Stories of Teacher Professional Identities

Perceptions of International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Teachers Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

This study explores the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on schools influenced the perceived professional identities of International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) teachers. Teachers' views surrounding their profession, combined with the values and beliefs they prioritise, shape how they approach their roles and responsibilities in practice. Additionally, teachers' identity characteristics connect to other aspects of their experiences, such as their self-esteem, motivation, and sense of purpose as practitioners.

To provide theoretical grounding for the study, the literature review in Chapter Two explores the nuances of suggested teacher professional identity (TPI) definitions proposed by different researchers and the factors that can shape TPI from various contexts. Chapter Three presents the narrative inquiry methodological approach that directed this empirical study. In line with the interpretivist research paradigm, the narrative interview (NI) data collection method and Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis (TA) guided the inductive determination of themes from the data. The subsequent two chapters present the data from the three narrative interviews conducted with each of the four participants. Chapter Six analyses the five themes that emerged from the data and evaluates their impact on the participants' TPIs in light of theories presented in the literature review chapter and findings from more recent studies.

The concluding chapter summarises the findings for each of the three research sub-questions. The participants in this study maintained certain core elements of their TPIs, irrespective of the contextual changes they experienced. They did, however, experience fluctuations in certain peripheral sub-identities while they navigated the unprecedented context of the pandemic. The study clarified that the dynamic aspect of TPI refers to how it is a constant process of negotiation and interaction between individuals and their surroundings. However, the participants' TPI was not volatile or easily altered despite its dynamic nature. The pandemic represented a temporary change of context, which ultimately meant that some of the adjustments the participants experienced during that time were also short-term. This study additionally highlighted the reciprocal impact between the participants' TPIs and the contexts in which these were enacted. The final chapter also includes a discussion of the methodology's strengths and limitations, areas for future research, and implications for ongoing professional learning and school communities relative to a warranted increase in attention placed on cultivating teachers' professional identities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this EdD dissertation to my two sweet little girls, Sofia (5 years old) and Lidia (almost 2.5 years old). They have both been part of my journey through this programme and have contributed in unique ways.

Sofia was born on Tuesday, September 4th, 2018, one day after my first course on the EdD programme officially started. I viewed her birth and the start of the EdD as marking my new life, with two journeys I would be going through in tandem. Sofia was the constant, silent (or sometimes not-so-silent) presence throughout this experience. She challenged me in many ways, translating into the ambition and strength I needed to persevere through the challenges of the EdD. Her presence in my life motivated me to continue and make her proud.

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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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Abbreviations Table

CAD: Computer-Aided Design

CAS: Creativity, Activity, and Service

COVID-19: Coronavirus Disease 2019

DP: Diploma Programme

EdTech: Educational Technology

ELL: English Language Learner

ESL: English as a Second Language

ESS: Environmental Systems and Societies

GUID: Glasgow Unique Identifier

HL: Higher Level

IB: International Baccalaureate

IBO: International Baccalaureate Organization

IT: Information Technology

MOOC: Massive Open Online Course

MYP: Middle Year's Programme

NI: Narrative Interview

NQT: Newly Qualified Teacher

OS2: Open Studies 2

PD: Professional Development

PHE: Physical and Health Education

PYP: Primary Year's Programme

SL: Standard Level

TA: Thematic Analysis

TNA: Thematic Narrative Analysis

TOK: Theory of Knowledge

TPI: Teacher Professional Identity

UIS: Unity International School

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Introduction

‘“The value of identity of course is that so often with it comes purpose”’
(Grant, as cited in Rannenberg et al., 2009:1).

This dissertation focuses on teacher professional identity (TPI) in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The values and beliefs that teachers uphold, as well as the professional roles and responsibilities they prioritise, directly influence their practice. Additionally, the traits that teachers portray and their actions contribute to how they approach the teaching profession. Although the concept of identity is intrinsically complex, continued research can support a deeper understanding of how TPI evolves and potentially shifts over time, especially when teachers experience change. Arguably, cultivating positive perceptions of TPI can foster professional self-esteem and motivation conducive to an investment in the profession, with positive ramifications for student learning.

My research was driven by my personal experience with the evolution of my TPI over my four years in the profession as an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) teacher and the connection that elements of my TPI had to my sense of professional purpose. Unfortunately, the tensions I had to navigate between my TPI and the identity elements encouraged by my professional environment ultimately culminated in my leave from full-time teaching. As I observed the changes that schools were required to make in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, I began to wonder about the possible ways it would affect teachers’ perceptions of themselves and their roles within the profession, which inextricably link to their sense of purpose and the actions they take in either fulfilling or giving up on that purpose altogether.

This chapter contains seven sections. Section 1.2 describes my story and the experiences that shaped my own TPI. The following section discusses the rationale behind this study. In section 1.4, I present my research question and sub-questions, followed by a discussion of the importance of my research topic. Section 1.6 provides further details surrounding the focus of this study on teacher professional identity. In section 1.7, I problematise the issues surrounding TPI by presenting an overview of some contentions and complexities associated with the concept. Lastly, I outline the structure of the dissertation chapters that follow.

1.2 My Story

I completed my primary and secondary education at an IB World School. Once I entered high school, several of my DP teachers became role models who inspired my interest in teaching. Hence, part of my TPI formation began as early as my own experiences through school. I had the privilege of learning from incredible teachers. Decades later, I still have vivid memories of being in their classes. Those represent some of the earliest moments and contexts contributing to my initial TPI. Ultimately, my experiences through the IB DP and the teachers who cared about my personal and academic growth convinced me of my passion for education and teaching.

My experiences at university as an undergraduate seeking a degree in Chemistry and Education, combined with a Secondary School Teaching Certificate, further shaped my emerging TPI. My courses, professors, mentors, and teaching placements all contributed to my development as a prospective teacher. I was able to complete my final practicum at an IB school. There, the students I interacted with in my classes, my supervising teacher, and the science department at the school further contributed to my evolution into a chemistry teacher.

It is difficult to fully trace specific TPI traits to particular origins or sources because multiple factors coalesced into shaping my identity, which developed and evolved over time. I can, however, attribute some of my professional values and beliefs to my upbringing, my experiences as a student, the role models I had along the way, and my teacher training opportunities. Although TPI is not a static set of characteristics, my experiences have shaped several essential values and beliefs that I prioritise surrounding my professional self.

My first teaching job was at the non-profit IB school where I used to be a student. I felt welcomed, excited, and committed to positively contribute to the school community and my students. I could truly embody the type of teacher that I wanted to be in that environment. The TPI I could outwardly portray corresponded with the identity I imagined I would cultivate throughout my professional journey.

For personal and professional reasons, I transitioned to my second job at a for-profit IB school in another country. The school's culture and ethos completely differed from my

previous teaching setting. Of course, I experienced so many contextual changes personally and professionally that it is difficult and even unrealistic to determine which parts of my new experiences resulted in the identity shifts I encountered. Still, the professional values, beliefs, and priorities that were important to me became less compatible with my new teaching context. It was the first time I discerned the significant impact that context could have on shaping my TPI. The pressures surrounding student academic performance were tainted by an underlying concern for obtaining a higher school ranking from yearly inspections. A higher ranking would result in higher school fees and greater financial profits. The extreme levels of pressure, stress, and unrealistic workload, together with the lack of empathy and support, exacerbated the professional burnout I started to experience.

Unfortunately, I was more demoralised and demotivated with each passing school day. I recall feeling deep sadness and frustration because I knew my professional context was changing who I was as a teacher. I was slowly losing elements of my TPI that I wanted to protect and nurture throughout my career. I did not want to change who I was as a teacher, but it seemed inevitable given the context in which I was supposed to enact my TPI. After two years in that professional environment, I knew I was a different teacher than when I started there. Unfortunately, my context and experiences at that school shifted my TPI in ways I struggled to reconcile. Regretfully, my practice suffered immensely, as I no longer had the motivation and commitment to effectively support my students' learning. My progressively deteriorating negative TPI reduced my professional existence to the coldly automated completion of the bare minimum tasks assigned to my professional role. Ultimately, the conflict between the TPI I yearned to cultivate and the professional identity elements encouraged by my teaching context pushed me into burnout and disenchantment, resulting in me leaving full-time teaching.

