is explicit about the frequency of reflective activities, stating that they occur on a weekly basis. The high frequency of reflective exercises that are required on the ITE courses that Helena works on suggest that reflection is central to the construction and development of a teacher's professional identity. As the interview progressed Helena elaborated on the weekly reflections that she supports:

> they've got to call on all of their knowledge of theory and practice because they're saying: okay, so this is what it's saying on paper, how does that relate to the epistemological framework that I'm using or the personal learning pedagogical framework that I'm using? Does this fit in with my social constructivist principles?

These questions, although not impossible to formulate if reflecting alone, may not necessarily be obvious to beginning teachers at the start of their career. They indicate how reflective dialogue often involves asking challenging questions. A critical friend may therefore be useful when conducting reflective dialogues with student teachers. Additionally, the connection between 'theory and practice' that Helena repeatedly refers to presents reflective dialogue as an opportunity to connect the different strands of ITE and ensure beginning teachers understand how the strands weave together, so that they can begin to develop a sense of professional identity that is based on their knowledge and experiences.

Ophelia's discussion around reflective practice reinforces Helena's perspective. Ophelia spoke in detail about the differences between working in a school where she was advising teachers and working in ITE where she is supporting beginning teachers. She described her role when she worked in schools as one where she was 'used to telling people'. In contrast, she said that as teacher educator, she thinks 'it's really important that students themselves question. Question their actions in the classroom. Question their discussions with colleagues. Question what they're doing…um…in order to really construct…um…a good sense of who they really are as a teacher'. The imperative verb of 'tell' that Ophelia utilises to describe her role in schools may infer that there is a lack of autonomy in schools. Furthermore, her observation that her role as a university tutor now is more to 'question' beginning teachers so that they can find out 'who they really are as a teacher' suggests an inquiry-based model where greater power is given to the beginning teachers to create their own identity. Yet, whilst Ophelia implied that university based ITE focuses on reflective dialogue, she also conceded that some of the strategies they have implemented could be less effective because they are applied within schools where they can become 'a bit of a mechanical exercise'. Her frank comments on this subject may suggest a tension between ITE providers and the schools that beginning teachers work in.

When asked about how reflection is used in the ITE programmes that she is involved in, Arabella chose to focus on the 'reflective practice records' that her university used 'across primary and secondary' courses. She explained how they use the 'Donald Schön kind of model' where 'reflection kind of takes place in its two forms, so they do reflection in action and reflection on action', but that she saw the 'taught sessions' at university as further opportunities to reflect and 'talk about their experiences' as well. Additionally, Arabella spoke about how she tries to get student teachers to 'take a story-based approach' to their training portfolios. Arabella's explanation of the approach that her university based ITE course takes appears to utilise multiple layers to ensure beginning teachers can develop their reflective practice. Her reference to how the theoretical work of Schön is used to underpin their approach suggests that the course she is involved in has a clear strategy for reflection. Beginning teachers, Arabella stated, have a range of opportunities for self-reflection, which

culminate in the construction of a narrative to evidence their progress. The idea of 'a story-based approach' may be interpreted as a way to distance beginning teachers from their own story; this may help bring clarity to their reflections by making them less personal. Arabella's experience of facilitating reflection in ITE for beginning teachers, therefore, can be perceived as detailed and thorough. Her final comment on reflective practice reinforces this idea, as she said that reflection is 'embedded as part of the programme'.

Evie focused in her interview on how beginning teachers continued to develop their reflective practice after completing their ITE through their involvement in 'a buddy system' or by acting as 'a mentor' to other beginning teachers. From her perspective the continued involvement in ITE that former student teachers had engaged in resulted in keeping the reflection process 'alive'. By using the word 'alive', Evie could be interpreted as suggesting that without ongoing efforts to develop reflective practices after completing ITE programmes, beginning teachers may find that their reflective skills "die". Alternatively, the diction used by Evie could imply that reflection is crucial to a teacher being able to sustain a role and grow as their career unfolds. Both interpretations suggest, however, that Evie perceives reflection as a vital component in the creation and development of a teacher's professional identity.

Blair, in contrast to the other ITE staff participants in this study, voiced her concerns about the efficacy of current reflective practices that are used in university based ITE courses. She stated: 'You cannot just say, well that worked twenty years ago, so therefore I am not changing because it worked then'. In this excerpt, Blair may be implying that the reflective practices used in ITE in the UK have become outdated. Her suggestion that some ITE courses and/or staff are 'not changing' may suggest that she feels things need to change so that they recognise the current pressures and demands of the teaching profession. Expanding on this comment, Blair went on to say:

> we have to be careful that we don't make assumptions about [reflective practices] and think they automatically work because even from the point of view that quite often students are working

> full time in school and then coming home and working, preparing lessons, doing lesson plans and doing everything else, sometimes, possibly they feel so overwhelmed that these are things that get rushed.

Blair's concern that beginning teachers may feel 'overwhelmed' by the amount of work they are expected to do during their ITE year is emphasised in this quote when she lists the activities expected of teachers that are sometimes completed at home. By listing these activities, Blair highlights the workload and simultaneously suggests that some reflective practices may lose their meaning because they end up being rushed. Notably, though, Blair seems to be calling on the university ITE programmes to change their practice when it comes to reflection, rather than discussing whether general workload within the teaching profession needs to be reduced. Moreover, Blair's comment that ITE staff need to avoid making 'assumptions', may imply that she thinks current reflective practice possibly needs to be reviewed and tailored to suit individuals.

Blair did, however, later in the interview go on to speak about how she felt some form of reflective practice was necessary, as 'it sends out a message that personal and the professional…um…are linked […] that they come together to create the teacher that you become', showing how she believes reflection is significant in the formation of professional identity. For Blair, reflective practice is clearly positioned as 'dialogue' where 'there has to be somebody who has experience that leads process that helps to induct'. Thus, Blair's final thoughts on reflection, reveal how power dynamics can play an unavoidable role in reflective practices within ITE programmes. The idea that reflection needs a person with 'experience' that 'leads' the process may reveal a power imbalance in reflective practice.

6.3.3 The evolution of professional identity

All participants in my study agreed that professional identity develops gradually; identity evolves over the course of ITE. Ophelia stated in her interview that most of the student teachers she has encountered 'have quite an idealised picture of what it is to be a teacher'. Her comments, here, highlight the disparity between real professional identity and perceptions of teaching. This,

Ophelia attributed to the fact that 'good teachers make teaching look easy', which she argued was not necessarily the case. To illustrate her point, Ophelia used the analogy of learning to drive, and how 'over time it becomes automatic, but to begin with, it's very clunky'. The comparison made here between driving and teaching suggests that both are skills that can be mastered with time and practise. Yet, it also infers that all student teachers initially will experience some discomfort as they begin to adapt to their new role and surroundings. Her use of the word 'clunky' implies that there is an awkwardness and uncertainty that trainee teachers need to go through before they will be able to successfully teach.

Ophelia's observations were echoed by Sylvia when she discussed her journey to discover her own professional identity. Sylvia spoke at length in her interview about the incongruous nature of her ideas about teacher identity before beginning ITE and the realities of becoming a qualified teacher: 'Yeah, I think I dismissed it because I thought this is just a degree. I've done one before. It's just a couple of essays and going into a classroom, and I didn't really think that it would actually affect me'. Sylvia's realisation that her year in ITE would be completely unlike her previous experience of higher education shows how developing a professional identity within education can lead to deep rooted changes. Her acknowledgement that she had 'dismissed' the significance of ITE on her identity suggests that her understanding of what it takes to be a teacher was based on surface level perceptions. Sylvia went on to discuss what she felt was a pivotal moment in the formation of her professional identity. In her interview, Sylvia spoke about her school mentor and how she came to realise that 'at home he's obviously different'. The surprise that Sylvia expressed at discovering that her mentor oscillated between different identities presents her as someone who was naïve, not only about teaching, but also, about what identity is. She also explained that up until this point she had been trying 'to kind of copy him', but that following this realisation she decided to 'take it on' and find her own professional identity.

Later in her interview, Sylvia reflected on her professional development beyond her year in ITE, saying; 'but I think…that I've grown in my professionalism since training to now…'. Sylvia's hesitation here, which is presented as ellipsis, may suggest that there are still elements of her professional identity that she is unsure about. By beginning her reflection with the conjunction 'but' she may be revealing an inability to commit to a straightforward response. While this may be a result of the complex nature of identity, it may also be indicative of the struggle that she is still experiencing as a beginning teacher. What Sylvia has clearly accepted is that she is 'more a teacher in the day than […] anything else', implying that she now appreciates that her teacher identity is dominant. By highlighting the amount of time that she spends being a teacher, Sylvia is illustrating the importance of professional identity, and that, over time, professional identity may become more influential than personal identity because it is relevant for a greater amount of time. Sylvia's sense of professional identity can consequently be viewed as a work-in-progress, as Sylvia, herself, even concedes that she 'didn't think that [she] would fit in as teacher', but that she is 'realising now with other teachers that there are different types of teachers'. Sylvia's experience since beginning her ITE year has helped her to develop an understanding of how professional identity can manifest itself, as well as an emerging sense of her own professional identity as a teaching professional.

Daisy, like Sylvia, felt that her professional identity had developed over the course of her ITE and NQT year, but felt that this was more to do with how she related to her subject specialism. She explained how she was originally drawn to the teaching profession because she was 'passionate about' her subject, and that this began to change when she 'realise[d] there's more to teaching than just teaching your subject'. Daisy's acknowledgement of this shift highlights how beginning teachers can find their priorities and interests challenged and altered early in their career. Her use of the adverb 'just' in this excerpt suggests that her experience of teaching has shown her that the job involves more than she expected. Like Sylvia, then, Daisy's perception of the teaching profession failed to acknowledge the breadth and depth of skills needed. Notably, however, Daisy felt that she had 'grown as a teacher this year more

than any other year', suggesting that her NQT year had provided her with greater opportunities to develop a professional identity than her year in ITE. This may be due to the fact that in her ITE year she was preoccupied with the mechanics of teaching, and consequently, felt that she had little time to think about her identity or it could be that she was not given the opportunity and support to develop her professional identity as a student teacher.

Daisy also discussed the differences that she had recently identified between professional identity as a teacher and in other jobs. She explained how, in her previous job, she had sometimes been able to say 'enough is enough, this is what I can provide', but that as a teacher 'there are certain times when you'd be a bit lenient, and try to be a bit more understanding'. Daisy's portrayal of a teacher here is one that considers 'feelings' and tries to consider different perspectives. For Daisy, then, this became a significant factor in her approach to her professional identity. Her comments about being 'lenient' suggest that she has to think about the students first, rather than place her personal wellbeing at the forefront of her interactions. Coming from employment that was based on 'customer experience', she seemed surprised that she was more likely to make allowances as a teacher than she was in her previous job. Yet, her willingness to embrace this change and accept the listening and caring aspects of her identity as a teacher imply that these are qualities that she has actively accepted and developed since entering the teaching profession.

Florence's reflections on how her professional identity had developed as a beginning teacher differed to the other participants that I interviewed. At the time that she was interviewed she had already begun to prepare for a new role as a middle leader. Although this position was not due to begin officially until the following academic year, the appointment meant that she had started to compare herself to other middle leaders in her school:

> I have to spend some time considering that and considering if there is something that I need to adapt, but…um…I do kind of at the moment, but this is something that I would think about, but…um…I think it's also because it's weird for me to think about

> me being in that role still because…I've…like obviously with ___ and ___, they're like a bit older than me. I still feel like quite young in terms of the job role, so I think it's a little bit of imposter syndrome in that sort of sense maybe.

In this excerpt, Florence repeats the word 'considering' twice indicating that she is actively adjusting her identity as a professional following her promotion. At the same time, however, Florence uses multiple hesitations and fillers suggesting a sense of apprehension about how she will negotiate the development of her professional identity. Her comment that the other middle leaders that she will be working with are 'older' implies that age is a factor in identity for her. When considered in relation to her comment that she is finding the process of identity development 'weird', Florence could be suggesting that the development of a professional identity as a middle leader is a strange experience, which is dramatically shifting her perception of her own professional self. Her evaluative comment that she is experiencing 'a little bit of imposter syndrome' positions Florence as someone who is willing to confront her own identity and engage in a reflective process that will facilitate ongoing development.

Although Florence had clearly begun to think about the future development of her professional identity, she also explored how her identity had developed previously. She explained how her ITE year represented 'such a big transition in terms of identity', but that she thought her identity had developed 'much better' during her NQT year. Here, then, Florence's views about professional identity development mirror Daisy's. Florence, however, justified her view by explaining that she was able to be more 'consistent' in her NQT year, and that this, for her, 'was really important' because it allowed her to explore her specific professional identity.

In his first interview, Samuel identified a specific aspect of his life that had been affected as a result of the development of his professional identity as a beginning teacher. He explained:

> There was something very funny that happened to me mentally when I became a teacher…my relationship with time changed […] All my time is organised or committed towards doing this little thing, or if I have to do all the errands that I need to do but can't do in the week…so I think that's the element of how the whole day gets organised around your teaching and the whole week has to be organised […] I definitely think that time became something different.

Samuel's assertion that everything 'gets organised around your teaching' implies that his identity as a teacher now dominates his personal and professional self. It is as though teaching is the central element of his identity now. Yet, Samuel's comments on this also draw attention to the impact that this had on his temporal awareness. His use of the phrase 'relationship with time' suggests that it is not time that has altered, but rather the way that he interacts with it. Repetition of the word 'organised' in this excerpt may infer how his new identity as a teacher now 'organises' his identity and consequently impacts how he behaves personally and professionally. Samuel's acknowledgement of this change shows how he, like Florence is highly reflective and may suggest that he is willing to prioritise his professional identity.

By the time I interviewed Samuel for the second time, he, like Florence, was thinking about the challenges that he would face in the future. For Samuel, this centred around the fact that he was going to have the opportunity to mentor ITE students during his NQT year. He expressed his concerns about giving 'feedback [that] is about how you would do it, as opposed to the generosity of thinking about the personality of the person in front of you'. Samuel's comments here evidence the change that his professional identity has undergone since beginning ITE. In his initial interview, Samuel's discussions very much centred around what he wanted to achieve and what he thought a teacher's professional identity should be, but in this quote Samuel shifts focus to the 'person in front of you', implying that he perceives himself more as a facilitator now. His desire to not focus on how he would approach teaching may be a result of his experience during his first placement, where he felt that he was being unfairly judged because he would not conform to his mentor's teaching preferences. It

could also be indicative of how he has now begun to develop a professional identity that recognises and embraces the role of a teacher as a guide who is there to listen and support. Furthermore, the inclusion of the word 'generosity' in his discussion may show that his professional identity, following the completion of his ITE year, is now more concerned with the experience of others.

In her interview, Ophelia spoke about her own professional identity and how she felt it had developed over the course of her career: 'I know as a teacher myself, I evolved and my professional identity evolved…and I think you must be very odd person who didn't…whose personal and professional identity didn't change and adapt and evolve, as they became experienced'. Ophelia's focus on the concept of identity that 'evolve[s]' is suggestive of a gradual change that occurs over time and is responsive to circumstance. Her comments on how gaining more experience can further cause professional identity to develop highlight the fact that, although this study focuses on beginning teacher development, professional identity development continues throughout a teacher's career. Ophelia also recognised the interrelatedness of personal and professional identity, which is something that Samuel explored in his interview. When reflecting on the way that the beginning teachers she had worked with developed, Ophelia explained that 'in their first placement their main focus, their main aim is to be able to stand up in front of a class and give a lesson', and that she felt identity development did not really begin until they 'start […] the end of their first placement', but that this can 'take a bit longer' for some ITE students.

While most participants in this study chose to focus on positive experiences of professional identity development, Helena spoke about one student teacher that she had recently encountered whose identity developed in a different way. She explained that most of her student teachers recognised how their identity had changed and reflected at the end of their ITE year by saying things like 'I can't believe the progress that I've made', implying that they could not imagine how

far they could develop within just a year. This optimistic view, however, was countered by a recent graduate who she referred to in detail:

> And I said to her, 'So, are you feeling better about it now?' and she said, 'Nope'. She said: 'I'm not sure I want to do it' and I said, 'Really?' and she said, 'I know I can do it', but she said…and, I said, 'Are you going to do the induction year?' and she said, 'Yes, I'll do the induction year', but I kept hearing […] a 'but'. I think she might…I'm not entirely sure she'll stay in teaching. I think she'll do the induction year and I think what this does is it's given her options and it certainly has…um…shown her that she can do it…and she can assume a professional identity. I'm just not convinced that that particular student really sees herself as a teacher.

The conversation recounted by Helena shows how, for some beginning teachers, developing a professional identity may lead to an internal struggle that they are unable to overcome. Helena uses a series of questions to try to get her student teacher to open up to her, so that she can support her, but the beginning teacher's responses are brief and suggest that she has already decided not to continue to pursue a career in teaching. Helena's use of the word 'assume' implies that the student teacher has been pretending to be a teacher. She also repeats the beginning teacher's words but uses them to reflect on her thoughts about the situation, which may indicate that as a teacher educator she is surprised at the decision not to continue as a teacher, and possibly, is trying to work through her own thoughts about the issue. Helena's final comment in the excerpt that she is not 'convinced' that the student teacher 'really sees herself as a teacher' may suggest that the student teacher has never managed to develop a professional identity. By reaching this conclusion, Helena is suggesting that the development of a professional identity within the teaching profession is crucial to remaining in the profession.

Blair also spoke about how she felt it was important for professional identity to be initially developed during the ITE year. She explained that she thought 'It's very much a process that starts with the university, continues throughout their

studies and then it goes on through their probation and then after their probation it doesn't stop'. The image of ongoing development of identity that Blair presents here shows the importance of laying the foundations of professional identity, but also the need to revisit and develop it as careers develop. Her comment that 'it doesn't stop' further reinforces the idea that identity development needs to be viewed as a never-ending process, but the fact that it 'starts with the university' may suggest that Blair thinks that universities need to take greater responsibility for ensuring that identity is explored during the ITE year. This sense of the university having responsibility was also apparent when, later in the interview, Blair explained her ideas about how university ITE can better support student teachers. She spoke about how she felt that having each placement in a different school would be better because it 'really is about allowing them to develop, allowing the placement to finish and then some time to reflect on that placement to continue to learn, examine theory etc. and then start another placement fresh' for each placement would, in her opinion, allow 'them to see their own personal professional development'.

Both Tess and Evie reflected on the positive impact that professional identity development can have on ITE students and those that support them either as mentors or teacher educators. Tess said that 'some of them develop in the most beautiful ways to become very deep thinkers'. Her use of the adjectives 'beautiful' and 'deep' imply that the ITE students she has worked with develop in a way that is lasting and meaningful; the language used presents the progress made during ITE in an idealised way. Yet, Tess's focus on the cognitive development of ITE students symbolises the academic development that is experienced over any other change. Tess's discussion around how her role as a teacher educator has made her more aware of student teachers being 'people' or 'beings' in their own right may refer to the way that professional and personal identities merge for some teachers. This, then, relates to some of the comments made by beginning teachers during the interviews that I carried out, as their identity development often affected their personal and professional sense of self.

Tess's understanding of how she has developed because of the work that she carries out in ITE is similar to Evie's ideas about how school mentors can experience shifts in their professional identity as a result of the role that they play within ITE. She discussed how mentors she had worked with felt that supporting an ITE student during their school placement had enabled them 'to refresh, and replenish, and change their practice'. The imagery evoked here infers the idea that by mentoring a teacher can gain a fresh perspective that can help to reinvigorate their professional identity and consequently improve their teaching practice. Evie, however, went further in her analysis of the impact that mentoring can have:

> the whole thing has become symbiotic, which to me is how it ought to be…which is very, very…in terms of what you're talking about…power and control. They're giving something back, but in a different way. Obviously that mentor's got more experience, so they're benefiting from that, but challenging ways of thinking and the experimentation is probably something that mentors had to let fall away a bit over the years because of the pressure on securing exam results, and the student brings that back to their professional world.

The connection forged by Evie in this excerpt suggests that power is disseminated within the teaching profession through relationships between ITE students and their mentors. Her comments that this process is 'symbiotic' imply that power is not owned by any one party within the profession.

6.4 Theme 3: University/placement influence on identity formation and development

During my interviews I asked each of my participants to reflect on the ways that their ITE provider and school placements influenced their professional identity. My participants spoke about the support provided by the university but also discussed how partnership working has been developed and implemented by the universities where they work. Teacher educator participants spoke about the challenges that they faced when trying to support beginning teacher professional identity development, and in some cases, how they tried to overcome these

issues. During the interviews, beginning teacher and teacher educator participants also discussed how power was disseminated and experienced because of the support provided by universities and school placements. In the following sub sections I analyse these responses and discuss possible interpretations of my data.

6.4.1 University support

Daisy, Sylvia and Florence all commented in their interviews about the lack of university influence over their professional identity formation. All three completed their ITE year through school based ITE programmes, but still had to attend training at university at certain points in the year. Daisy, for example, stated that she only had 'been to the university five times', whilst Florence said that she had to attend university 'once every two weeks' over the course of the ITE year. Sylvia, in comparison, spoke about the depth of professional identity learning at university that she experienced: 'Um…I wanna say yes, but I can't think…I'm trying to think if we ever did, and I can't think…I don't think we did […] nothing really to think about like, or even reflecting, on us as a person'. Sylvia's hesitations and use of fillers and hedges in this quote imply a sense of uncertainty around how professional identity could be explored, which suggests that the topic was not covered during her time at university. Her realisation that there was nothing 'on us as a person' may reveal that her ITE course was more concerned with the technical aspects to learning to teach rather than addressing the need to develop professionals that can enter a career and develop over time. It could also imply that she felt as though she was not recognised as an individual, let alone as someone who is now developing a professional identity in addition to their personal identity.

In contrast, Samuel's perception of university influence on his professional identity development was that his university was too involved in the formation of it. He spoke about how there was 'a very imposed idea' of what a teacher should be that was encouraged by his university mentors. Samuel's use of the word 'imposed' suggests that the university that he attended was trying to force him to become a specific kind of professional but, simultaneously, may be because his professional identity did not need as much support due to his

background in academia. Samuel explained his criticism of the approach taken by his university as being about how there 'was very little about the self-reflective critique… about what is working for me, what's not working for me'. His comments highlight how the support offered was not personalised and he was consequently concerned that it would not be appropriate for all student teachers on his ITE course. He expresses a desire for 'self-reflective critique' to be incorporated more into his ITE course, suggesting that he did not want less support from the university, but rather a recognition that each ITE student may have different needs depending on their personal characteristics and experiences. At the same time, however, Samuel acknowledged that some of the teacher educators at his university were 'really, really lovely people, who are super approachable and very interested'. Samuel's use of the adjectives 'lovely', 'approachable' and 'interested' may suggest that by the end of his ITE year, Samuel had altered his view of the support given, either accepting the construction of teacher identity that they had 'imposed', or alternatively, by accepting his position as someone who is located in a space outside of what his mentors believed to be an appropriate professional identity.

Tess discussed how she thought that subject specialist support was significant to professional development, but how she felt this was one thing that was currently lacking in ITE courses while students were out on placement. She explained that some university tutors no longer assess during placement which makes it difficult for them to have 'an overview of what's happening' when student teachers are out on school placement. For Tess, the lack of subject specialist support makes it difficult for university tutors to assure quality in their subject area, as they are relying on feedback from staff in schools that often do not have the necessary subject knowledge. Tess continued in her description of how she thinks this impacts professional identity development by using the simile that 'it's a bit like containing quicksilver' – a phrase that suggests that professional identity for beginning teachers may be unpredictable and fragile. Tess implies how important it is to have subject specialists involved in the process that can help to support student teachers in the challenges they may encounter during practicum. Tess also suggested that this is an issue that the university she works at is trying to resolve, as she told me that they are 'hopefully gonna get it

changed back' so that subject specialist support is required in schools during placements and can be used to inform the assessment process with greater accuracy.

Perceived lack of support provided in school based ITE programmes for student teachers was picked up by Florence and Sylvia in their evaluation of the effectiveness of their university days. When asked to reflect on whether professional identity development was explored during her allocated university days, Florence said: 'No, we had nothing on that really. We had like sort of something at the start about first impressions, but it was almost too late because we'd already started'. Florence's comments suggest that an incongruity between school and university in terms of organising the support available had meant that any guidance provided was 'too late' to make any real difference. The comments made by Florence in this respect may highlight a need for universities and schools to align their delivery of specific topics, so that it can help student teachers develop. Similarly, Sylvia explained how her naivety before beginning ITE had meant she 'didn't really understand the differences between the Schools Direct and the PGCE', which led her to conclude that she 'probably would have chosen to do it…to do a PGCE'. In Sylvia's interview, it became clear that her experience on a school based ITE programme had left her feeling that she had missed out on university support. By admitting that she did not understand the difference between teacher training routes, Sylvia is either showing that she had failed to research her options or could be indicating a need for greater clarity about what each course entails to be made available to prospective applicants. Sylvia, ultimately, felt that the university failed to support her during her ITE programme, saying: 'To be honest, I don't think the academic side where I trained actually affected my identity really'. The fact that Sylvia refers to university involvement as the 'academic side' may suggest that Sylvia does not personally view her ITE as something that is based on theory. It may show that she perceives teaching as a technical process, rather than something that has strong academic links.

Helena spoke about how changes to ITE policy in Scotland had led, in her opinion to professional identity development support becoming 'more visible and more formalised'. This, Helena explained, did not mean that professional identity was ignored before: 'we always did talk about the marriage of theory and practice, but I think what our new degrees do, is that they make that much more obvious and foregrounded'. Helena's use of the word 'marriage' suggests that she believes that universities can play a significant role in enabling students to make connections between what they do as teachers and the theory that underpins education because they are able to formalise the partnership by structuring the course appropriately. Helena provided an example of how she felt her ITE programme had risen to this challenge when she described the lesson plan, lesson evaluation and weekly reflection templates that are utilised on the ITE course. She said that the templates included 'reference to theory, academic reading, policy documents and practice', showing how the course is designed to pull together the different strands of ITE, so that student teachers have multiple opportunities to reflect on how their identity as a teacher is affected by the varied learning experiences they encounter on their courses. Alongside this, Helena told me that the university runs 'seminars' that are held whilst student teachers are out on placement that get them to reflect and discuss how their understanding of the professional identity of a teacher develops.

Similarly, Evie explained how the university in England that she works in has structured it's PGCE to ensure student teachers study the 'big thinkers' early in their course as part of a module that focused on 'Professional Investigations and Research in Education'. Evie, however, pointed out that 'time is pretty limited on the PGCE', so any further exploration into professional identity was left to the student teachers to pursue in their own time. Her recognition that 'time is pretty limited' could indicate that professional identity is sometimes pushed aside in favour of other more noticeable strands of ITE that can be empirically measured. Evie also spoke about the importance of developing an understanding of what professional identity is prior to beginning ITE. She explained how her recent involvement in 'School Direct' (a school based ITE route) had helped her to recognise and then incorporate new strategies that she felt helped her ITE students form their professional identity in advance. Evie explained: 'School

Direct students had often been teaching assistants in the school that was hosting, and I thought, that's not fair. They've got a massive head start. So, I started sending mine in even if it was just…if they've only been in for a couple of days, it makes a difference'.