1.3 Rationale for the Study

Given the struggles I faced with my TPI and the shifts I experienced with it throughout my journey as a DP teacher, I felt that the radical changes incited by the COVID-19 pandemic would potentially represent another situation that could prompt transformations in a teacher's perceived professional identity. The first school closures resulting from the rapid spread of COVID-19 occurred in February 2020. I was enrolled in the fourth core course of the Doctorate in Education (EdD) programme. The following semester, we were encouraged to reflect upon possible research topics we would be interested in exploring as part of our

dissertation studies for the last two years of the EdD programme. Even before the pandemic, I knew I cared about investigating a topic related to teachers' professional experiences since my research for previous degrees focused on pedagogy and practice. Following my teaching experiences, I was reminded that TPI may warrant closer attention since teachers' classroom effectiveness and retention heavily depend on their mindset and beliefs surrounding their roles and responsibilities.

Apart from the pragmatic changes in practical teaching approaches, as well as the technical considerations surrounding online learning, I felt that the entire experience through the pandemic could have potentially caused a shift in a teacher's professional identity. I was reminded of the pressures I experienced during my last teaching job related to student performance and assessment outcomes. I wondered whether the daily grind and stresses associated with in-person teaching and the struggles with work-life imbalances would change with the pandemic forcing the world to slow down. With the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) shockingly announcing the cancellation of the May 2020 examinations, I was intrigued by what this could mean for teachers, students, families, and entire schools. My mind was filled with questions such as:

- Would this prompt educational institutions to re-evaluate their priorities around examinations and preparing students for high-stakes assessments?
- Would teachers get a chance to re-evaluate their roles and responsibilities?
- Would teachers get more time and space to remember the reasons they went into teaching in the first place?
- Would the pandemic cause schools to slow down and re-focus on students rather than content?

These questions condensed into my overarching research question for this dissertation, aiming to focus on the potential role of the pandemic in shifting TPI.

1.4 The Research Question

I have experienced first-hand how my exposure to different professional environments incited a change in my TPI, which I embraced or resisted to varying degrees. With the sudden drastic changes prompted by the COVID-19 health crisis, which imposed school closures and long-term distance learning, I began to wonder whether teachers would experience shifts

in elements of their professional identities. Hence, my research has been guided by the question:

To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on schools influenced the perceived professional identities of International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) teachers?

Since I was aiming to develop an understanding of how teachers view themselves and how changes in their surrounding context may contribute to or shape their self-perceptions, I formulated the following three sub-questions to help direct my study:

1.) What key elements or contexts influenced the pre-pandemic professional identities of IB DP teachers?
2.) How do IB DP teachers evaluate their professional identity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
3.) How has COVID-19 adjusted understandings of teacher professional identity?

1.5 Importance of the Topic

TPI is essential to how teachers act and interact in their professional setting. The values, priorities, and beliefs they uphold, along with their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities, impact their experiences, mannerisms, and practice. In some cases, conflicts surrounding personal TPI perceptions and priorities relative to contextually endorsed TPI characteristics can harm a teacher's professional motivation and self-esteem which, in extreme cases, can lead to them leaving the profession.

1.6 The Focus of the Study

I chose to explore the possible effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had on IB DP teachers for two main reasons. First, I could identify with the experiences and contextual factors specifically impacting IB DP teachers because I used to be one myself. Second, I knew that teaching DP students adds unique layers to a teacher's experiences. In my professional journey, I became more concerned about how teachers of academic programmes such as the IB are often forced to focus on content delivery and student knowledge acquisition to obtain high scores on their final examinations. As a high-stakes gateway towards high school

graduation and university admissions, the IB DP feeds into a culture of credentialism that prioritises academic performance and qualifications to support students when they must enter a highly competitive job market. These characteristics and contextual factors surrounding the experiences of IB DP teachers increasingly impacted my perceived professional role and identity the longer I taught in this system.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and its lingering presence, I wondered whether it would exacerbate certain professional identity perceptions or could cause a shift away from them. The new teaching conditions, expectations, and limitations caused by this global health crisis may have altered the perspectives, beliefs, and priorities upheld by practitioners in the field of education. I wondered whether the drastic changes, including imposed lockdowns, isolation and social-distancing practices, synchronous or asynchronous online learning, and even the cancellation of final examinations, may have prompted teachers to re-evaluate their views of their profession, roles, and professional personas.

1.7 Problematising Teacher Professional Identity

Although teacher professional identity represents a distinct subset of research within the field of education, literature on the subject encourages further exploration and highlights areas where understandings surrounding TPI can expand. The varied terminology used to refer to a teacher's identity and its development over time contributes to the difficulties of defining the concept (e.g., Beijaard et al., 2004; Bosse & Törner, 2015; Kelchtermans, 2009). Instead of a clear definition, studies often refer to specific features to characterise TPI (e.g., Burns & Bell, 2011). However, although the characteristics discussed can provide insight into the development and evolution of a teacher's identity, the definition of the concept itself remains unclear. Researchers in the field have explained the difficulties with defining identity (e.g., Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004), a challenge partially attributed to the multiple subject areas discussing the topic from different standpoints. For example, some TPI literature may take a sociological stance, whereby identity is discussed as a phenomenon that develops through an individual's environmental interactions (Mead, 1934). Another grouping of TPI literature addresses the topic from a biological or psychological perspective by discussing how identity may be shaped by certain physiological developments that individuals experience over time (Erikson, 1968). However, even the compartmentalisation of TPI literature into groupings based on other subject areas that have informed the research is unclear, as multiple spheres of influence can interact in complex ways to shape an

individual's identity. I discuss the different contentions surrounding the definition of TPI in section 2.3 of the literature review in the next chapter before sharing the working definition I used in my dissertation study.

While the definition of TPI represents an area of tension in this field of research, two main characteristics of TPI are widely acknowledged in the literature on the subject. First, TPI is often described as a dynamic phenomenon. TPI is viewed as a constantly evolving process rather than a set of fixed traits an individual upholds (e.g., Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Second, rather than viewing identity as a single entity, the literature suggests that a multi-layered conceptualisation of an individual's TPI may be more effective in representing the nuances and sub-identities that develop in different contexts and under various influencing factors (e.g., Assen et al., 2018; Beijaard et al., 2004; Mishler, 1999; van Lagenhove & Harré, 1993). I further discuss these two features of TPI, the dynamism and multiplicity of identity, in section 2.3.4 below.

The multi-layered effects that teachers' backgrounds and contexts can have on shaping and re-shaping their TPIs further contribute to the complexity of discussions in this area of research. The intricacies and contentions surrounding the concept are not drawbacks or negatives to research on the subject but rather characteristics of the explorations and views surrounding the topic, which encourage further study. As an unprecedented context, the pandemic provided a unique opportunity to explore the intricate process of TPI development. Before embarking on my investigation, I discuss the complexities surrounding TPI in more critical depth within the literature review presented in Chapter Two.

1.8 Chapter Outline

Chapter Two of this dissertation critically reviews key literature on TPI and the factors that shape it. I first describe my literature search strategy before I discuss five broad areas of impact intersecting with TPI development: Personal Pre-training Contexts, Training Contexts, Teaching Contexts, Teacher Agency, and The Personal-Professional Continuum and Conflicting Influences on TPI.

Chapter Three describes my methodological approach, which involved an empirical study guided by the interpretivist paradigm using the narrative inquiry approach. I provide details about my four participants and the narrative interview (NI) method I employed to collect the

qualitative data on their perceived TPIs pre-, during, and post-COVID-19. I then describe the ethical considerations relevant to my study, followed by a discussion of the transcription, coding, and thematic analysis (TA) approach I used to identify themes from the data.

I describe my data findings within two separate chapters. Chapter Four presents the data from the participants' first interview, which addresses my first research sub-question related to the participants' pre-pandemic TPIs. Chapter Five explores the other two sub-questions since they relate to the participants' identities during the pandemic and their reflections on their TPIs moving forward into the post-pandemic period. These chapters present the interview data grouped by theme, with prose and extracts from each participant's narratives.

In Chapter Six, I analyse the themes that emerged from the participants' narratives to discuss the key elements and contexts that influenced the participants' pre-pandemic TPIs, their perceived TPIs in the context of the pandemic, and any adjusted understandings of their TPIs moving into the future. My discussion of the data critically examines the participants' interview responses in light of my own experiences and relevant literature.