Blair, in her interview, focused on the ways that the university enabled and encouraged professional identity because of a centralised approach. She explained that student teachers come into contact with 'over 500 students' over the course of their ITE year, and that she thought 'they wouldn't encounter that number of people going through that exact same process in a school-based approach', which meant that they were more likely 'to experience difference'. In comparison, school based ITE programmes are likely to have smaller numbers of student teachers. It can therefore be inferred that Blair's argument here, then, is that by exposing student teachers to more people, they will have a greater chance to understand the different ways that professional identity can be interpreted. Blair also explained that the university ITE course that she works on requires students to create 'professional development plans […] as part of their school experience', highlighting how university based ITE overtly prioritises professional development at different stages. In Blair's experience, the requirement to create a plan 'allows them to stop and reflect' on how they are developing as beginning teachers. Reflection, then, once again is shown to be a crucial process in professional identity development.

Ophelia and Tess discussed the way that days at university are used to support professional identity development for ITE students. Ophelia explained that the courses she worked on used these days to focus on 'different learning theories', 'being reflective' and 'having a big session […] about what kind of teacher do you think you're going to be and what are your aims, what are your ideals, um…how do you see your professional identity'. Tess, in comparison, described a specific session where former ITE graduates are invited to talk to current ITE students in 'preparation for moving into the profession'. Tess explained that the purpose of this session was not 'prescriptive' and that she was trying to 'create a space' where student teachers 'who have almost qualified can talk with […]

someone who's been out for longer'. Ophelia and Tess's description of the support provided by their respective universities demonstrates how universities use a range of methods to support the development of beginning teacher professional identity, but also how this support must be highly responsive to individual needs. Tess's decision to explain how the sessions are not 'prescriptive' suggests that a certain amount of autonomy is given to the qualified teachers who come to speak and to the unqualified teachers that they come to speak with. This may be because of the unique nature of professional identity. Thus, it can be inferred that a varied approach needs to be taken by any ITE provider if they are to support ITE students in the development of their professional identity.

The use of assignments in university ITE courses was explained by Evie and Arabella in their interviews. Evie spoke about how the course she leads gets students to 'start looking at people like Foucault and like Bourdieu, and, you know, a bit of Freire, some of the main big thinkers, to help them shape their ideas of what exactly is it I'm doing here. So, it's not really about throwing their ideas away: it's about refining and sharpening them'. The assignment that Evie spoke about is first given to students 'right at the beginning of the course, but it doesn't have to be handed in until April'. Evie's description of the theorists that student teachers are asked to look at as 'main big thinkers' suggests that she feels they are providing a base for development and implies that theoretical learning is significant for the development of beginning teachers. Her use of the verbs 'refining' and 'sharpening' suggest that work undertaken for assignments helps to polish or improve professional identity, but that the change it supports is subtle or gradual, rather than being massively transformative. Evie also clarifies the timeline that is utilised for assignments, pointing out that student teachers on university based ITE are given roughly seven months to work on assignments. The length of time allocated to assignments, therefore, may suggest that the development of student teachers is gradual or even ongoing, as they are asked to work on them alongside their school placements.

Arabella discussed how she felt the assignments given to ITE students were designed to support the different stages of their development as beginning teachers. She explained how 'the first assignment is very focused on subject and it drills down particularly deep in a particular aspect of the subject pedagogy and working within the subject, and the second assignment is quite broad and it looks at things across the school'. Arabella's description of the differences between the two main assignments may reflect the process of training, where student teachers begin getting to grips with individual components of teaching and then explore how everything fits together within the context of schools and the wider educational landscape. Arabella also explained that, for both assignments, there are certain requirements: 'It can't just be something very theoretical and out there. It has to, you know, it has to be connected somewhere and grounded somewhere'. The word 'grounded' implies that, whilst assignments allow student teachers greater freedom in terms of topic, they remain bound by the limitations of the teaching profession.

Arabella did, however, go on to speak about how student teachers are required to engage with several theorists as part of their ITE. She explained that the course she worked on included writing by Andrew Pollard, Donald Schön and 'Maynard', 'to begin to think a little bit about students, where they are, and where they might be'. Arabella's discussion around this topic centred around the idea that student teachers were given the chance to engage with academic writing that enabled them to explore 'teacher development' and therefore focus in on their own professional identity development. Her description of how the reading considered 'where they are' suggests that ITE students are encouraged to consider the present before thinking about the future by looking at 'where they might be'. The two-step approach employed by ITE courses may thus imply that professional development needs to be idealistic yet grounded in a contextual reality.

Evie, similarly, spoke about how reading was used to help to develop the professional identity of the ITE students she worked with. In her interview, Evie explained how the ITE course she was employed on used 'pre-course tasks' and a

'jigsaw shared reading approach' where student teachers are required to carry out 'about five readings' on a 'practitioner or theorist of their choice'. The decision to allow student teachers a 'choice' as to who they would read about shows there is a certain amount of flexibility and individualisation available to them when it comes to engaging with educational literature. Evie explained that the 'choice' given to them is also intended to ensure that they are adding to their learning rather than repeating the same thing because she encourages student teachers to select an educational theorist who they are not familiar with. The decision to fill in gaps in knowledge in this way suggests that the reading carried out at ITE level is intended to provide a broad and varied foundation that can be developed in the beginning years of a teacher's career. By recognising that some student teachers may already have knowledge about key educational thinkers, Evie is demonstrating that she appreciates how ITE students may begin the course with varying levels of experience and knowledge, and therefore may need to read different texts to support their professional development.

6.4.2 Partnership working

A common thread emerged during the interviews that I conducted with ITE staff about the way that universities supported schools in delivering ITE. Scottish participants use the term 'partnership model' to describe the approach developed in the Scottish university where the participants worked. It should be noted that each university in Scotland has developed their own approaches to, and models of, partnership with local authorities and schools. The partnership model developed by the Scottish university where my participants worked involved collaboration between the university ITE provider and the local authorities and schools where students completed placements. Participants in England similarly spoke about working in partnership with schools to support beginning teachers during their ITE year but did not discuss local authority involvement. Blair, Arabella, Tess and Evie all explained their experience of working in partnership with schools, and how they felt this was an appropriate approach to take within ITE.

For Blair, there was a strong justification for partnership working because of the parallels that can be drawn between teaching and other professions. Blair said: 'We wouldn't want doctors going out to hospitals straight away and becoming doctors. We'd want them to know their theory…um…and the same with lawyers'. By drawing a direct comparison between teachers and other professionals, Blair highlights the need to address the academic development of a teacher, rather than focusing on the technical aspects of teaching within the classroom. Her argument that student teachers need to 'know their theory' shows that, for Blair, university involvement can provide an academic foundation on which teaching practice can be built. Blair's comments may also be interpreted as resistance against school based ITE that reduces university involvement, and in some cases, removes it entirely. By stating that doctors should not go 'to hospitals straight away' Blair is implying that a deeper understanding is necessary and that failing to take this into account may be compromising the integrity of the profession.

Additionally, Blair discussed how she felt more universities should actively work in partnership with schools to support the development of student teachers whilst they were out on placement. She explained that at her university the 'tutor doesn't just appear at the last minute', but instead works with the school to carry out 'joint' lesson observations with the school mentor, so 'that students are actually guided through their school experience'. The consistent presence of the university was implied by her comment that their involvement is not 'last minute'. The word 'joint' also suggests a two-way process that is shared between the school and university ITE provider, rather than universities being expected to lead the process. Therefore, the emphasis placed by Blair on collaborative practice may suggest that university participation in every aspect of ITE is necessary if student teachers are to develop, and to ensure that schools are appropriately assessing beginning teachers.

Tess, like Blair, spoke about how she felt universities played an important role by working with schools. In her interview she spoke about how university tutors worked with school mentors when carrying out assessments. She said this

involved: ‘A mid-placement review and that will involve an observation of a lesson…jointly in some situations. Um…and then at the end the final report – summative assessment – of the student is carried out…um…jointly’. Tess’s repetition of the word ‘jointly’ further highlights how the university works closely with schools to support beginning teachers as they develop their professional selves. Her use of the adverb ‘jointly’ suggests a relationship that is connected and collaborative. Tess’s focus on assessment in this excerpt, however, may imply that the university that she is employed at is focused on outcomes rather than the process. If this is the case, there may be an argument that universities need to provide greater consistent support to school mentors and ITE students while they are completing their school placements.

Blair spoke in her interview about how universities are positioned to support beginning teachers following their completion of ITE so that they can continue to develop their professional identity. Blair explained that her university, like others in Scotland, offered a ‘wealth of courses and programmes that students can undertake in order to complete their learning to Masters level’ as well as offering a taught doctorate. By providing these different routes, Blair said that universities create ‘lots of opportunities for teachers to continue their academic journey, as well as a professional journey’, thus reinforcing the support given to educators and demonstrating an ongoing commitment to support teachers throughout their career.

Sylvia’s experience of completing a school based ITE programme contrasted with the support that university ITE staff in this study described providing. She explained that there was very little opportunity in her training year to discuss and develop a professional identity with the university that supported her learning. She explained how ‘You almost go into it not knowing…what’s allowed, so you just go with what you see, and that’s why I followed what my mentor until he said to me that it’s okay to, you know’. Sylvia’s comments suggest that she relied heavily upon her school mentor to guide her, but that this was problematic because it led to errors being made. Her use of personal pronouns in this excerpt may also imply that her experience was isolated and

individualistic. Whilst the idea of developing a more bespoke approach to professional identity may, to a certain extent, be appropriate, it is worth considering the negative impact that this may have had on Sylvia's development. She described in the interview how she feels she would have benefited from a session on identity before going into school, which shows how the influence and support of university tutors was limited on her school based ITE programme.

6.4.3 Challenges to university support

Tess and Helena touched upon concerns that they both had about how much support university tutors were able to provide beginning teachers. Both participants spoke frankly about the challenges that they faced as teacher educators. Tess described ITE programmes as being 'a kind of conveyor belt'. The imagery utilised by Tess connotes a production line where support is used to ensure quality assurance that leads to the same outcome. It evokes a mechanical idea, which dehumanises the process of ITE, consequently suggesting that professional identity is abandoned in favour of uniformity. Furthermore, the image of a conveyor belt' implies linear development that is constrained by time. The imagery used by Tess here may, therefore, reveal concerns about how ITE courses are structured. Helena retrospectively explored the impact that policy changes have had on ITE:

> students who began in 2001 started on the new degree and they would be working to the standards, but the students in year two, three and four would still be working on the old degree. You know, under the old degree regulations. So, we…they were still have having to…um…reach a standard, but the degree wasn't as well matched to it, as such, so we had to do a lot of work with them.

Helena's explanation of how the changes impacted student teachers reflects how top-down reforms can create issues for those who have already begun their studies, possibly implying a lack of consideration for how changes are implemented. Her comment that 'a lot of work' had to be done to mitigate these issues highlights how universities are often having to work within difficult and challenging circumstances to ensure that beginning teachers are adequately

prepared for their new careers. The idea that those who had already begun their studies did not have to conform to the new regulations during training, but that they would be expected to adhere to them following the completion of their ITE creates an inconsistency in terms of the expectations of their profession, which may have only become problematic later in their careers when university support is no longer available.

6.4.4 Beginning teacher experiences of power during school practice

As a teacher educator, Ophelia reflected on how power is distributed and exerted during school placements. She explained: 'One of the things that the students tell us when they come back from their placement is that each teacher that they have…or teachers that they have will say, 'this is how you do it, I want you to teach it like this',' suggesting that teacher mentors in schools expect student teachers to follow instructions and emulate their mentors. The fact that Ophelia uses the plural 'students' implies that this is a common issue. Her experience of this led her to view the 'power dynamic' as 'very strong' and to draw the conclusion that:

> For some students it can take longer for them to actually find who they are as a teacher because they're so busy pleasing particular members of staff, or their mentors, and for other students they're also very quick to think 'I don't want to be like this. I'm going to forge my own identity and be myself'.

Ophelia illustrates how the power dynamic that is commonly experienced by student teachers leads to two different outcomes. Whilst some ITE students struggle to find their own identity as a result, others immediately push back and attempt to build a unique identity. The power exerted, therefore, can result in drastically different reactions, but in both scenarios, power is presented as leading to artificial identity development because it is a reaction to the mentor's behaviour rather than a natural process that the student teacher is able to work on over time. In a sense, then, professional identity development becomes forced if school mentors channel the power that they have and make trainees teach like them.

Sylvia found during her placement that her understanding of what a teacher should be was influenced by her mentor. She remembered in her interview how her mentor had discouraged her from behaviour in certain ways that felt natural to her own identity. Sylvia explained how 'a child high fived me', but that when her mentor saw, he told her not to do it again, telling her that 'he would never do that'. This incident, Sylvia described as being pivotal in the development of her professional identity as a teacher because it made her reconsider her previous behaviour and amend her actions going forward. When reflecting on why this moment was significant, she said: 'I couldn't see myself being that sort of person', but that she felt the need to construct her identity in a more professional light following this event. Sylvia's response to her mentor's advice may imply that she felt compelled to behave in a set way, demonstrating how the power her mentor had over her was used to alter not just her actions, but also her identity from that point onwards. It shows the long-term effect that mentor power can have on beginning teacher identity.