Chapter Seven concludes this dissertation by highlighting the key ideas that surfaced through this research. I then share my reflections based on the findings. Next, I evaluate this study's strengths and limitations while suggesting areas for future research. Lastly, I discuss implications relevant to teacher ongoing professional learning and school communities.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review below focuses on selected themes and debates in the expansive literature on TPI. In line with the aim of this study—to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the TPIs of IB DP teachers—my focus was to engage critically with a range of considerations, features, influencing factors, and modes of development and transformation of TPI from previous studies conducted on this subject at its intersection with international schooling.

This chapter contains eight main parts. The first section describes my search strategy. I then explore the concept of TPI and discuss several considerations surrounding its definition. The following sections focus on the three central contexts I identified as having varying impacts on TPIs: teachers' personal pre-training, training, and teaching contexts. I critically discuss factors that potentially shape a teacher's professional identity within these three main sections of the literature review. In section 2.7, I examine teacher agency, which interacts with the three pre-training, training, and practical teaching contexts in impacting the development of an individual's TPI. The last section addresses considerations surrounding personal and professional influencing factors on TPI and the inherent conflicts among these multiple spheres of influence. Within each of the above sections, I include specific content related to IB DP teachers and any nuances that the context of international education may bring to the issues.

This literature review provides background information primarily related to the first research sub-question guiding my dissertation, which focuses on the key elements or contexts that influenced the pre-pandemic professional identities of IB DP teachers. By consulting previous studies on TPI formation and evolution over time, I could consider how factors from teachers' pre-training, training, and practical teaching contexts have been found to affect their TPIs. Although, at the time of writing this review, studies on TPI during the COVID-19 pandemic had not been published, the literature I could access provided a starting point for considering how teachers may have evaluated their TPIs in the new context and its potential effects on adjusting understandings of TPI.

2.2 Literature Search Strategy

I used the University of Glasgow's Library search engine to identify relevant literature linked to my study. I began with the broad search terms 'teacher identity' and 'teacher professional identity.' I restricted my search to peer-reviewed content. In the initial stages of my research, I did not limit the date range of my literature search because I wanted to gain a broader sense of past research in the field of teacher identity. However, once I identified themes and main topics discussed in the literature on TPI, I restricted my research deeper into those themes to studies conducted from 1990 to the present. This was so that I could focus on more current understandings that surfaced from recent studies on these subtopics. The key themes from my initial searches became the new keywords I used as search terms to further delve into those subtopics. For example, broader overviews of literature on TPI, such as Beijaard et al.'s (2004) and Beauchamp's and Thomas' (2009) articles, helped me pinpoint subtopics related to TPI that I then researched separately. In this way, I was able to expand my research into multiple branches comprising the literature on identity that addressed the intersections between TPI and other topics. In some cases, the online journals from where I retrieved the articles would suggest related materials, which would help expand my research into a particular subtopic of TPI (see Appendix D).

I initially focused on the general literature related to teacher identity rather than limiting my search to studies on international teachers. I first wanted to understand the broader field and the themes that surfaced from there. Studies specifically focused on international teachers were limited, so I first needed to explore the concepts and trends discussed in general studies on teacher identity. I then revisited my keyword searches to add the term 'international' to all of them so that I could identify whether studies discussed the themes from the specific perspectives and experiences of international teachers.

Since I began my literature review for this dissertation in September 2021, studies related to the COVID-19 pandemic and teacher identity were virtually non-existent. There were articles discussing the broad impacts that the pandemic had on the field of education. However, I could not find literature specifically discussing TPI in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic at the time. I completed my literature review research in December 2021. Although I continued reading from the sources I had found and editing my literature review chapter for an additional year, I did not continue searching for new articles published after this period.

I created a spreadsheet to track and organise my research (see Appendix E). I assigned each piece of literature to a general category based on its abstract (see Appendix F for an

example). Once I started reading the contents of a particular source in more depth, I tracked the additional references from its in-text citations that I wanted to read further. Hence, I created a list of literature sources organised by general topic, which allowed me to map out the materials I wanted to access. This helped me track materials cross-referenced by multiple authors and highlighted common sources that more frequently surfaced as foundational research on TPI. As a more visual representation of my research pathway, I would create a web or mind-map of the literature trail I followed, starting from one particular source (see Appendix G).

I downloaded the articles and literature resources I would delve into and saved them in folders for their respective category. As I read each source, I highlighted key ideas and extracted quotes from each piece of literature. As my exploration of identity literature expanded, I decided to re-organise my notes under different subheadings based on the key themes I noticed from my reading. I created separate documents with each subheading (see Appendix H). I had around 20 documents with quotes and notes from various published literature on each topic related to teacher identity. In some cases, I could identify overlapping topics, so I combined my notes into one larger category. As I progressed in my study, collected the data, and began analysing it, I continued to reshape my literature review. I worked on aligning the content of the review to the relevant themes that surfaced from my interviews.

2.3 Exploration into the Broad Concept of Identity: A Working Definition

To support my investigation of the TPIs of IB DP teachers in the contexts before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, I first explored the range of potential definitions attributed to the concept. My analysis of the possible components of TPI and the issues related to its development helped me clarify the working definition I would use for my study and the themes and sub-topics I could explore with my participants through the NIs.

2.3.1 Early Influential Works

Research on TPI has been shaped by the general concept of identity, which has been explored through the lenses of multiple subject areas. For example, Erikson's (1968) work in psychology discussed identity formation as a chronological process that passes through multiple stages across an individual's lifetime. Erikson (1968) believed that a combination

of biological, psychological, and environmental factors shapes each identity phase. In his view, an individual does not simply possess a particular identity. Instead, identity continuously evolves as a person matures, based on the range of interactions the person experiences with the surrounding environment (Beijaard et al., 2004 referencing Erikson, 1968). The concept of identity developing through environmental interactions reflects Mead's (1934) work in sociology. Mead (1934) suggested that an individual's beliefs and personal representation can solely develop through environmental interactions and communication.

2.3.2 Difficulties with Defining the Concept

The body of literature on identity acknowledges the difficulties with describing and understanding the issues surrounding the concept due to its complexity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Beijaard et al. (2004) affirm that, even as a distinct area of research, TPI remains an unclear concept that has been difficult to define in a single, overarching manner. In a literature review of studies on professional identity published between 1988 and 2000, Beijaard et al. (2004) found that almost half of the articles did not clearly define the concept. The studies that did explain the term focused on specific features. Most of the articles discussed 'professional identity as an ongoing process of integration of the "personal" and the "professional" sides of being a teacher' (Beijaard et al., 2004:113). Many researchers addressed how aspects of a teacher's personal and professional lives blend in a multi-layered, conscious, and unconscious construction of their TPIs (e.g., Goodson & Cole, 1994). Through their literature review, Beijaard et al. (2004) found that identity has been discussed from multiple perspectives, informed by various disciplines that focus on different nuances of the concept. The numerous influences and constant evolution of identity, considered a continuous process rather than a stable set of characteristics, suggest that it can represent something different from one person to another or from one context to another.

Some researchers believe that the frequent changes and challenges associated with today's education arena warrant a 'redefinition of teacher identity' (Burns & Bell, 2011:953 referencing Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). Since the social influence and social negotiation aspects of identity are crucial elements of TPI development (Burns & Bell, 2011 referencing Lasky, 2005; Søreide, 2006; Watson, 2006), the constant fluctuations in external contextual influences make it difficult to develop an overarching, permanent definition of teacher identity. Especially for international teachers, who are the focus of this study, the

characteristics of their external professional context may play an amplified role in shaping their TPIs, given their frequent moves to different schools worldwide.

Another source of challenges related to defining identity stems from the multiple terms used interchangeably to describe the concept. For example, Kelchtermans (2009) advocates for the term 'self-understanding' as a substitute for 'identity' since it highlights that the phenomenon depends on individuals' perceptions and interpretations of themselves. However, Bosse and Törner (2015) suggest that Kelchtermans' (2009) definition is quite limited, due to the fixed components he attributes to it. They reference the definition proposed in the works of Grootenboer et al. (2006) and Grootenboer and Zevenbergen (2008) as a broader alternative, which frames the concept of identity in terms of teachers' 'beliefs, attitudes, emotions, cognitive capacity and life history' (Bosse & Törner, 2015:3).