Samuel compared how power impacted his professional identity in his two school placements. Whilst he stated that his first school was 'the school that made me a teacher' and that he felt he was appreciated because the 'school listens', he also explained that the mentor in his second school treated him in a way that he felt was unfair: 'So we ended up working more than the rest of our colleagues with not enough guidance. I mean, the last three months, I did not have an observation…I was just delivering and delivering and delivering'. Power can be seen as significant in the formation of identity in both of Samuel's placements. His first placement, however, can be seen as an example of a school where power is shared, as the school appeared to listen to his thoughts and ideas. Samuel, therefore, appears to have responded positively to their guidance because he felt valued. In contrast, during his second placement, Samuel presents his mentor as someone who uses their power to get ITE students to lighten their workload, but not to support their development. Samuel's repetition of the word 'delivering' suggests that he felt as though he was not developing, but rather repeating the same thing again and again regardless of whether his teaching and learning strategies were effective because his mentor

did not take the time to observe him. Based upon Samuel's comments on the two schools, I would argue that power flowed in both directions during his first placement, empowering him in his role as a beginning teacher, whilst power was exerted upon him top-down during his second placement, which made him feel unable to develop his sense of professional self.

6.5 Theme 4: State influence on identity formation and development

As discussed in chapter 2, both England and Scotland have beginning teacher provisions that are influenced by the state. My interview participants discussed how they felt government policy shaped their experiences and helped or hindered their professional identity. Their responses highlight the differences between England and Scotland in this respect, but also how the use of teaching standards in both countries influences beginning teacher professional identity. In this section, I will explore their responses and discuss the impact that state influence can have on teacher professional identity.

6.5.1 Divided expectations: the differences between professional identity in England and Scotland

In the interviews that I conducted with ITE staff, a clear divide became apparent between the ways that England and Scotland approached professional identity development during ITE, but also across the teaching profession. Blair explained:

> in Scotland there is a drive to maintain and promote…um…a focus on personal and professional identity and development…and it's this idea that…that as a professional you must continue to develop. That it's not a case of your qualifying, but rather you continue to revisit, to develop, to change etc. Um, I think possibly in our training we believe that students once they join the training and start to become part of the teaching profession, we have to invest in them.

Blair's use of verbs like 'promote', 'drive', 'develop' and 'invest' imply that nationally there has been an increased focus on developing professional identity long term. The idea that teachers are expected to 'continue to revisit' their

professional identity shows that the need to reflect on how a teacher's professional self is constructed and presented is integrated into the education system. The word 'invest' also implies that teachers' identities are valued within the profession and society at large.

Evie, speaking from an English university's viewpoint, had very different ideas about the way that professional identity features in ITE courses. Evie said: 'We know we should be doing other things, but we're in a framework that is kind of restricting it. So, we also need to have that kind of dialogue with our government'. Evie's description of the framework as 'kind of restrictive' suggests that ITE providers lack the autonomy that they need in England to be able to explore professional identity for beginning teachers. Her conclusion that a 'dialogue' needs to begin with the 'government' suggests that the discussion around how professional identity is developed for beginning teachers is not currently being addressed. If we view a 'dialogue' as a discussion where different groups are given the opportunity to converse openly, Evie could be trying to communicate her frustration with the top-down nature of the frameworks that are currently being used. Simultaneously, however, her use of the collective pronoun 'we' implies that Evie believes teacher educators need to take greater responsibility for how the framework develops professional identity by negotiating with the English government.

The impact that new government initiatives and policies can have on ITE was discussed by Helena in her interview. As a member of ITE staff with significant experience in different roles, Helena spoke about how 'The Donaldson Report' had aimed to make 'teaching a Masters level profession', which had led 'ITE courses and programmes' to 'up our [their] game'. Helena's argument that the expectation that ITE courses would be designed to provide or prepare for Masters level education implies that she thinks government policy catalysed improvements in ITE. Helena also recalled how the 'reaccreditation' process that educational courses are required to go through 'every six years' had meant that in '2000' significant changes were made to ITE courses in Scotland: 'So, we were very consciously putting, um, teacher professionalism, teacher identity,

teacher integrity and resilience, all of those components in, because we were having to show the GTCS where the course would meet the standards'. Helena's comments demonstrate that changes made at a higher level can actually lead to improvements in professional identity development in ITE courses. Although Helena admitted that this change came about because they needed to evidence the inclusion of professional identity to the GTCS, the idea that it was 'consciously' being included shows that intervention from a regulatory body can help to promote greater focus on professional identity.

Arabella, in comparison, implied that the changes made to policies in England failed to initiate real change: 'I've got a very cynical brain and I would say that regulations have been tweaked and changed in terms of the surface level features', but that 'the real underpinnings I don't think have changed that much, it's just the process of assessment has had to change'. The acknowledgement that changes have been 'surface level' infers that policy shifts have been done for appearance's sake. Arabella's use of the word 'tweaked' further reinforces this, as she presents the changes as minimal. Interestingly, Arabella stated that she has a 'cynical brain' twice in her interview when discussing how the government has supported the development of professional identity within ITE courses. Arabella's repetition of this phrase suggests a sense of uncertainty; she seems to be doubting her own judgement and at the same time admitting that she lacks confidence in the government's ability to improve ITE.

Whilst Arabella expressed uncertainty over the impact that government initiatives have had on ITE, Evie was more forceful in her description. She compared government led changes to being 'like a machine gun [that] has punched holes in the whole system'. Not only does Evie's imagery connote a violent attack on the ITE system in England, but it also implies that the attempts made to improve professional identity have actually weakened it by creating 'holes'. Furthermore, Evie specifically refers to 'a machine gun' suggesting that the damage has been quickly and haphazardly inflicted. Evie's portrayal of the impact of government policies may, therefore, imply that changes have been

rushed through without being carefully considered, and that this has resulted in unnecessary damage to the ITE system and to beginning teacher professional identity.

6.5.2 Influence of standards on identity formation

For Florence, the standards that are in place in England played a significant role in her development during her ITE year:

> Um…and I think it did affect my identity a fair amount inside school definitely…um…in the classroom, making sure that there were certain sort of key words that I was using and ensuring that was going into my lessons, and it probably did affect sort of the way that I do things a lot.

This excerpt is interesting because Florence begins by talking in the past tense, she transitions to using the present tense suggesting that the effect on her identity carries into the present. The standards have perhaps had a wider effect than Florence at first thought. She acknowledges that they resulted in her integrating 'key words' into evidence that she had met them, but also accepts that she still refers to them when constructing her identity as a beginning teacher following the completion of her ITE year. For some beginning teachers the standards may have a long-term impact on how they view themselves as professionals. While the Standards might be viewed as surface level at first – as a kind of tick box activity to enable QTS to be awarded – they can gradually extend their influence and shape the construction of qualified teacher identity as well.

Several of the ITE staff that I interviewed for this study held similar views about the significance of the standards for professional identity development. Ophelia described the standards as 'comprehensive', suggesting that they cover everything that a teacher needs to consider about their identity, whilst Blair argued that they 'helped cement' an 'understanding of the profession'. Blair's use of the word 'cement' suggests that the standards have helped to secure an appreciation of what it means to be a teacher, thus implying that the standards are necessary for professional identity to be achieved. Helena felt the standards

had improved ITE provision in Scotland: the introduction of the standards 'made sure that everyone had to have that kind of conversation and it wasn't just down to the passionate people or the people that [had] professionalism coming out of their fingernails'. Helena's assertion that 'everyone' is required to consider their professional identity because of the standards demonstrates how the standards have effectively standardised the teaching profession. Her comments that prior to this only those that were 'passionate' or naturally professional to the point that they had 'professionalism coming out of their fingernails' indicates that she thinks professional identity was previously not significant to all teachers. Helena also explained that the standards had been reformed soon after they were introduced at the request of 'ITE institutions', so that 'professional commitments and outcomes' features 'first' to highlight how important they are. This alteration shows that universities recognise how the standards can influence teachers. Its placement at the start of the standards conveys the overarching significance of professional identity for teachers.

However, Sylvia spoke about how she felt standards are 'kind of technicalities, as opposed to anything to do with professional…like…I feel like in terms of like identity, I guess they're slightly separate because they're things that need to be done regardless of what your identity is'. She also spoke about how she felt the 'need to tick these standards off'. Sylvia's view on the standards suggests that they do not support professional identity because they are reduced to 'technicalities' or to a list that has little meaning. Her belief that they are 'separate' suggests that, within ITE courses, professional identity is marginalised in favour of evidence collection that is used to prove that the standards have been met. Consequently, Sylvia has begun her career as a teacher believing that professional identity does not contribute towards qualification, as her experience has not shown her that professional identity is an integral part of the standards. This may, therefore, mean that Sylvia has not developed a sense of her professional self over the course of the ITE and may struggle to develop it during the early years of her career.

Ophelia acknowledged the limitations that the standards posed, but also expressed ambivalence about their efficacy in relation to professional identity: 'the student teachers see it as a number of hoops that they have to jump through. […] I don't know if it helps or constrains us really'. The imagery used in this quote connotes a game and suggests that ITE students may not take the standards seriously. This may mean that the standards have become redundant, as they are not actually fulfilling their initial objective of helping to develop beginning teachers and prepare them for the teaching profession. Ophelia's uncertainty of whether the standards 'help' or 'constrain' beginning teachers and those who educate them implies that the impact of the standards is not fully known.

During the interview that I conducted with Helena, she presented a completely different perspective on how the standards can limit professional identity development. Helena approached the discussion by considering the impact that assessing against the standards may have on ITE students. She stated that when assessing student teachers, educators decide where each standard has been met and award 'satisfactory or unsatisfactory', which she said meant the judgements made are 'an all or nothing'. This, she went on to say, meant that some student teachers were reluctant to push themselves because performing above 'satisfactory' is not officially rewarded. Helena, therefore, highlighted how the use of standards rather than a grading system can impede development of the most able student teachers.

6.6 Theme 5: Challenges and limitations to professional identity development

In this section I will analyse the interview data elicited from my interviews about some of the challenges faced within the beginning the years of a teacher's career. I will first consider how time was presented as a limitation to professional identity development. I will then analyse data that suggests psychological, emotional and social barriers exist within ITE and the initial years of a teacher's career. I will conclude this section by interpreting data that

relates to how accountability has been found to affect professional teacher identity.

6.6.1 Never enough time

Among the ITE staff interviewed, Ophelia, Helena and Arabella stressed how time constraints negatively impacted teacher professional identity during ITE. Helena and Arabella were not able to explore professional identity on their respective ITE courses because they did not have enough time, with Arabella saying that they have 'too much to fit in'. Time, for both participants, was an issue because they had too many competing demands. With Helena explaining that they struggle to 'spend the amount of time on the curriculum content material' that they would have liked to, and that, as a result, professional identity is barely addressed. This, then, identifies an issue around how much universities are being asked to do to prepare student teachers for the profession. Their comments suggest that they are expected to cover too much already during ITE. Consequently, anything that is not presented as compulsory, like professional identity, is reduced or removed. Ophelia's comments on time concur with Arabella and Helena's, however, she explained that 'the students would all like more time…we [teacher educators] would like more time', suggesting that time allocation and expectations about what can be covered need to be reviewed to ensure ITE is able to adequately prepare student teachers for the profession.

Daisy and Samuel reflected on how time restrictions limited their professional identity development during their ITE. Samuel spoke about how he was able to talk to university mentors openly and could 'ask questions, even questions we couldn't ask our teachers in the department', but that they 'did not have the time to always talk to them'. Samuels comments imply that support systems were in place, but that the structure of ITE prevented him from seeking advice that could have helped to develop his sense of professional identity. Daisy also felt that time inhibited her identity development but related this to how she personally was able to develop her professional identity. Daisy explained: 'I'm reflecting a lot on feedback that is given to me, but I didn't really have time to become the kind of teacher that I wanted to be'. Daisy's acknowledgement

that she was unable to respond to her reflections and develop into the teacher that she 'wanted to be' suggests that reflective practice became futile during her ITE year. The idea that she had a 'lot of feedback' but was not able to use this to improve her role as a teacher may reveal a flaw in how ITE programmes are structured and delivered.

6.6.2 Psychological barriers

Sylvia spoke numerous times over the course of her interview about how she faced psychological barriers when constructing and developing her professional identity. Sylvia explained that she 'felt like I [she] had to change to fit in to even sit in the staff room', 'hide' her 'shy' nature' and that she wanted to 'build the relationships with the students using kind of bits of my [her] personal identity', but that she was discouraged from doing so by her mentor. As a result, Sylvia believed that she had experienced 'imposter syndrome' during her ITE year, which meant that she was still struggling with constructing a professional identity during her NQT year. She told me that she was 'not getting anywhere', saying: 'And, that's why I always feel like I need to be me, so I can be relatable. But then, it's hard to be relatable to everyone, isn't it?'. Sylvia's use of rhetorical question implies a sense of uncertainty: at times it felt as though she wanted me, as the interviewer, to answer the questions and help her work out what she was really thinking about professional identity. Sylvia's need to conceal her personal identity shows that she has some apprehension about being a teacher, which may also explain why she experiences 'imposter syndrome'. Alternatively, her school mentor's influence may have caused anxiety because he is presented as trying to control how she presents herself to the students. This may have created tension for Sylvia that inadvertently caused her to think that she had to 'change' and 'hide' who she was when interacting with staff and students in school. Sylvia's professional identity appears to have been inhibited by her interactions with her mentor and her own personal expectations. Her discussion around professional identity in the interview that I conducted suggest that she may still be struggling psychologically to negotiate her identity and that it may take her longer to establish a secure professional identity than other participants in this study as a result.

As a teacher educator, Ophelia conveyed concerns about how student teachers form a sense of professional identity during their school practice. She said that, at her university, they 'keep emphasising that you cannot borrow a teacher's identity or a teacher's approach'. Ophelia's use of the verb 'borrow' in this quote highlights the temporary nature of professional identity for some student teachers. Whilst Ophelia's comments initially seemed to suggest that student teachers were choosing to adopt other teacher's personas, she explained later in the interview 'that there can be conflict and there can be tension, if they're being asked to be somebody that they're not'. The 'conflict' and 'tension' that Ophelia refers to could be between the student teacher and their mentor or it could be experienced internally by the student teacher. Thus, Ophelia may be suggesting that ITE students overcome psychological barriers that are foisted upon them by their mentors and internalised psychological barriers within themselves before they are able to develop a secure sense of their own professional identity.

The psychological challenges that Florence faced appear to have been less extreme than Sylvia's. Florence described her ITE year as 'intense' and 'pressurised'. She likened it to being 'almost in fight or flight mode the whole time', yet at the same time she conceded it was a 'really useful' experience. By accepting that the psychological challenges were 'useful', Florence may be implying that the level of intensity helped her to prepare for life as a teacher. The suggestion that she was in 'fight or flight mode', however, may suggest that she was pushed to the limits. Florence's experience of ITE may show that more needs to be done to protect student teachers, as a less resilient trainee may have given up and left teaching.

6.6.3 Emotional barriers

In her interview, Tess expressed a concern about how the emotional 'constraints' of teaching can impede the development of professional identity during the ITE year. Tess discussed how having 'to do what the school says' meant that student teachers 'can't be cross' and 'can't be upset', which she thought might make beginning teachers 'think that they can't make changes'. Tess' repetition of the contraction 'can't' highlights how student teachers may

feel restricted by the situation they are in. This could consequently lead to suppressed emotions, which may present issues later in their careers when they are not subjected to the same hierarchical pressures. In her comments, Tess made it clear that the expectation to be emotionless was not consigned to ITE, but also featured, in her experience, within the teaching profession overall.

Samuel also discussed how he found it difficult to develop professionally during his second placement: 'I mean I was in such a negative space in that school, that I was…I did not try to…to reach out'. For Samuel, 'negative' emotions resulted in him isolating himself from the staff on his placement. Although this could be a good thing if a student teacher finds themself in a toxic environment, it could also prevent the development of professional identity, as it may limit the interactions that they have with professionals who could support them. Samuel's acknowledgement that he was responsible for this is shown through his use of the personal pronoun 'I' and does suggest that he retrospectively appreciates how this may have stunted his development. His lack of emotional connection during the latter part of his ITE year, however, may have a long-lasting impact on his professional identity, the extent of which may not become fully apparent until later in his career.

6.6.4 Limitations created by society

Arabella and Helena commented on the impact that societal views of the teaching profession have on how beginning teachers construct their professional identity. Both agreed that the perception of teaching as a profession has changed in recent years, with Arabella stating that 'we've reached a point where teaching isn't the profession that it might have been thought of'. Helena's discussion similarly centred on how teaching has been de-professionalised, but also considered how this affects ITE. She explained:

> everybody thinks they know what's involved with being a teacher and the biggest surprise for teacher education students is the amount of work that's involved, and the level of detail, and the level of skill…and, I think if the public…if the wider public knew more about what was actually involved in being a teacher, they might have a slightly different perspective, and, I think that

> professional identity might once again be seen with greater respect.

Helena uses the triplet of 'work', 'detail' and 'skill' in this excerpt to emphasise the areas of teaching that are misunderstood within society. In doing so, she presents teaching as a profession that is demanding and multifaceted. From Helena's viewpoint, it is the inaccurate portrayal of teaching in wider society that limits student teachers because they fail to appreciate what will be required of them and therefore are 'surprise[d]' when they begin their ITE year. Student teachers then, in Helena's experience, need to overcome the preconceived ideas that society has projected about teaching before they are able to develop a professional identity.

6.6.5 Accountability: increased pressure and box ticking

Sylvia spoke about how she was concerned about her professional identity being susceptible to pressure from schools to achieve results. She said: 'it's easier for me be like swallowed up by other things, so I could easily be influenced, and my identity be like changed in a certain situation because of maybe pressure'. The simile of being 'swallowed up' suggests that Sylvia thinks she may be consumed by the education system, as though she will disappear into it if too much pressure is placed on her or too much is expected of her. Sylvia admits that she 'could be easily influenced', which suggests that this is an issue that is unique to her as an individual, but her comments may potentially relate to other beginning teachers' experiences. The 'pressure' that she refers to may allude to the trend in English schools to measure teacher performance against accountability measures like exam results. Alternatively, Sylvia may be referring to 'pressure' from colleagues to conform to their expectations in terms of things like workload.

For Tess, accountability within the teaching profession can define a beginning teacher's professional identity in two different ways. She spoke about how student teachers often return from their school placements with a greater understanding of the 'responsibility' that they have towards young people. This, Tess suggested, created a 'fork in the road' where student teachers would either decide that teaching is 'only a job' and 'do just what the schools do' or begin to

develop a professional identity where they take on the role of the 'good parent, the positive role model' because they recognise the significant role that they play in students' lives. Whilst the former response may lead to disenfranchised professionals who do the bare minimum, the latter is indicative of a professional identity that is highly emotive. There is, of course, a danger in both responses: detachment for those intent to do 'only a job' and attachment for those who take on the role of carer.

Samuel spoke about how his sense of responsibility was influenced by his school mentor at his first placement. He said that he had a 'lot of respect' for his mentor who was 'more controlling' because he recognised that they were 'controlling it because it's their group and ultimately they are the ones who will be responsible for them'. Samuel concluded his comments on this by saying: 'that taught me about the teacher I want to be', suggesting that he has modelled his own professional identity on his first school mentor. The word 'controlling' often has negative connotations, but in this context, Samuel sees it as something to be 'respect[ed]', as it shows that his mentor took responsibility for student outcomes. If we compare Samuel's comments on accountability to Tess's we can see that Samuel is presenting a third potential response to accountability that focuses on accepting an increased sense of responsibility and reacting by doing everything within your power to control the situation. The danger, however, in this scenario is that teachers could become so determined to control situations that they struggle to cope with situations that they cannot control, and consequently, their professional identity could become less resilient and falter.

Tess stated, when discussing how effective the standards are at supporting professional identity development, that she would like 'to see the benchmarks bundled up into a sack and put into a rubbish bin actually…revised completely', suggesting that she felt the benchmarks were not appropriate or useful to evaluate student teacher progress against. The imagery of throwing them 'into a rubbish bin' highlights how Tess feels the benchmarks have no value. She is implying that, in her experience, they do not help student teachers develop a

secure professional identity. Her comment that they should be 'revised completely', however, suggests that she recognises the need for a system that can be used to evaluate student teacher progress, but that she thinks a change needs to be made, so that a fair and accurate assessment model can be created that supports student teacher professional identity development, but also enables ITE staff to make accurate judgements about whether a student teacher is capable of entering the profession.

Helena chose to focus on the system that is currently used to hold ITE students to account, speaking about the evidence folders that student teachers compile over the course of their ITE. The folders need to prove that student teachers have met the standards. Alongside lesson observations and mentor reports, the evidence portfolio that ITE students produce is used to demonstrate that a student teacher should be awarded QTS. When thinking about evidencing the professional identity strands of the standards, Helena thought that it was 'hard' because the file 'would need to be three times wider if you were actually trying to show that'. Helena suggests here that professional identity is such a large part of ITE that extensive evidence would be needed to prove student teachers had sufficiently developed their sense of professional self. Yet, at the same time, Helena is revealing a flaw in the system, as student teachers are being awarded QTS without providing adequate evidence.

6.7 Theme 6: Portraits of professional identity development in an ideal world

At the end the interviews that I conducted I asked my participants to think about how they would like to see professional identity developed in an ideal world. I explained to them that this was an opportunity for "blue skies" thinking, and that they should not limit their ideas when responding. In the following sections I will analyse the responses that were given to this question that present potential ways that professional identity development can be better supported in the future.

6.7.1 Increased support from universities following the completion of ITE

Tess and Evie both discussed how they felt increased presence and support from universities over a longer period for beginning teachers would be beneficial. Tess summarised this approach as being 'two-year mentoring and then follow-up mentoring', whilst Evie argued that 'really rigorous initial teacher training ought to take place over two years'. Evie supported her assertion with experience-based evidence by talking about how in England it seems that the 'NQT year is bolted' on, which can result in some beginning teachers having 'a very bumpy ride'. By describing the support for beginning teachers following their ITE as 'bolted' on, Evie implied that it was an afterthought, something that is an addition rather than being integrated into the beginning teacher experience. The metaphor of 'a very bumpy ride' suggests that the NQT year is not taken seriously and that the experience and support provided is inconsistent. Evie further critiqued the current NQT system by saying that the current 'one mentor' approach in schools 'does not penetrate the school system', thus highlighting the NQT system as something that is surface level.

Evie continued in her discussion to explore the potential models that could be introduced to rectify these issues. Evie spoke about how universities could create a programme that acted as 'stepping stones' for NQTs and prepared them for a Masters. She felt that this could help to develop them professionally rather than encouraging them to begin a Masters straight after finishing ITE, 'which they really haven't got the time or the energy for'. Evie's acknowledgement of the limitation of 'time during the first qualified year of a teacher's career may also suggest that provisions need to be put in place to support beginning teachers by reducing their teaching hours so that they have the time to engage with any extended training programme.

Increasing the presence of university support, Evie said, would also be beneficial to the universities:

> We tend to see only the initial teacher training bit. We are not as au fait as we ought to be with the pressures that are going on in secondary schools. Again, we tend to think it's all about our bit,

> and perhaps, our eyes need to be opened and reacquainted with the wider school context.

Evie's acknowledgement of the blinkered view that universities can have of the teaching profession may show that ITE staff have lost touch with what it is to like to be a teacher but are willing to take greater responsibility for the development of teachers and become more involved in schools for any change to work. Yet her use of the collective pronoun 'we' may also suggest that she is presenting her views as representative of all teacher educators – it is important to acknowledge that these are her personal views and may not indicate how other teacher educators in England feel. Evie uses the metaphor of sight, here, to imply that greater exposure to schools will help university staff improve the provision that they provide to teaching professionals. By increasing university involvement in schools, Evie suggests that teacher educators may be more aware of the pressures and expectations of schools and consequently more able to support beginning teachers as they prepare for their careers.

6.7.2 Increased time and opportunity for reflection

In her interview, Blair spoke about the importance of reflection to the development of professional identity, highlighting how she felt opportunities to reflect were not currently being created, and how this needs to be rectified: 'I think that we really do have to bend this idea that practice doesn't just come from the sky, that it's something you have to think about and that it's underpinned and you know it's not just a wee notion somebody's had'. With the colloquial adjective 'wee' Blair conveys how reflection in ITE has been reduced so that it is almost insignificant. This, then, contrasts with her previous presentation of reflection as 'something you have to think about' that is 'underpinned' to emphasise how the process of reflection has been marginalised within the teaching profession. Consequently, Blair wants reflective practice to become more prominent within ITE to ensure that student teachers can use it to develop their professional identities. Blair, however, was not alone in suggesting improved reflective practice; Florence, Sylvia and Arabella also discussed how they would like reflection during the ITE year to be improved.

Florence proposed a specific reflective practice strategy that she felt would help develop the professional identity of beginning teachers:

> Sort of thinking about before you actually had entered the classroom at all, before you'd presented to the students at all, to have a session where you like figure out: okay, what is my identity going to be? How I'm gonna ensure that that comes across. How am I gonna stick to that? What am I gonna do? How am I gonna present myself, like physically? And what am I gonna say? And any sorts of things that I've got planned…in terms of routines…to actually be able to…because I think, especially, and for a lot of people, it was like scrambling at the start to try and figure it out […] and then if you could then revisit that at the end of the year, or even maybe midway through the year, and say how has that changed.

Florence's idea relies upon creating opportunities at pre-planned intervals to be able to reflect on and review professional identity. Florence implies that she thinks it is important to begin this process prior to entering the classroom, but that it needs to be revisited again as the year progresses. Florence's description of how some of her peers 'were scrambling at the start to try and figure it out' implies a panicked and disorganised start to the ITE programme, which she then suggests could be avoided if greater attention is paid to establishing professional identity before student teachers go into school. Her use of a list of rhetorical questions that outline the kinds of things that need to be considered by beginning teachers demonstrate how wide and varied professional identity can be. This suggests that understanding professional identity can be beneficial in a myriad of ways.

Sylvia also suggested that reflective practices that focus on professional identity need to be introduced. She pointed out that on her school based ITE course they 'did do reflections on, you know, lessons', but that they were not given the opportunity to reflect on who they were 'as a person'. Sylvia's comments present ITE as tending to be on teaching practice rather than the beginning

teachers themselves. Her suggestion that reflecting each 'half term' or at the 'end of term' specifically on professional identity may, therefore, provide a solution to this issue, as it would require early career teachers to stop and think about who they are as professionals rather than looking at the minutiae of lessons.

On the other hand, Arabella spoke about how she felt more needed to be done 'to embed a little bit more of that…of the theoretical perspectives', so that beginning teachers can critically reflect on their professional identity. Arabella felt this would help struggling beginning teachers by showing them that 'there are other people that might be feeling this kind of insecurity about who they are and where they are, where they are located, and, you know, how to be a teacher'. Arabella's perspective on this, therefore, shows how building student confidence is important to developing identity, as well as providing them with knowledge about issues, like reflective practice, that may impact identity.

6.7.3 Greater autonomy

Daisy spoke to me about how she would like to see greater autonomy given to beginning teachers during their ITE year. Daisy explained that there were always 'other teachers' in the classroom when she was teaching, which meant that she did not feel she was 'given a chance to be the type of teacher that we [she] wanted to be'. Consequently, she said that she thinks a system where student teachers are given more opportunities to be alone with a class would be beneficial. Daisy's experience of constantly being observed by other staff suggests that the schools she trained in kept her under constant supervision. Her comments on the effect that this had on her professional identity, suggest that she had little power to create and develop her professional persona as a result. Daisy also explained that she would like more 'freedom' to be given to ITE students and would like to have their 'opinions heard'. Thus, it could be interpreted that Daisy felt suppressed during her ITE year.