The inexistence of one overarching definition, although potentially unsettling, should not be considered a drawback of this area of research. Instead, it reflects the open-ended nature of the field and the diverse angles through which it can be investigated. My dissertation capitalised on the flexibility and multiple considerations surrounding the concept of identity because I explored the unique ways each participant conceptualised TPI. Rather than delineating the concept of identity under a strict definition, the flexibility allowed me to explore TPIs in a bespoke, inductive manner that unveiled the significant identity issues relevant to each participant. Rather than viewing the lack of a standard definition for TPI as a deficit, this concept's multiple layers encourage further exploration through a more individualised investigation approach.

2.3.3 Possible Definitions

An older study by Moore and Hofman (1988) defined professional identity in terms of teachers' perceived roles and the characteristics they would use to describe themselves as educators. The focus was on the elements constructing the features of the teaching occupation and the individual teacher's consideration of the profession's (1) 'importance,' (2) 'attractiveness,' and (3) 'harmony with other roles' (Moore & Hofman, 1988:70). The authors discussed two additional dimensions contributing to TPI: how educators represent themselves, referred to as 'self presentation,' as well as their commitment to the profession or their 'solidarity' (Moore & Hofman, 1988:70). Some definitions of professional identity are broader and do not focus solely on the elements characterising an individual's

professional role. For instance, Maclure (1993:311) referred to professional identity as a 'resource that people use to explain, justify and make sense of themselves in relation to others, and to the world at large.' However, rather than viewing TPI as a static list of characteristics that uniformly constitute the persona, practices, and actions of teachers (Sugrue, 1997), some researchers view TPI as an approach or process that individuals go through 'to make sense of themselves in relation to other people and contexts' (Beijaard et al., 2004:111 referencing Coldron & Smith, 1999). The process is continuous and unstable, as a complex combination of influencing factors shapes and reshapes the self-image and professional expectations teachers combine as part of their TPIs (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998).

As part of their literature review, Beijaard et al. (2004) identified different groupings of the studies on TPI. They found that some studies connected professional identity with teachers' self-image, which then reflected 'the way teachers teach, the way they develop as teachers, and their attitudes toward educational changes' (Beijaard et al., 2004:108 referencing Knowles, 1992; Nias, 1989). Another group of studies focused on teachers' roles (e.g., Goodson & Cole, 1994) and the relationship between reflection and professional identity development (e.g., Cooper & Olson, 1996; Kerby, 1991). Other studies combined these considerations and conceptualised TPI as 'a dynamic equilibrium between personal self-image and teacher roles one feels obliged to play' (Beijaard et al., 2004:111 referencing Volkmann & Anderson, 1998).

Even more broadly, Gee (2001:100) defines identity as 'what it means to be a "certain kind of person."' He describes four different views of identity: (1) 'nature-identity: a state developed from forces in nature'; (2) 'institution-identity: a position authorized by authorities within institutions'; (3) 'discourse-identity: an individual trait recognized in the discourse/dialogue of/with "rational" individuals'; (4) 'affinity-identity: experiences shared in the practice of "affinity groups"' (Gee, 2001:100). Gee (2001) asserts that these are four contributing areas to the development of identity. The four perspectives suggest elements that are all intricately interconnected such that, within a particular environment, an individual's identity may evolve from a unique combination of strands from each of the categories. Although Gee's (2001) compartmentalisation provides some guidance into the contributing elements shaping an individual's identity, it also reveals the complexity of the concept.

The working definition of TPI used in my study encompasses the key considerations suggested through earlier research. Sachs (2005:15) indicates that TPI 'stands at the core of the teaching profession.' It represents 'a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of "how to be," "how to act" and "how to understand" their work and their place in society […, which are] negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience' (Sachs, 2005:15). This definition acknowledges the roles an individual's social interactions and professional context have in identity development. It refers to teachers' views of the profession and the associated traits and actions personally and contextually attributed to their roles. TPI is seen as a continuous process through which teachers interpret their experiences and interactions, both inside and outside their profession, rather than a set of fixed inherent characteristics. Teachers develop the positions and behaviours they internalise, express, and display through dynamic negotiation processes between themselves and others in their surrounding contexts. Teachers do not simply obtain a final TPI as an outcome of their training, professional actions, or professional development. Instead, TPI refers to teachers' evolving understanding and representation of themselves in a particular context.

Although the above definition and associated considerations of TPI guided this study, I remained mindful of the nuances and unique aspects of an individual's professional identity. The lack of a fixed definition across the literature on identity reflects how a teacher's identity constantly changes. Especially since the notions surrounding the teaching profession and a teacher's professional role are continually evolving, an individual's TPI also reflects the dynamic nature of the field (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Furthermore, the unique identity elements of professionals in their surrounding contexts encourage individuals to re-evaluate and shift their TPIs continuously. In international education, where teachers frequently move to different schools across various countries and new teachers arrive each academic year, the TPIs of international school teachers have an even more dynamic character, in line with the naturally shifting landscape of their professional environment.

2.3.4 Features of Teacher Professional Identity

Despite the lack of a clear definition, the literature on identity commonly discusses certain characteristics. First, identity is not conceptualised as a static set of human attributes (Beijaard et al., 2004). Instead, it is a 'relational phenomenon' that develops and changes continuously throughout an individual's 'intersubjective interactions' (Beijaard et al.,

2004:108). Second, identity is multi-faceted, as individuals may develop multiple sub-identities based on their contexts and experiences (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

The Dynamism of Identity

One feature of TPI is that it develops and changes continuously as teachers interpret and re-interpret their experiences. Beijaard et al. (2004) parallel the ongoing TPI formation process to the regular professional development (PD) and lifelong learning endeavours that characterise the profession. Relatedly, TPI is not a set of fixed characteristics defining an individual teacher. Instead, TPI evolves as part of a teacher's journey of discovery and growth towards new professional aspirations (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). This process is concurrently driven by external factors such as policymakers' expectations, school systems, educational standards, and individual perceptions that teachers uphold relative to their teaching role. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) discuss the inconsistencies in the terminology used across identity literature regarding its dynamic characteristics. They cite studies that use various terms to refer to how identity changes. For instance, different articles discuss how identity can be 'developed, constructed, formed, made, created, shaped, or built' (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009:178). The variations in the language used to discuss the identity shifts that individuals experience throughout their lifetime depict it as a unique and nuanced phenomenon.

Some studies highlight certain indicative traits to classify participants' TPIs into different groupings. For example, Burns and Bell (2011:955) considered 'the sensitive and empathetic teacher,' 'the teacher capitalising on personal strengths,' and 'the perseverant and proactive teacher' as the dominant TPIs that emerged from their interview data. The researchers note that, although they refer to these three specific identity labels throughout their analysis, they should not be seen as static identities. Instead, these were the prominent 'flexible [identity] constellations' (Burns & Bell, 2011:955) relative to which the participants positioned themselves throughout their NIs. Their stories shared how these identity areas were fluidly reshaped and changed throughout their experiences.

The continuous evolution of TPI can be attributed to perpetual changes characterising teachers' experiences in their personal and professional lives. External, contextual changes from a broad societal level to reforms within the 'educational landscape,' followed by school-level developments that permeate to the classroom level, can all lead to 'shifting [teacher] selves' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999:131). Teachers' engagement with these

environmental characteristics, their experiences within the personal and professional realms of their lives, and their interactions with individuals in their surroundings further contribute to a dynamic identity development process.

One caveat to the discussion of identity's dynamic nature is that this does not imply that shifts in identity occur quickly, smoothly, and without contention. Korthagen (2004:85), referencing the research of Bullough and Baughman (1997), asserts that 'fundamental changes in teacher identity do not take place easily: identity change is a difficult and sometimes painful process, and often there seems to be little change at all in how teachers view themselves.' Certain aspects defining teachers' understandings of themselves can be 'extremely resistant to change' (Korthagen, 2004:83). Hence, although continuous identity negotiation and meaning-making processes occur through teachers' constant interactions with their surrounding environments, this does not mean that resulting alterations to their identities occur easily or immediately. Furthermore, due to multiple sources of influence, 'tensions and dilemmas' (Beijaard et al., 2004:121) often accompany the evolution of an individual's identity.

The Multiplicity of Identity

The multiple contextual elements and interactions that inform a teacher's identity formation can create sub-identities. The existence of several sub-identities has been referred to as a 'multiplicity' (Assen et al., 2018; van Lagenhove & Harré, 1993), which is generated from an individual's discursive interactions and practices enacted within varied social contexts. Beijaard et al. (2004:122) suggest that a teacher's sub-identities could be categorised into 'core' and 'peripheral' ones, depending on the value or importance ascribed to their elements. An individual's professional identity is constructed out of multifaceted, uniquely combined components since it 'is formulated in relation to the conditions it responds to, and in this regard, it divides into different selves' (Burns & Bell, 2011:953 referencing Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). The varying influential sources, including a range of 'historical, sociological, psychological, and cultural factors' (Beijaard et al., 2004:113 referencing Cooper & Olson, 1996), can give rise to various sub-identities. Figure 1 shows a possible visual representation of concentric circles that portray the combination of core (the inner purple circle) and peripheral (the blue circle) sub-identities that develop within a landscape of different contexts (the green circle). The arrows suggest that these sub-identities are fluid in their evolution through continuous contextual influences and in terms of an individual's outward portrayal of them at a given time in a particular context.

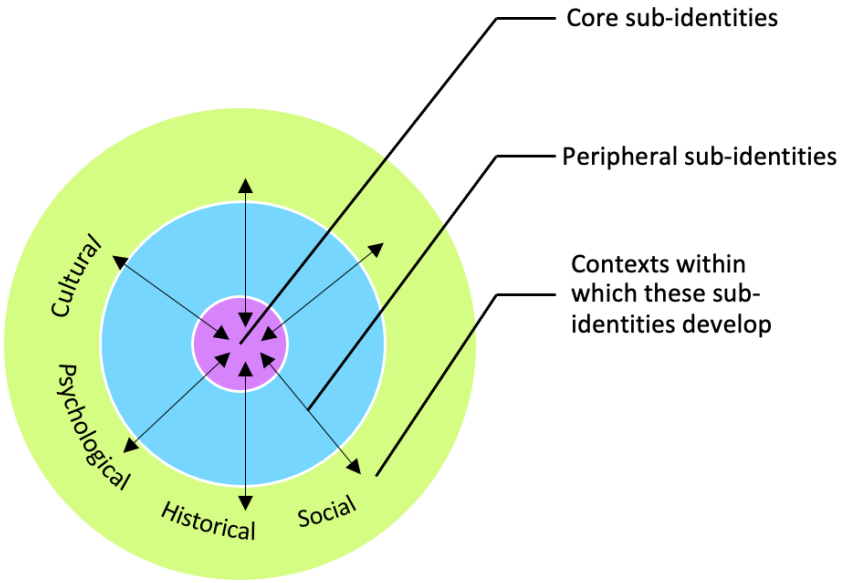

Figure 1: A visual representation of the multiplicity of dynamic sub-identities constituting an individual's overall TPI.

Mishler (1999:8) explains that 'metaphorically, […we can view] our selves as a chorus of voices, not just as the tenor or soprano soloist.' This 'plurality of sub-identities' can complement or oppose one another (Beijaard et al., 2004:113 referencing Mishler, 1999). Following Mishler's (1999) metaphor, Beijaard et al. (2004:113) suggest that 'the better the relationships between the different identities, the better the chorus of voices sounds.' In other words, a greater agreement between an individual's sub-identities can support a more cohesive overall identity. Ultimately, teachers' sub-identity strands and features at a particular time and in a specific setting contribute to their actions and interactions within their professional contexts (Beijaard et al., 2004).

2.4 Personal Pre-Training Contexts and TPI

In this section of the literature review, I explore the role of personal pre-training contexts in an individual's TPI formation. Studies that examined TPI development in novice teachers found that their early identities combined elements from their past experiences and upbringing with their own experiences as students (e.g., Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Flores & Day, 2006; Sachs, 2001). Teachers' observations of and interactions with their own teachers during their schooling can act as, what Lortie (1975:80) termed, 'anticipatory socialization.' This is a phenomenon through which teachers develop a sense of what a school environment

is like and what the teaching profession entails from their initial immersion within that context. Significant others who influence their upbringing, including family members and former teachers, can leave an imprint on teachers' perceptions of the profession even before they decide to pursue a career in education.

Buchanan (2015) suggests that TPI can take shape long before the teacher training process. Teachers' experiences throughout their schooling can significantly affect the image they create of their professional selves (Buchanan, 2015 referencing Lortie, 1975; Samuel & Stephens, 2000). Following on from Lortie's (1975) seminal work, Buchanan (2015) explains that teachers' observations when they were students, of their own teachers or mentors, significantly impact their perceptions of their professional roles and practices. Some studies have found that student teachers' biographies greatly influence the formation of their professional beliefs and identity (Beijaard et al., 2004 referencing Kelchtermans, 1994; Knowles, 1992; Sugrue, 1997). Some categories contributing to a teacher's biography include the teacher's 'early childhood experiences, early teacher role models, previous teaching experiences, and significant or important people and significant prior experiences' (Beijaard et al., 2004:115). The entire span of teachers' years of schooling acts as an experience of apprenticeship, during which they construct, consciously or unconsciously, their perceptions and beliefs of the teaching profession based on their exposure and interactions with individuals already in the field.

The impact of a teacher's past schooling, background, and upbringing on professional identity is highly variable and personalised. In some cases, teachers' experiences and interactions before they begin their professional training can create an idealistic professional identity (Flores & Day, 2006). The motivation and optimism that prospective student teachers have towards the profession before their training can contribute to an envisioned professional identity they hope to embody. In some situations, teachers may want to replicate the actions and identity elements of former teachers (Buchanan, 2015). For example, the participants in Flores' and Day's (2006) study identified that flexible, motivating, and fair former teachers became positive role models for them. They shared memories of teachers they admired who were highly competent, engaging, and who cared about forging strong connections with their students. These former teachers positively impacted the participants' experiences as students and even contributed to their choice of entering the teaching profession. In other cases, participants also identified more negative schooling experiences that highlighted TPI elements they wanted to avoid as they entered the profession. They described how some teachers acted as negative role models, which gave the participants a

sense of the opposite trajectory they would not want to pursue and contrasting characteristics they cared to cultivate instead as part of their own TPI development.

2.5 Training Contexts and TPI

Moving on from teachers' pre-training contexts, this section examines the possible effects of teachers' training experiences on their TPI development. Throughout this dissertation, 'teacher training' refers to the pre-qualification phase before individuals become certified teachers. Other terms used in literature to represent this period include 'teacher education,' 'teacher formation,' and 'teacher preparation.' When teachers interact with their professional environment, they develop a sense of their role and position within that setting. This process of teacher socialisation into the profession originates from their 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975:61), whereby teachers observe and interact with their mentors during their training programmes, which can then influence their views and practices.

In some cases, teachers' training experiences can have a formative impact on shaping their initial TPIs through an introduction to a range of knowledge sources that inform their professional journeys (Beijaard et al., 2004). These include 'knowledge of affect, teaching, human relations, and subject matter' (Beijaard et al., 2004:114 referencing Antonek et al., 1997), which shape teachers' theories about education and the profession (Sugrue, 1997). Some studies have focused on exploring teachers' 'subject-matter, didactic, and pedagogical expertise' (Beijaard et al., 2004:118 referencing Beijaard et al., 2000) as components of their professional identities. Although teachers' knowledge and expertise are seen as components of their identity, some researchers have found that teachers may discuss identity and knowledge interchangeably. For example, when Clandinin and Connelly (1996) asked teachers about their practical knowledge, they would focus on the elements comprising their views of their TPIs rather than specifically discussing their content knowledge. This suggests that their TPIs were more strongly impacted by the teaching characteristics they prioritised rather than their subject-area aptitudes.

Some studies have suggested that teachers' subject-area training and expertise can significantly impact their TPIs. In considering the identities of out-of-field mathematics teachers, Bosse and Törner (2015) underline the importance of subject-area expertise, or lack thereof, in shaping identity. A teacher's transition from other fields into education or between different subject areas has been referred to as a 'boundary-crossing event' (Hobbs,

2012:271) that uniquely contributes to transforming a teacher's identity. Depending on teachers' past experiences and career trajectories, their focus on specific knowledge areas and types of expertise may change. According to Beijaard et al. (2000), as teachers advance in the profession, their attention tends to shift from developing subject knowledge to pedagogical competencies, which make more dominant contributions to their TPIs. As their content knowledge becomes more established, teachers tend to focus on and experiment with a broader range of teaching strategies and approaches, contributing to the evolution of their TPIs.