Tess felt that student teachers could be imbued with a greater sense of autonomy if the way that ITE courses are assessed could be changed. Tess

suggested that '3000/4000 word essay[s]' should be replaced by assessments that 'measure engagement' in different formats. Her rationale for doing this was to create 'a sense that the professional environment is exciting…um…its empowering'. Tess, however, was not specific about how student teachers could be assessed differently but did talk about how 'theory' and 'practice' could be brought together more if assessments were carried out in other formats.

6.7.4 Securing teaching as a profession

Tess proposed that teaching should introduce a sort of 'Hippocratic oath' to ensure that they understand the commitment that they are making by entering the profession. She argued that this would help to clarify that 'development' is part of their role rather than being something that 'has to be drawn out like blood on a stone', but also that it could help them understand their identity as a professional better: 'you know it's the whole know thyself thing again. If we don't know who we are as people…if we don't know what makes us…if we don't know our hopes or fears, how can we possibly understand others?'. Her suggestion of 'Hippocratic oath' could help to align teaching with other professions like doctors and lawyers by formalising professional entry. In having to make a pledge of this kind, teachers may also begin to question their identity, which may help them continue to develop after qualification. The image of professional identity development post ITE being something like getting 'blood on a stone' also highlights that the development of identity can be an issue as teachers advance in their career, showing that teachers may not appreciate that ongoing development is crucial to success as a professional.

6.7.5 Developing professional identities through research practice

Tess spoke about how she would like 'the opportunity to do joint research' with student teachers and teachers who work in schools:

> I…I really need to go back again and seem in…the field…see them…work with them, understand what they're thinking, what they're feeling. Um…and work with them on identifying areas

> that might benefit from, um, not just scholarly activity, but action research. I would like to see…um…student research papers published…um…I would like to see a great…um reconnection to discipline and um specific learning…um…and so that we can actively support what colleagues…not just in the secondary specialist but right from early years.

Tess's description of how research would work shows that it would take multiple forms and vary from 'scholarly activity' to 'action research'. This suggests that different types of research would ideally be made available to staff in schools and universities so that they could find out about different issues that are relevant to teaching. The strategy suggested by Tess indicates a move to greater collaborative practice where teacher educators continue their work with teachers following qualification by identifying areas that will help them in their professional development. Tess's desire to understand what beginning teachers are 'thinking' and 'feeling' also suggests that she feels their identity will be crucial to ongoing professional development. Her comment that there needs to be 'reconnection' between 'discipline' and 'specific learning' may also show that she feels research can act as a bridge between academic theory and real practice.

6.8 Concluding remarks

The data gathered from my interviews suggest that the formation and development of a professional identity in the beginning years of a teacher's career is affected by a number of factors. Participants discussed the significance of their personal identity before becoming a teacher, but also how a strong ethical grounding is necessary within the profession. Their responses indicate that professional and personal identities need to merge, and that the level of autonomy experienced early in their careers contributed to their sense of self.

To develop a secure professional identity, participants acknowledged that reflective practice was essential and that the current system's approach to reflection needs to be reviewed to ensure it is appropriate and effective. However, there were elements of their professional identity that evolved naturally, such as the role of the caring professional. My research highlights that professional identity evolves over the course of ITE and that it continues to develop throughout a teacher's career.

The support provided by universities during the beginning years of a teacher's career was discussed during the interviews, with beginning teachers commenting on how they felt there was limited support provided. The teacher educators interviewed explained the support that was in place but expressed concerns about the amount of time allocated to support student teachers, and that professional identity support was not always signposted for student teachers, as well as their desire to extend their support into the early years of a teacher's career.

Regulatory influence over professional identity in both England and Scotland was spoken about in the interviews I conducted. Apart from the teaching standards and benchmarks in both England and Scotland, participants felt that policy impeded professional identity and often diminished their sense of agency in England. They did, however, feel that the inclusion of professional identity in the standards and benchmarks in both countries had raised the profile of professional identity.

When discussing the limitations and challenges they faced in developing professional identity, the issue of time was discussed, with beginning teachers and teacher educators talking about how time constraints meant they were not always able to address professional identity development. Psychological and emotional barriers were presented as impeding the development of professional identity, as beginning teachers struggled to come to terms with their new roles.

The pressures placed on beginning teachers because of social expectations and accountability systems were also found to be a challenge.

My participants spoke about how they thought professional identity could be better supported in the future. Increased support from universities during the ITE year and in the initial years following qualification was suggested as being a potential solution. There was a consensus that more time needs to be given for reflective practices to be carried out in a meaningful way. Suggestions were made for greater autonomy to be given to teachers during their training year and for the assessment process to be altered so that it recognises outstanding student teachers. One participant wanted to empower beginning teachers so that they could lead change within the profession by introducing a professional oath to increase the understanding of what it means to be a teaching professional. A desire to develop research practice that can help to improve the profession was also expressed.

In this section I have analysed the data gathered from my interviews to gain a greater understanding of how beginning teachers and teacher educators view professional identity. In the next section I will use Foucault's writing on power and the care of the self as a lens to discuss the findings from my interviews.

Chapter 7: Viewing Professional Identity Through a Foucauldian Lens

7.1 Introduction

Foucault explored a range of topics in his writing. However, he returned to the issues of identity and power repeatedly, leading him to eventually contend that the two are inextricably linked (2000:300). In this chapter, I will discuss how I have used Foucault's writing on identity and power as a theoretical lens to understand how professional identity can be created during the beginning years of a teacher's career. This lens can help us, as teachers, to appreciate the significance of professional identity, so that, as a profession, we can comprehend how power can impact upon professional identity, and how we can reclaim power as professionals.

I use Foucault's *The Care of the Self* (1986) to discuss the findings from my interview data to explore professional identity in relation to the ethical self and parrēsia. To explore how power affects professional identity formation, I refer to Foucault's essays in *Power* (2000) and in *Discipline and Punish* (1991). Foucault's theories on power are used to consider who has power within the teaching profession and how the distribution of power can affect the development of a beginning teacher's professional identity.

7.2 Beginning teacher professional identity

Foucault's writing on parrēsia helps us to understand how the professional identity of a teacher is defined from the beginning of a career. Foucault's examination of the role of reflection in identity formation in *The Care of the Self (1986)* shows us the value of being able to speak freely to a trusted advisor when developing an identity. Foucault clarified his thinking on parrēsia during a lecture that he delivered in 1982, where he stated that 'the notion of parrēsia indeed means telling all' (2015:222). Foucault traced the development of the concept of parrēsia through Greco-Roman and Christian civilizations to find that, although the person 'telling all' changed, the concept of being able to speak freely to another person remained crucial to knowing oneself. In his lecture, he

concluded that he thought 'parrēsia will be the presence, in the person who speaks, of his own form of life rendered manifest, present, perceptible, and active as model in the discourse he delivers' (Foucault, 2015:245). From a Foucauldian point of view, then, the ability to speak freely enables us to take an active role in our own identity by articulating our thoughts and experiences so that we can reflect on who we are and what we could become. Yet my participants discussed how the reflective practices they engaged in as part of their ITE were only partially effective, with comments being made about the process becoming mechanical. Although ITE provides opportunities for beginning teachers to reflect and reflective practice is already established as significant to teacher development, the process, according to my beginning teacher participants, became redundant because they did not feel able to speak freely. This was partly because the person they were expected to confide in was also the person who made judgements about their teaching. The trusted person that Foucault positions as crucial in the reflective process holds a position of power over the fate of the beginning teacher in ITE and consequently the beginning teachers interviewed for this study felt unable to be honest for fear of judgement. Foucault's writing on the trusted advisor suggests then that ITE courses could adapt the mentoring structure so that the trusted person plays no part in the assessment of beginning teachers.

Foucault found from his study of the Classical age that daily self-examination was necessary (1986) to ensure individuals develop a sense of self. Although my participants acknowledged that they were expected to participate in regular reflective exercises, most felt that the process was futile because it felt rushed. He wrote that 'there developed an entire activity of speaking and writing in which the work of oneself on oneself and communication with others were linked together' (Foucault, 1986:51), highlighting how reflective practice that enables individuals to develop a sense of identity requires different methods that involve self-reflection and the sharing of reflection with another person. The lack of time given to the process of reflection within ITE, as experienced by my participants, may explain why reflective activities for the beginning teachers in this study were found to be less effective. Indeed, time was spoken about by beginning teacher and staff participants as a barrier to professional identity

development. To uncover who beginning teachers are as professionals it may be necessary to review the frequency of reflective activities, but also to look at providing beginning teachers with different methods that they can choose between when engaging in self-reflection. Less frequent reflective activities may mean that opportunities to reflect become more significant, especially if longer periods of time are allocated to each activity so that beginning teachers can explore their thoughts and experiences in greater depth before sharing them with a trusted advisor. If we fail to make time and space for self-reflection, we may inhibit the development of professional identity for beginning teachers and lead to attrition, as teachers may not have a secure sense of identity.

Participants discussed how their belief that teachers should take on the role of caring professionals had been key to their decision to apply for ITE. They were motivated by their desire to contribute positively to society and influence future generations. Participants spoke about how they had a strong moral grasp of their role, and how this helped to ground them even when faced with challenging conditions. Notably, when asked to behave in ways that were in opposition to their ethical beliefs, participants expressed concern. There was a strong sense that behaving in a way that aligned with their own beliefs and values helped them to not only create a professional identity, but also to develop it. Their views align with Foucault's writing in *The Care of the Self* (1986) where he postulated that ethics help to give purpose to a person's existence, but also resonate with Foucault's comments that ethics can help to free people from oppressive control (2017). My participants' concern at having to go against their ethical beliefs highlights how their identity as teachers is bound up in a need to behave ethically and contribute to society and that their identity may be negatively affected if they are not able to do so. Foucault's argument that behaving ethically can help individuals to hold onto power when faced with oppressive power (2017) may indicate that a strong sense of ethics in the beginning of a teacher's career can also help beginning teachers to increase their power within the profession. It may, therefore, be useful to use Foucault's ideas about the ethical self explicitly during ITE to help beginning teachers develop a strong sense of identity that is grounded in ethics so that they have a clear sense of purpose that can enable them to behave in the best interests of

their students and the profession. By doing so, we may be able to improve teacher retention, as suggested in Newburgh's paper where she argues for 'deep supports' that can help first year teachers work within the profession without being in opposition to their ethical self (2019:1249).

In *The Care of the Self* (1986) Foucault discussed how desire can be controlled by a strong sense of identity. For Foucault, the ability to approach our desires rationally can mean that we are able to successfully motivate ourselves. He discusses in *The Care of the Self* how leaders, like kings, need to demonstrate that they can control their desires and manage their own practice so that others can trust them (Foucault, 1986:89). If we view all teachers as leaders within their classrooms, then the ability to control their desires and manage how they are motivated can be seen as important to whether students are able to trust them to guide them in their learning. I found this to be relevant to my interview data; participants commented on how they were motivated to develop a professional identity by a desire to care for the students in their schools and to contribute to society by helping to educate young people. Thus, by understanding what their motivation was they were able to establish a professional identity that enabled them to work within the teaching profession, and in some cases, help improve how students were educated and cared for. It is important, therefore, that beginning teachers are given the opportunity to delve into their desires as an educator and gain a greater understanding of how this motivates them. Failure to address this may result in teachers who are unable to remain in the profession because they lack relevant motivation and are unclear about what they are trying to achieve as professionals.

7.3 The origin and impact of power

Foucault's analysis of the panopticon in *Discipline and Punish* (1991) as a method of surveillance that enabled power to be exerted is relevant to my study because participants discussed how beginning teachers are closely monitored by their ITE provider and the schools that they attend for their practicum. Interestingly, my beginning teacher participants found the constant surveillance experienced inhibited the development of their professional identity. Yet staff participants spoke about how they felt the use of joint observations of lessons were useful in

ensuring that all student teachers were assessed fairly. Most beginning teachers suggested that they agreed with the judgements made about their teaching, but Samuel expressed concerns about the standardisation of teaching practice that was expected of him during his first interview. Samuel's resistance to delivering standardised teaching showed how early in his ITE he was keen to forge his own identity. Yet, when I interviewed him for a second time, he had accepted the expectations projected onto him by his university tutors and expressed a sense of pride in his conformity. Viewed through a Foucauldian lens, it seems that Samuel had internalised the expectations presented to him and consequently accepted that his professional identity should fit within his university's framework. Samuel's account highlights how ITE providers act on behalf of the state by disseminating expectations so that they are then internalised by beginning teachers. Government power, in this sense, may be invisibly distributed throughout the profession in England, through constant surveillance that is then assimilated by individuals who then become responsible for perpetuating government expectations and controlling how professional identity is constructed.

A common thread in the interviews was the way that power was exerted on beginning teachers through the use of benchmarks and standards. The standards that teachers are expected to meet were spoken about by participants in positive and negative ways. The standards that are used to judge the effectiveness of teachers are created by regulatory departments, but my participants felt that meeting them meant that they had greater power within the profession, suggesting an internalisation of regulatory ideas about what a teaching professional should be. Appreciated through a Foucauldian lens, this perspective demonstrates how beginning teachers are given a false sense of power, possibly becoming what Foucault described as 'docile bodies' (1991:136) because they are conforming to government influenced mandates rather than carving out their own sense of what a good teaching professional is. My findings here are in keeping with previous literature on agency that found that teacher agency can be limited because of policy reform (Vähäsanten, 2015), over prescribed practices (Lingard, 2008; Lipman, 2008) and the use of accountability measures like standards (Lipman, 2008). My study has found that policy that

dictates the use of teacher standards can impact teacher agency by limiting their choice and freedom in how they act. I would argue then that the use of standards is a way for state power in England to control the individual and that, as a result, the autonomy that a beginning teacher has is actually diminished as beginning teachers take on the role of 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1991) who strive to meet predetermined requirements rather than carving out their identities.