Conversely, numerous studies have found that teacher training programmes have a weak effect on shaping teachers' professional identities (e.g., Flores, 2000; Flores & Day, 2006; Hauge, 2000; Hobson & Tomlinson, 2001). Teachers often identify a disconnect between their theoretical and practical training experiences, leading to a lack of direction and increased tension throughout their professional formation. The discrepancies between theoretical teacher training guidance and the practical realities within classrooms leave teachers with conflicting suggestions regarding the construction of their teaching values and approaches (e.g., Flores & Day, 2006).

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Overall, the literature on the potential impacts of teacher training on TPI is quite divided. Some studies accentuate the importance of certain aspects of a teacher's professional preparation while minimising others. This includes the debate between the varying significance and strength of the impact of subject-specific training versus more generic teacher training competencies on TPI formation. For teachers in international schools, who all completed their teacher training through institutions and programmes across the globe, no overarching trend can be attributed to the effect of their training experiences on their subsequent TPI development. In fact, in some cases, teacher training may have a weak impact on the evolution of TPI, as teachers' practical experiences and interactions while actively fulfilling their professional roles may overshadow other background factors in shaping their professional identities.

2.6 Teaching Contexts and TPI

Once teachers begin practising within the profession, there are multiple ways in which their teaching contexts shape their TPIs. The following section discusses how (1) prior teaching experiences, (2) the motivating factors impacting teachers' decision to work within the

international school network, (3) international school culture, (4) international school norms and expectations, and (5) professional community interactions, can all uniquely contribute to a teacher's professional identity development.

2.6.1 Prior Teaching Experiences

Olsen (2008) investigated the ways in which a teacher's prior professional experiences impact TPI formation. Especially for novice teachers, their first teaching jobs can represent seminal contexts in which their identities as practitioners in the field of education take shape. However, Buchanan (2015), referencing Olsen (2008), emphasises that teachers' past experiences do not have generalisable, unidirectional impacts on their identity formation. Instead, teachers actively engage with their context and negotiate the trajectory of their TPI development based on other influencing factors and contexts, including personal background characteristics and prior beliefs shaped by other experiences too.

2.6.2 Motivations to Teach Internationally

International teachers' past experiences and contexts directly impact their motivation for becoming international teachers in the first place, as well as their subsequent decisions to change schools throughout their international teaching careers. The terms 'teacher mobility' or 'mobile teachers' have been used in reference to the increasingly common phenomenon of teachers choosing to change schools or move overseas to teach worldwide (Bailey & Cooker, 2019; Bense, 2016). The reasons why a teacher decides to move abroad, teach in an international school setting, or migrate to different schools after a certain period are unique considerations that contribute to a teacher's identity. For example, a teacher may have selected to work at a specific school because of the degree to which its academic vision aligned with the teacher's own professional beliefs and priorities. Alternatively, a teacher may have been encouraged to leave a particular school setting and travel abroad due to certain conditions that conflicted with core characteristics of their TPIs.

Bailey and Cooker (2019:136) developed an identity typology consisting of three types of international school teachers: (A) teachers who 'joined the profession in order to be globally mobile,' as they 'see their jobs as […] supporting travel and mobility'; (B) teachers who 'see their jobs in ideological terms'; they 'see being open-minded and international as central to their role'; and 'they are committed to the profession because it enables them to make a

difference to students' lives: to change the world in global, ideological ways'; (C) teachers who 'view their primary attachment as being to the locale in which the international school is located.' This typology is an example of the way international school teachers may be motivated by various personal or professional drivers or commitments, encouraging them to teach abroad and be professionally mobile. These motivations contribute to their vision of their teaching role and the elements prioritised within their TPIs.

The demographic characteristics that international teachers identify with may also contribute to their professional motivations as international teachers and can be a significant factor impacting their TPIs. Some researchers have determined that 'international school teachers are largely young and single – 72% are under the age of 50 and 48% are single' (Bailey & Cooker, 2019:126 referencing Bunnell, 2017). However, Bunnell (2017) cautions that the information provided by these statistics is limited since research needs to expand on understanding these characteristics and their significance for the experiences and identities of international school teachers.

2.6.3 International School Culture

A teacher's workplace characteristics can have a decisive role in shaping or reorienting professional identity development. An international school's diverse and dynamic characteristics amplify the importance of context in impacting a teacher's identity. It is typical for international teachers to move around the world to different international schools as often as every two to three years (Ren et al., 2015). They live as expatriates in various countries and then migrate around the network of international schools. This common practice of international teachers changing schools and moving from one country to another makes their background and experiential influence on their identity even more unique and intriguing.

The context-dependency of identity is sometimes referred to as 'sociality' (Assen et al., 2018:131) or the 'situational character of identity' (Bosse & Törner, 2015:4). It contributes to the complex, dynamic, and multifaceted nature of TPI. According to Assen et al. (2018), the policies, academic programmes, and the professional members within a school community represent the external elements contributing to the sociality characteristic of TPI. Consequently, TPI cannot be described by a fixed set of traits because of the unique combination of interrelated effects generated by several contextual spheres of influence. The

physical environment, the social characteristics within that setting, and the broader context of the educational institution (Bosse & Törner, 2015) represent some contexts that impact the development of TPI. As discussed in section 2.3.4, these multiple contextual backgrounds create different sub-identities. Some contexts may limit or delineate the identity characteristics that a teacher should embody while accentuating and encouraging others to flourish.

The traits and approaches of the school leadership team help foster a particular school culture and encourage teachers to inhabit certain roles within that setting. Within an international school context, teachers are exposed to various leadership styles (Halicioglu, 2015). Even across their teaching experiences at one particular school, teachers may experience numerous changes in the school's management and leaders throughout their employment. Although the transience of administrative staff can be a characteristic of any school, the diversity of the faculty members that replace those who leave is unique for international school settings. As each director, principal, or learning leader, of a different nationality and educational background, typically has a different approach and set of priorities, teachers are exposed to various external parameters that they respond to, resulting in potential identity shifts.

The characteristics of a teacher's workplace seem to have an over-powering impact on shaping and reshaping TPI. Pre-service teachers enter their first year of full-time teaching with a particular image of how their experiences within the profession will unfold. Some TPI ideals may be encouraged or challenged depending on the teachers' experiences within their specific teaching contexts. Flores and Day (2006) found that their participants' perceptions of their school context were determining factors dictating the direction of their TPI development. For these teachers, who were in the early years of teaching, the school culture within which they were immersed moulded their understandings and expectations of the profession and their roles within it. Although the researchers found strong personal background influences on the participants' underlying identity characteristics, contextual factors mediated the (re)construction of their TPIs.

Regarding teachers' cultural background characteristics and their effect on TPI, Bailey and Cooker (2019:127) suggest that expatriate teachers could be referred to as 'Third Culture Teachers.' Through their exposure to the unique diversity of their professional experiences abroad, they may end up 'see[ing] their educational role and their professional practices as formed by their international school experience.' However, they neither fully identify with

the teaching professionals from their country of origin nor entirely belong to the professional community in the country where they reside (Bailey & Cooker, 2019; Holderness, 2002). Following their interaction with and immersion in a range of different cultural surroundings and diverse communities, some of which may be highly dissimilar from past contexts and experiences, international teachers 'take into themselves a little of each culture they encounter without fully belonging to any' (Bailey & Cooker, 2019:128). Bailey (2015), referencing Joslin (2002), suggests that the culture shock international teachers experience when adapting to new systems and practices within a new community impacts their perceptions of their professional roles and TPIs. The exposure to a new culture within their professional and personal lives, although potentially unexpected and challenging to navigate for some teachers (Roskell, 2013), seems to provide a fruitful opportunity for teachers to study alternate practices and experiment with new professional approaches that all contribute to the evolution of their TPIs (Bailey & Cooker, 2019 referencing Bailey, 2015).