7.4 Reclaiming power and professional identity

Whilst Foucault's writing shows how professional identity within the teaching profession is controlled by the state in England and by a regulatory body in Scotland, it may also provide us with a framework to enable the redistribution of power. I have found that surveillance methods used within the early years of a teacher's career may act coercively to control the creation and development of professional identity so that beginning teachers act as docile bodies on behalf of the state. Foucault, however, wrote: 'What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no; it also traverses and produces things' (2000:120). Here, Foucault is suggesting that power not only limits but also creates, and that we have the opportunity to use power to develop practice. Foucault's optimistic take on power in this quote led me to consider where power comes from within the teaching profession and how it can be used by beginning teachers to help them construct a professional identity and reclaim power within the profession.

Foucault recognised that by internalising rules power can be shifted from society to individuals (2000). The idea that power can be given to individuals and form a network that distributes power more equally may expose the potential for beginning teachers to have a voice in their own development and the development of the profession. The participants in this study spoke about how they would have liked to have had a greater say in the support given to them in the early years of their career. If we listen to beginning teachers, we may be able to improve the ITE and early career support given by extending Foucault's network of power to beginning teachers, which may in turn improve retention rates and lead to less teachers leaving the profession in the next five years

(Weale, 2021). As a senior leader who is responsible for the professional development of ECTs, I may be able to improve retention if I listen to the ECTs in my school and develop support systems that are chosen by them rather than imposing top-down approaches. In doing so, I will be able to redistribute power (Foucault, 1986) by giving a voice to beginning teachers, which may help to improve retention long term.

The responses from beginning teachers when asked to think about how they could be better supported, highlighted how there is a desire amongst the beginning teachers in this study for power to be more equally distributed across the network of power (Foucault, 1986; Foucault, 2000). They all spoke about how they would like a system where mentoring is increasingly used, but that the role of the mentor should be different. My participants felt that the mentor should take on the role of a trusted advisor so that they could speak freely to them about their experiences, which is in keeping with Foucault's ideas about the importance of parrēsia (2015). This feedback concurs with the latest iteration of beginning teacher support in England: the *Early Career Framework* (DfE, 2019), where beginning teachers have increased mentor support and where the mentor's role is a supportive one, rather than an evaluative one. However, it must be acknowledged that the ECF has been designed and implemented as part of government policy to facilitate the meeting of the Teaching Standards. Although the increase in mentor support may be intended to support ECTs, it may not be effective because the content of mentor meetings is dictated by government approved providers and focuses on practical development rather than allowing mentors and ECTs to discuss areas that are relevant to individual ECTs. Comments from most participants in this study also highlight that greater autonomy in the early stages of a teaching career could also help beginning teachers develop a sense of professional identity, which the ECF does not overtly aim to increase. The new ECF approach to mentoring may in fact limit autonomy (Gerwitz et al., 2008) because it prescribes the focus for mentor meetings, which may result in less time being allocated for beginning teachers to discuss areas that they feel are important. My participants' comments on wanting the role of the mentor to be changed and their desire for greater autonomy does represent a desire for power to be shared with beginning

teachers in different ways so they can increase their influence within the profession whilst having a more bespoke support system that is able to respond to individual needs. If we use Foucault's idea about a network of power, we may be able to give beginning teachers the chance to develop new approaches and systems that empower teachers to create professional identities that can respond to the challenges of the future by redistributing power so that teachers can have a greater say in how the profession develops.

Foucault argued that resistance is needed for power to exist (2000) but also that 'Power relations are rooted in the whole network of the social' (2000:345), which when applied to Sylvia's comments may suggest that power within teaching is not held by the profession, but rather influenced by society, as Sylvia spoke about how she struggled to conform to society's ideas about what a teacher should be. If it is societal views of the teaching profession that Sylvia was resisting, rather than the profession's expectations, I would argue that a Foucauldian interpretation of her responses could mean that the profession needs to address misconceptions of teaching within society and consequently regain power over the professional identity of teachers. This would mean addressing how the government views and represents teachers, as well as communicating to the public the reality of what it means to be a teaching professional in the modern world. Although most people are likely to base their ideas about teacher professional identity on their own experiences as students in schools, it needs to be recognised that the profession has changed and will continue to evolve over time. Consequently, it is important to educate those outside of the profession about what the role of a teacher entails now and how this impacts the professional identity of teachers. It is also crucial that there is greater transparency going forward so that the rhetoric around teacher identity is not controlled by those who have little understanding about the reality of the profession and is as realistic as possible.

7.5 Chapter conclusion

When viewed through the lens of Foucault's writing in *The Care of the Self* (1986), *Discipline and Punish* (1991) and *Power* (2000), my interview data demonstrates how power can have a negative impact on the professional identity

of beginning teachers because it can turn professionals into docile bodies who are stripped of any individuality or control. However, Foucault's writing on the power of the individual, ethics and parrēsia may help us to develop and improve methods within ITE that can redistribute power so that individuals are able to construct professional identities that influence the profession as whole.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

In the final chapter of my study, I will provide a summary of my findings in response to the research questions before reflecting on the choices I have made about my research. I will then explain how I have developed professionally, make recommendations based upon my findings, make recommendations for future research and conclude by reflecting on how I have changed personally and in terms of my practice.

8.2 Research questions

This study set out to understand how beginning teachers develop a sense of professional identity by answering five research questions. The research questions and my key findings in relation to each are provided below:

- *How do teachers at the beginning of their career define their professional identity?*

  This study found that beginning teachers do not develop their professional identity in isolation, but rather in response to and with their previous identities. The experiences that participants had prior to beginning ITE were significant in the formation of a teacher professional identity. However, I found that most of the beginning teachers in my study began to develop a professional identity that fused with their personal identity; those who were unable to connect the two found the formation and development of a professional identity to be challenging, expressing dissatisfaction with their new identity. Beginning teacher participants created professional identities that were in keeping with their ethical beliefs, which aligned with Foucault's ideas about the ethical self (1986). Participants in this study described a growing sense of themselves as caring professionals and demonstrated a susceptibility to societal and governmental expectations, suggesting that external factors were powerful in the formation of their professional identities. Notably, participants from England described how the state influenced their understanding of who they were as professionals.

- *How do beginning teachers develop their professional identity?*
  Beginning teachers and teacher educators in this study spoke about the significance of reflective practices in the formation of a professional identity and the importance of a trusted advisor. Comments on reflection relate to Foucault's writing on parēssia (2015) and highlight the need for time and space to be able to develop a professional identity. The influence of university sessions and activities like assignments was also recognised by participants as helping beginning teachers form professional identities during their ITE year. However, participants also discussed the impact that reflective systems currently used during the beginning years of a teacher's career have on professional identity, suggesting that some opportunities to reflect on their professional identity felt as if they were carried out to "tick a box" rather than to support professional development. The use of teaching standards in both England and Scotland was seen to play a part in the formation of identity by reminding beginning teachers of their obligations as professionals.
- *How are beginning teachers currently supported so that they can develop their professional identity?*

  Although participants recognised that efforts were made to support professional identity development by tutors introducing reflective exercises and through mentoring, beginning teachers and teacher educators questioned whether the efficacy of current practices could be strengthened. It was felt that professional identity was not addressed in as much detail as participants would have liked either because of time limitations or because of government or regulatory bodies' requirements to meet criteria that focused on technical aspects of teaching.
- *How can we improve the support given to develop beginning teacher professional identity?*

  Interview responses showed a desire for the role of the mentor and use of reflective practice to be reviewed so that beginning teachers are better supported and given the opportunity to develop their professional identity during their ITE year but also in the first few years after qualifying as teachers. Teacher educators said that they would like to extend their

involvement with beginning teachers by supporting professional identity beyond the ITE year and improving the partnership work that they carried out with schools. It was also suggested that an increased focus on research could help beginning teachers to be more aware of their professional identity.

- *By understanding how beginning teacher professional identity develops, how can we empower teachers so that they are able to improve the teaching profession?*

  Beginning teachers in this study expressed a desire to have a greater sense of autonomy. By giving beginning teachers a greater say in how they develop their professional identities, we may be able to redistribute power so that the network of power extends to those early in their career and enables them to have greater agency (Foucault, 2000). My findings suggest that redistributing power may enable beginning teachers to develop themselves in ways that can improve the profession long term and help retain teachers. Interestingly, out of my four beginning teacher participants, only two are still in the profession. Samuel and Florence demonstrated a strong sense of professional identity that was grounded in their ethical values and supported by reflective practices. They also spoke about how they wanted to improve the profession. Samuel and Florence are both still working as teachers in schools in England. In comparison, Sylvia and Daisy showed uncertainty about their professional identity and have now left teaching. This suggests that there may be a correlation between teacher retention and professional identity, although further research would be needed to find out if this is applicable more widely, as this study has used a small data set and the findings are not generalisable.

8.3 Reflections on my study

I made a conscious decision in this study to foreground the voices of my participants. I wanted to give my participants the chance to speak and share their understanding of professional identity before viewing their responses through a Foucauldian lens. This decision was made when planning the study because I wanted to remain open to ideas around professional identity that were

presented by my participants even if they did not align with ideas from previous literature or Foucault's writing. At times this made the richness and complexity of interview data difficult to analyse, but it also enabled me to gain a fuller picture of what professional identity meant to my participants. If I had utilised Foucault's writing to direct my interview questions, my data may have been skewered as my participants may not have been given the space to talk about their professional identity in a way that was representative of their personal experiences. Foucault's writing, however, helped me to interpret my data by exposing power structures and presenting the historical background of identity development. Foucault's views that we should remain open to different possibilities helped me to consider my data from different perspectives. As a result, I chose to include direct excerpts from my interview transcripts and then conduct specific analysis at word and sentence level so that I could explore thematic patterns that emerged.

As with all research, this study has limitations. As a small-scale qualitative study the findings are not intended to be generalisable. My findings have been made based upon a small data set with a focus on beginning teacher participants from England. Scotland has been used as a point of comparison to highlight issues in the support provided to develop professional identity in England, and, in some instances, to present potential solutions. It also needs to be remembered that the findings are from particular ITE institutions and other universities and providers may have different ways of working. It therefore must be remembered that the findings of this study are grounded in the context of time and place, and that the data gathered is specific to the individuals interviewed for this study, and as such, may not be indicative of other beginning teacher's experiences. One further limitation was that the number of participants was not intended to be as small as it was. No student participants from Scotland agreed to be interviewed and therefore potential understandings of student identity were limited to ITE students in England.

Daisy and Sylvia have now left the profession and Florence has recently resigned from her middle leadership role after only two years in position but remains in

the profession as a classroom teacher. Samuel remains in the teaching profession but has also faced difficulties, as he took a break from teaching during his NQT year. While Florence and Samuel, in the interviews that I conducted, presented themselves as having a stronger sense of identity, the challenges that they have faced since suggest that even those who are reflective practitioners and have strong ethical beliefs may experience challenges to their professional identity post ITE, and that more needs to be done to support teachers following qualification. Although this study has begun to explore professional identity development for beginning teachers, further research in how professional identity develops and helps teachers cope with the challenges of the profession following the conclusion of their ECT induction may help us improve attrition rates in the future.

8.4 Professional development

As a senior leader in an English school, it is very easy to become lost in policy directives and the operational aspects of my job, but by carrying out this study I have been able to reflect on the bigger picture and think about how others within the profession view things. I support beginning teachers every day as part of my job, but rarely have the time to sit and listen to them for extended periods of time. This study gave me the opportunity to listen to beginning teachers and reflect on their experiences. As a result, I now have a greater appreciation of how others view professional identity. Since beginning this study I have consequently noticed that my ability to recognise alternative viewpoints has improved and that I have developed my professional identity. For example, the ethical foundations that my participants expressed have prompted me to think about my ethical beliefs and to use them to help me lead with integrity.

Foucault's writing on networks of power (2000) has also helped me develop as a leader. Whilst I previously relied upon systems of accountability as a leader, I have now begun to look at how I can empower those that I work with so that they can act with agency. I now recognise that power can be disseminated throughout the profession; I want those that I work with to be able to use this power to improve the profession. Thus, I have used line management meetings, focus groups and surveys to create opportunities for the teachers in my school to

express their thoughts and ideas, identifying opportunities to respond to their suggestions so that they can help to develop the school. I want to use my position as a leader to influence the teachers that I work with to use their agency and have a say in how the teaching profession is shaped now and in the future, and, since carrying out this research have actively sought out opportunities to do this within my school.

8.5 Recommendations on professional identity

Beijaard et al. (2003) found in their paper that professional identity does not have a fixed definition. This study defined professional identity as 'an individual's dual perception of himself or herself, who, as a member of a profession, has responsibilities to society […] other professionals, and to himself or herself' (Crigger and Godfrey, 2014:377). My decision to choose this definition was based on my personal understanding of what professional identity is but also was based on the literature that I reviewed. Crigger and Godfrey's (2014) definition, however, was not written about teachers. I chose to use this definition because I felt strongly that teacher professional identity should encompass internal and external factors, and that professional identity should traverse professions. Yet my interpretation of teacher professional identity may contradict other people's. To avoid future uncertainty, it may be worth developing a concrete definition of professional identity that specifically relates to beginning teachers. By doing so, we may be able to develop focused research on professional identity that can be used to improve how beginning teacher professional identity is developed.

The mixed responses elicited from participants about reflective practices suggest that more may need to be done to understand what reflection looks like during the beginning years of a teacher's career. This finding supports Mockler (2011) who argued that greater guidance needs to be provided in the early years of a teacher's career to enable reflection to become more effective. While reflective practices are generally accepted as worthwhile, how they should be carried out is less clear. Greater clarity about what constitutes reflection and a defined framework that can be used when designing and supporting reflective activities may be useful in improving the effectiveness of reflection in the

beginning years of a teacher's career. My findings also suggest the importance of ensuring empowering practices are introduced and embedded that enable beginning teachers to understand their own professional identity and how it can be used to improve the profession. We can avoid the risk of creating 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1991) and instead help teachers take an active role in the development of the profession. By reclaiming our identities, our power and our agency, we can distribute power within the profession more equitably.

Some participants spoke about how they felt ITE should be extended beyond the initial teacher education phase so that universities could provide additional support for beginning teachers. While this may present a potential solution by providing extra time for professional identity to be addressed, it may also be challenging to put into practice given the current recruitment crisis schools are facing, as it would result in a longer wait for roles to be filled by early career teachers. We are, therefore, left with a question: how do we ensure that we fill roles in schools while also sufficiently supporting the development of identity in the early phases of a teacher's career? Although this study has spoken to university teacher educators about how they support professional identity development, I would argue that senior leaders, like me, could bring professional identity development to the forefront of professional rhetoric and development within schools and support beginning teachers so that they can develop professional identities that are able to cope with the demands of teaching.

Furthermore, responses from the participants in this study about the role of benchmarks and standards in teaching may be worth examining more fully. While some participants found these documents to be helpful in establishing the expectations of the profession, others found them to be restrictive. It may therefore be worthwhile for the profession to review what is specified in professional standards and how these might then be used to develop professional identity. In doing so, we may be able to develop a document that has greater relevance for teachers and the profession as a whole.

8.6 Recommendations for future research

Based upon my findings in the study, the following recommendations for future research have been made:

- This study explored beginning teacher professional identity development over the course of a two year period. It would benefit from being followed up with a longitudinal study where beginning teachers are interviewed during the first 3 to 5 years of their career to look at how professional identity affects their resilience as teachers. This period would be pertinent due to statistics that show that most teachers leave the profession within 5 years of qualifying (Hampshire, 2019).
- The results of this study indicate that further research needs to be carried out into reflective practices and how they can be carried out differently so that they enable the formation of professional identity. Foucault noted that reflection for the Ancient Greeks involved daily self-reflection (1986) but my participants felt that they were asked to reflect during their ITE year too frequently. Frequency, method, and other factors could be measured and considered as part of a further study so that we can establish how reflective practice can be implemented successfully for beginning teachers in the 21st century.
- The new ECT framework was rolled out in England from September 2021. The participants in this study, therefore, did not experience this new support, and to date, only limited research has been released on the ECF. Further research should be carried out into the impact of the new ECT framework in England, particularly into how the mentor role has been reconceptualised and whether the use of centralised resources is helpful. It may also be useful to compare the experiences of those who experienced the NQT induction with those who have had an ECT induction to look at whether either approach is better at developing the professional identity of beginning teachers.
- I focused on the professional identity of beginning teachers in this study, however, the professional identity of leaders deserves attention as well. In England, the launch of the new suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) has coincided with the launch of the ECT induction programme. The new NPQs include an element of coaching that is

supposed to provide leaders with the opportunity to reflect on their progress, but there is currently insufficient evidence that the programmes will be successful in cultivating future leaders, or that it will help to curb the shortage of headteachers in England. Further research into the NPQs and the impact that they have on the profession in England would be useful.

In the future I hope to publish a paper on this study in which I will examine Samuel's responses more closely, as well as look to interview Samuel again so that I can explore how his professional identity has developed following his ITE and ECT induction. Samuel's responses in this paper presented rich and complex data that shone a light on the beginning teacher experience in a detailed way. I also found him to be the most engaged participant. By returning to Samuel's interview responses and adding to my data set with a follow up interview, I believe I will be able to provide further insights into how professional identity could be supported in the future, as well as explore issues around retention of beginning teachers, as Samuel has just returned to teaching following a break. In the follow-up interview, I would like to ask Samuel about why he took a break from teaching and discuss how his professional identity has evolved over time. A study of this nature would be relevant to senior leaders responsible for beginning teacher support and CPD in schools, but also may be helpful to ITE and ECT training providers in the UK.

Additionally, I plan on using my understanding and appreciation of academic literature and research methodology to explore professional identity in relation to teacher recruitment and retention. As a school leader, I directly experience the issues of recruitment and retention in England every day. While there are many factors that contribute to attrition rates in England, it would be useful to research why teachers are currently leaving the profession and whether cultivating professional identity in schools can help to improve the situation.

8.7 Changes in my personal development and practice

The EdD has provided me with greater understanding of my limitations both personally and professionally. Time, for example, became significant for me during my EdD. Time to think and understand was needed, and I learnt to appreciate the process of reflection in a completely different way. I realised over the course of the EdD that I had taken time for granted but learning to manage my time and ensure that I shared it out between my role as a Deputy Headteacher, my role as a mother and my role as an EdD student has provided me with the opportunity to see time differently. I now realise the importance of using the time that I have on the things that matter to me.

Conducting this research has made me want to change things for the better, not just within my school, but across society. I feel empowered to change things for the better because of the texts that I have been exposed to during the EdD. The colleagues that I met along the way have also inspired me to find out about elements of education that I knew little about before. Ultimately, I have realised that it is easy to get lost in the job of being a teacher and not think about anything else. The need to be perceived as 'outstanding' in English schools had for many years influenced how I behaved and the need to achieve results for students as proof of a teacher's efficacy very much dictated my professional identity. In many ways, I have realised that I was a docile body before beginning the EdD, conforming to expectations and internalising social and governmental expectations. Because of this dissertation, however, I have now learnt to question, to challenge and to strive to improve education so that I can develop as an individual, but also so that I can contribute to the development of the profession now and in the future.

Appendix A: Vignettes

- Teacher 1 believes that their professional identity is separate from their personal identity. They view their role as a teacher as one that is clearly defined. During their contracted hours they think that they should act in a professional way: taking on duties as requested, teaching clearly planned lessons and marking regularly. They are happy to be a classroom teacher and do not have any interest in promotion. When at school they are polite to their colleagues and any students that they teach but avoid conversations about life outside school. Following lessons, they sometimes think about how effective the learning has been, but do not act upon this by changing their lesson plans.

- Teacher 2 believes that their personal and professional identity are inextricably linked. They regularly take on extra responsibilities and are ambitious. They believe that a teacher should behave ethically at all times, whether in or out of school. Teaching for them is less about money and more about supporting the development of young people. They have developed strong working relationships with their colleagues, which have in some cases developed into friendships. For them, respect and integrity are vital components within teaching. They reflect on their teaching regularly and try hard to improve. They hope that they are appreciated by students, staff and parents alike, but are not worried about being “liked”.

- Teacher 3 is passionate about teaching and feels that teaching is the only job they could ever do. They care for their students and often find it difficult to leave work at school. They work hard to be amenable, but often find themselves hurt by comments and attitudes of students, staff and parents. They are, however, highly invested in their role as a teacher and want to make progress. They feel that their identity before becoming a teacher has fed into their identity as a professional. From their point of view, the emotional aspect of their identity is one of their strengths.

Appendix B: Consent Form Example

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

Consent Form: Beginning Teachers

Title of Project: Constructing the professional identities of beginning teachers in the UK: a postmodern analysis

Name of Researcher: Neela Choudhury

Name of Supervisor: Dr Fiona Patrick

I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I consent / do not consent (delete as applicable) to interviews being audio-recorded.

I acknowledge that participants will be referred to by pseudonym.

I acknowledge that there will be no effect on my employment arising from my participation or non-participation in this research.

- All names and other material likely to identify individuals will be anonymised.
- The material will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times.
- The material may be used in future publications, both print and online.

- I agree to waive my copyright to any data collected as part of this project.
- I understand that other authenticated researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.
- I understand that other authenticated researchers may use my words in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form

I agree to the data collected in this project being

used in publications ☐

I agree to the data collected in this project being used

by other researchers ☐

I agree to take part in this research study ☐

I do not agree to take part in this research study ☐

Name of Participant ……

Signature ……..

Date ……

Name of Researcher ……

Signature ……..

Date ……

Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet Example

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

Participant Information Sheet (Beginning Teacher)

Title of project: Constructing the professional identities of beginning teachers in the UK: a postmodern analysis

Name of Researcher: Neela Choudhury

Researcher contact details: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

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 and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

The purpose of this study is to research how UK University based initial teacher education constructs and develops the professional identities of trainee teachers.

The rationale for carrying out this study is that in recent years the increase in government involvement in initial teacher education has led to a lack of clarity about the purpose of initial teacher education. Consequently, a number of different routes are now available for initial teacher education in the UK.

University based initial teacher education courses have, however, been preparing teachers for the longest period to date.

This research study will explore how university based initial teacher education courses construct the professional identity of beginning teachers. By interviewing beginning teachers, I hope to gain understanding of the ways in which university based teacher education impacts upon professional identity development.

You are being invited to take part in this study because you are currently a student on a programme of initial teacher education or were recently on a programme of initial teacher education.

If you decide to take part, then your participation in the study will entail two interviews that will last approximately 45 minutes each.

Please note that participation in this research study is voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point before, during, or after the interview process. There will be no effect on your employment arising from your participation or non-participation in this research. If you choose to withdraw from this study at any point, any data collected will be destroyed. After participating, you will have two weeks to decide if you wish to withdraw from this study.

All personal details of participants will be kept confidential by using identification codes for all data and by using pseudonyms in any written reports.

Confidentiality will be maintained as far as is possible, unless during our conversation I hear anything which makes me worried that someone might be in danger of harm, I might have to inform relevant agencies of this.

The data collected as part of this study will be used in my Educational Doctorate dissertation.

All electronic data collected will be stored securely using password protected files. All paper data will be stored in a locked cupboard that only the researcher has access to. Personal data (e.g. audio recordings) collected during this study will be deleted and/or shredded at the end of this study (31/12/2020). De-identified data (e.g. anonymised transcripts) will be stored securely for a maximum of ten years before being deleted and/or shredded. The data may also be used if I write journal articles or conference papers arising from my doctoral research.

The data collected may be used in future publications, both print and online. By agreeing to participate in this project, you will be agreeing to waive your copyright to any data collected as part of this project. Other authenticated researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information. Other authenticated researchers may use your words in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information.

This project has been considered and approved by the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee in the University of Glasgow.

Should you have any concerns or wish to make a complaint , you may contact: the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr Muir Houston, email: Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk

Appendix D: Sample Interview Questions

Project Title: Constructing the professional identities of trainee teachers in UK University based initial teacher education: a postmodern analysis

Name of Researcher: Neela Choudhury

The following questions are indicative of the questions that will be used in the interview in my research study. Please note that the questions listed are not exhaustive, and that, as the interviews will be semi-structured, questions may vary between participants.

Interview One Trainee questions:

1. How important do you think construction of a professional identity is when training to become a teacher?
2. How would you define the professional identity of a teacher?
3. How much do you think your personal identity affects your professional identity as a teacher?
4. How important has your ability to reflect been on the construction of your own professional identity?
5. How significant do you think theory has been to the development and construction of your own professional identity?
6. So far, how has your university and/or school practice experience helped you to reflect on your professional identity?
7. So far, how has your university supported you in developing your professional identity?
8. Do you feel that your university has provided opportunities for you to discuss your own ideas about professional identity?
9. Can you think of any ways in which your university can further support the development of your professional identity as a teacher?
10. Based upon your first school experience, how important do you think professional identity is within the teaching profession?

Appendix E: Participant Interview Schedule

	Participant pseudonym	Location	Number of interviews	Interview dates
Beginning teacher participant	Daisy	England	1	November 2019
	Florence	England	1	November 2019
	Samuel	England	2	March 2019 August 2019
	Sylvia	England	1	November 2019
ITE staff participant	Arabella	England	1	June 2019
	Evie	England	1	October 2019
	Blair	Scotland	1	March 2019
	Helena	Scotland	1	June 2019
	Ophelia	Scotland	1	May 2019
	Tess	Scotland	1	March 2019

Appendix F: Table of Participants

Participant pseudonym	Gender	Role	Significant background details
Beginning teacher participants			
Daisy	Female	Beginning teacher at beginning of NQT+1 year in a school in England	Mature student teacher. Married with children. Worked in private sector before beginning ITE.
Florence	Female	Beginning teacher at beginning of NQT+1 year in a school in England	Began ITE year immediately after finishing undergraduate degree.
Samuel	Male	Beginning Teacher studying PGCE at university in England	Interviewed twice during PGCE year. Only male participant. Worked in a university as an academic and has a PhD.
Sylvia	Female	Beginning teacher at beginning of NQT year in a school in England	Worked in HR before beginning ITE year.

ITE staff participants			
Arabella	Female	ITE staff at university in England	Leads ITE at university in England. Primary specialist. Works on partnerships programme.
Evie	Female	ITE staff at university in England	Secondary specialist. Leads on secondary subject PGCE.
Blair	Female	ITE Staff at university in Scotland	Programme leader and teaches on range of undergraduate/postgraduate courses and worked on partnerships programme at university in Scotland.
Helena	Female	ITE staff at university in Scotland	Worked on secondary/primary ITE and partnerships programme at university in Scotland.
Ophelia	Female	ITE staff at university in Scotland	Secondary specialist. Teaches on range of undergraduate and postgraduate educational courses at university in Scotland.
Tess	Female	ITE Staff at university in Scotland	Education lecturer at university in Scotland.

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