Sahling and De Carvalho (2021:42) suggest that international teachers may experience three stances that inform unique aspects of their TPIs in an international school setting: (1) the perspective of a 'learner'; (2) the perspective of 'a teacher in a new context'; and (3) the perspective generated from seeing 'values through different lenses.' The new environments and cultures they are exposed to may prompt international teachers to cultivate the 'learner' aspects of their identity as they explore and adapt to their new professional sphere and country of residence (Sahling & De Carvalho, 2021:42). As they adjust their practices to their specific international school context, their teaching values, motivations, and approaches may shift in line with their new experiences, further cultivating their expatriate teacher sub-identities. These sub-identities combine characteristics of the teachers' experiences as intercultural learners with their adaptive professional practices (Tran & Nguyen, 2015).

Overall, the TPIs of international teachers are informed by the unique mixture of their international experience and their previous work in the education system of their home country (Poole, 2020). However, the 'blending of prior and international school experience' (Bailey & Cooker, 2019:136) in a teacher's professional identity is an unclear and complex phenomenon. Teachers may retain a particular set of TPI characteristics when they move from one school to another, and these then transform into their TPIs at their new location. Each teacher may experience different degrees of adoption and dismissal of certain TPI traits, which leaves room for further exploration in identity literature.

2.6.4 International School Norms and Expectations

As teachers face the demands of their roles at a particular school, they continuously analyse the professional identity they convey through their practice (Flores & Day, 2006). Education policies, expectations, and regulations comprise the broad societal structures to which individual schools must adhere (Buchanan, 2015). Teachers position themselves within the framework created by these guidelines. Depending on the type of international school, the entity that governs the standards it must follow can differ significantly. For example, some international schools function in a completely private realm from their local and national surroundings. Others may have some autonomy regarding internal policies and curriculum implementation, but they must follow local education guidelines and may still be inspected by local authorities. Therefore, the norms at a particular international school depend on its relationship with the host country and other governing bodies that have established its existence. In other words, they are not autonomous entities.

International schools that follow the IB programme—the present study's focus—implement the policies established by the IBO. These, in turn, impose certain expectations on IB DP teachers. The IBO has its own mission statement, which IB World Schools must adopt (see Appendix I). Part of the mission statement highlights the IBO's aim 'to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment' (International Baccalaureate, 2022:n.p.). The assessment policies and examination guidelines of the IB programme emphasise the responsibility of teachers and schools to provide the necessary framework and support mechanisms to ensure that students can take the final IB examinations. Hence, IB DP teachers must follow specific guidelines regarding the hours they spend teaching different topics, the types of practice and internal assessments they provide to students, and their approaches towards teaching, grading, and tracking student progress and attainment (see Appendix J). When the IBO audits schools every five years, the visiting inspection team evaluates evidence provided by the school to ensure it remains compliant with the standards and practices associated with its IB accreditation.

IB DP teachers must adhere to certain roles and responsibilities associated with their position, which then dictate some priorities they must uphold. One crucial requirement is for IB DP teachers to collect numerical data on their students' academic performance, which directly contribute to the predicted grades they can use in their university applications. Buchanan (2015) describes the contention generated by the accountability policies that characterise the education landscape in many areas worldwide. Under these policies, all

members of school communities, from students to administrators, experience the pressures associated with quantifiable performance measures equated to academic effectiveness and success. Within this landscape, driven by standardised testing and assessments that lead to a qualification such as the IB diploma, the norms and expectations characterising the teaching profession result in changes in TPIs (Buchanan, 2015).

To ensure that IB teachers are prepared to teach, assess, and mark students according to the IB programme's guiding principles and standards, the IBO imposes specific training and certification requirements for all staff members at IB schools. The IBO organises PD workshops that deliver the required training for each subject. Schools enrol their teachers in these courses to ensure their IB training meets the required standards. Furthermore, the IBO carries out authorisation and verification visits, as well as regular re-accreditation visits, to ensure that a school maintains its full compliance with all aspects of the IB's rules and regulations.

The strong association between teachers' practices and their students' standardised assessment outcomes, together with stricter controls on those practices, have transformed TPIs (Meyer & Rowan, 2006). Schools, as institutions, function through a set of rules, regulations, and schemes that delineate the actions and approaches its community members must follow. The institutional blueprint that outlines a school's priorities encourages its stakeholders to comply with certain routines and behaviours that can become relatively scripted and inflexible (Meyer & Rowan, 2006). However, Meyer and Rowan (2006) suggest that teachers, as members of a particular academic institution, create their own meaning of the place they inhabit by actively interpreting their surroundings. Buchanan (2015) upholds that the dominant policies surrounding student performance and teacher accountability for that performance fuel a particular TPI. Concurrently, as teachers comply with enacting those TPIs, they perpetuate those boundaries and expectations. However, policies and expectations of certain teacher representations do not unidirectionally shape a teacher's identity (Buchanan, 2015). Instead, other elements, such as the unique assortment of a teacher's personal and professional engagements and experiences, add complex layers to their identities.

The measurable elements of standardised accountability practices become parameters for judging the effectiveness and success of teachers (Valli & Chambliss, 2007). The defining characteristics and results used to legitimate a teacher's level of achievement and even worthiness as an educator become part of the factors influencing TPI. The decisions teachers

make, their practices, and their actions may reflect, to differing degrees, the expectations imposed by accountability measures. Like other institutions and academic programmes, IB World Schools publish their examination scores, compare their results with global averages, and often share the university acceptances their students obtain based on their diploma scores. Implicitly, the value and pride that schools attribute to such representations of success permeate into teachers' professional identities in ways that would support these achievements.

Although the concerns associated with student academic results can shape the priorities that fuel particular TPI characteristics, some studies suggest that these effects may be less significant at certain international schools. Day et al. (2007) argue that some international teachers may experience lower levels of accountability pressure, increased teacher autonomy, and less de-professionalisation of their teaching role compared to their national teacher counterparts. Especially when an international school is not subjected to the same institutionalised inspections imposed on national systems, its teachers do not experience the same debilitating scrutiny of their practice. For example, Bailey and Cooker (2019) found that their expatriate teacher participants did not discuss the concerns associated with the professional roles shared by teachers in national systems. Instead, their interviews revolved around themes such as the complex roles of teachers that span past knowledge dissemination, the importance of qualifications to support competence in the profession, and the enduring drive to support students.

Another component of the IB's mission statement encourages schools 'to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect' while supporting 'students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners' (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2020:n.p.). To support the development of a school ethos that aligns with the aspects outlined by this part of the mission statement, each IB World School must implement the IB Learner Profile, which 'represents 10 attributes [… that] can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities' (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2020:n.p.). The IB Learner Profile encourages all members of IB schools to be 'inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective' (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2020:n.p.). These attributes of the IB Learner Profile and specific requirements for participation in a range of community service opportunities constitute core elements of a school's identity as part of the IB network. As professionals

working at an IB school, IB teachers must model and embody these attributes and priorities since they define aspects of an IB community. At many IB schools, the Code of Conduct that teachers must sign as part of their employment incorporates characteristics reflecting the IB ethos and the Learner Profile attributes. This Code of Conduct outlines the traits, practices, and actions that IB teachers agree to follow as members of the IB network. Although following a Code of Conduct is not unique to the teaching profession or IB schools, IB teachers are not just directed towards fulfilling a list of tasks, roles, and responsibilities. Instead, aspects of IB Codes of Conduct, such as the IB Learner Profile, explicitly outline elements that should become part of IB teachers' professional identities, including the traits and actions they should model.

Teaching in an international school environment may require teachers to develop certain character traits or may accentuate particular mindsets that local or national schools prioritise less. For instance, Bailey and Cooker (2019:135) found that some of their participants identified that their roles as international teachers 'required different skills than being a national teacher, especially an open-mindedness and willingness to alter their world view.' Although Bailey and Cooker (2019) attribute increased levels of open-mindedness to teaching in an international school context, the need for acceptance, understanding, and the celebration of diversity should not be considered unique for professionals in international schools. Local and national schools have their own characteristic diversity. While the student body may be more homogenous regarding nationality, students still bring their distinctive backgrounds to their learning experiences. Yet, international teachers experience stark changes in all aspects of their professional contexts when they transfer to new schools, including new norms and expectations to which they must adapt. In some cases, Bailey and Cooker (2019) suggest that international teachers may experience shifts in their levels of confidence relative to their professional skills when they transition to a new international school context. Hence, as international teachers adapt to their new environments, so do their TPIs.

2.6.5 Professional Community Interactions

As a context-dependent process, identity development is closely tied to a teacher's exposure to and interaction with the surrounding professional community (Goodson & Cole, 1994). Within their surrounding context, teachers' complex interactions with other professionals strongly shape their identities (Beijaard et al., 2004). Coldron and Smith (1999) describe the

importance of teachers' engagement with their colleagues and how their professional interactions support an understanding of themselves as professionals. Beijaard et al. (2004) reference Coldron and Smith (1999) when they suggest that teachers build their professional identity through dialogue, collaboration, and engagement with various teaching practices, resources, and approaches. Some researchers claim that teachers' concurrent engagement with and evaluation of the values of other professionals relative to their own represents the process of teacher professionalisation (e.g., Brooke, 1994). The external expectations and guiding representations of the features a teacher should embody can either legitimate or contradict the personal elements incorporated in a teacher's identity (Beijaard et al., 2004). Hence, the professional community to which an individual teacher is exposed provides one key source of inspiration towards developing TPI in a particular direction (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009 referencing Wenger, 1998). However, the trajectory of this influence is not straightforward. In some situations, teachers may engage in an active identity-building process based on their interactions with others. In other instances, the impact of social interactions on an individual's TPI may function more covertly, as exposure to specific external influences can become part of an individual's identity through a less active or conscious process.

Teaching colleagues' impact on each other's professional identity is highly variable and context dependent. A school's culture often dictates the direction and degree to which teachers' interactions with each other impact their TPIs. For some participants in Flores' and Day's (2006) study, the competitive and unsupportive professional environment where they were teaching meant they attributed minimal importance to their colleagues' impact on their TPI. Instead, they experienced a more isolated professional identity development journey, which was limited and restricted by the characteristics of their school's culture. Conversely, teachers' professional attitudes and TPIs were positively impacted by their colleagues when they worked in schools that encouraged the cultivation of professional relationships. Flores and Day (2006), however, noted that the different effects that colleagues could have on TPI development were not solely context dependent. Other personal factors, such as teachers' dispositions and choices relative to their professional interactions, further contributed to how they responded to their colleagues. Flores and Day (2006) highlight that their findings corroborate with results from earlier studies where collaborative school cultures were more conducive to positive impacts of teaching colleagues on an individual's TPI development. However, Flores and Day (2006) also emphasise that it is not a singular unidirectional effect since personal identity elements had mediating impacts too. That is to say, although teachers surrounded by a collaborative work environment may be more likely to experience enhanced

positive attitudes towards their profession, such as increased morale, commitment, and a heightened desire for continuous development in their practice, their incoming personal beliefs matter too in shaping these attitudes. For example, teachers entering the profession with a strong level of intrinsic motivation, as well as a personal belief system emphasising the positive impacts they wanted to have on their students, could face a more negative school culture with continued optimism. The ways in which teachers interpret the surrounding school culture and their beliefs associated with their position within that teaching environment contribute to their outlook on the profession (Buchanan, 2015; Flores & Day, 2006). Hence, a teacher's workplace conditions and personal beliefs reciprocally impact each other in shaping, interpreting, and enacting their TPI.

One relevant consideration for international teachers is that their colleagues change frequently. The transience of their professional entourage, combined with the significantly different training backgrounds of colleagues who were certified in countries and education systems from around the world, can affect teachers' identities in non-generalisable ways. The eclectic professional community within an international school exposes teachers to a wide range of teaching approaches and philosophies. The unique identities of their colleagues, as influenced by their professional experiences from around the world, further fuel a constant assortment of new developments in the professional identities of international teachers. Some colleagues may provide the inspiration and advice to support a teacher's professional identity formation and might even become professional role models who encourage a teacher's development of certain TPI traits. In other cases, some colleagues may uphold contradicting or contrasting beliefs about their professional roles, contributing to a teacher's consideration of potentially conflicting TPI representations. Some authors suggest that teachers can experience various growth opportunities even when there is a dissonance between elements of their TPIs and those embodied by colleagues, administrators, or members of their broader institutional context (e.g., Brooke, 1994).

A second complexity associated with the experiences of international teachers stems from the numerous adjustments they must make in their personal and professional lives when they relocate to different schools. International teachers tend to rely more heavily on their school community and colleagues throughout their accommodation experience. To a certain extent, international teachers create a shared community, brought together by their common experiences and traits as expatriate educators (Bailey & Cooker, 2019). However, one consideration is that the heterogeneous and diverse nature of staff in the international teaching community could also be highly 'stratified,' considering the large variability in

their backgrounds (Bailey, 2015:12). Bailey (2015) found that the international teachers in her study classified themselves into multiple different community groupings at their school. Examples of these groupings could include teachers of the same subject area, those teaching the same grade level, expatriate teachers, similarly aged teachers, those having a similar number of years of international teaching experience, and teachers who share the same nationality or cultural background. These multiple divisions create a unique professional community stratification. International teachers must navigate between these multiple spheres of influence, which can variably contribute to their TPI development. In some cases, the range of professional community affiliations that international teachers experience can amplify their difficulty with reconciling potentially conflicting or dissonant sources of influence on their TPI. As they interact with various professional perspectives and examples or counterexamples from their multiple professional community affiliations, international teachers embrace certain TPI elements while they may avoid developing others.

2.7 Teacher Agency and TPI

Since contextual influences are not unidirectional in impacting TPI, I now examine the role of agency and the different degrees to which individuals can exercise agency as part of their ongoing TPI development. As discussed above, although many external contextual factors can mould and direct the evolution of a teacher's professional identity, these influences are not simply imposed and appropriated without the teacher's engagement. The literature on TPI highlights the importance of considering a 'teacher's active location in the process of professional identity formation' (Beijaard et al., 2004:114). Not only do teachers have their own voices and perspectives, but their professional existences involve navigating and negotiating through the different demands, expectations, and visions they are confronted with in their professional context. In this way, teachers are 'neither free agents nor completely socially determined products' (Ahearn, 2001:120), as there is a constant interaction between teachers' exercising agency and the external parameters placed on their agency. According to Ahearn (2001:112), agency is 'the socioculturally mediated capacity to act' since individuals make decisions and take different courses of action while these are influenced and delineated by various external contextual parameters.

In some studies, researchers have associated the personal components of a teacher's identity with agency. By contrast, the contextual impositions on a teacher's identity are paralleled with the concept of 'structure' or a limitation on agency (Beijaard et al., 2004:113

referencing Coldron & Smith, 1999). Beijaard et al. (2004) describe identity formation as an active process during which teachers act with a certain degree of agency. The pursuit of certain professional goals, the decision-making processes involved in selecting and implementing particular teaching practices, and the actions taken to exhibit certain traits are all examples of instances when teachers exercise agency (Coldron & Smith, 1999). Buchanan (2015:714) suggests that 'teacher agency can be understood […] as identities in motion' since a teacher's actions and externalised identity are enabled through agency. At the same time, agency is not unidirectionally 'the performance of identity' because the actions and agency that teachers can exercise in their context also reciprocally feed into their identity development (Buchanan, 2015:714).

Teachers must constantly adapt to their environments and decide how to enact their identities. Hence, identity formation, as an individual develops a heightened personal and contextual awareness, involves the development of agency (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009:183) suggest that 'what may result from a teacher's realization of his or her identity, in performance within teaching contexts, is a sense of agency, of empowerment to move ideas forward, to reach goals or even to transform the context.' Although every context provides different challenges and affordances, teachers do not passively respond to their surroundings. Teachers do not encounter restraints or delimitations, whether from external policies or contextual characteristics, 'as tabulae rasae, but rather actively use their own preexisting identities to interpret, learn from, evaluate, and appropriate the new conditions of their work' (Buchanan, 2015:701). Even when teachers feel forced to conform to certain roles and approaches, their interactions with and navigation through the context still activate a sense of agency, regardless of whether the teacher can act upon that agency or feels restrained in suppressing it.

In some cases, teachers, as individuals exercising their agency, may become actively involved in maintaining or encouraging the development of certain aspects of their identity. Buchanan (2015:710) termed this form of agency as '*stepping up*' because she found that some teachers would take on roles and responsibilities that surpassed their job description (emphasis in original). These were the teachers who were practising in environments that complemented their identities. In other instances, teachers employ their agency while reflecting upon, navigating, and resisting identity-related conflicts (Buchanan, 2015; Day et al., 2006). Buchanan (2015:710) categorised this form of agency as '*pushing back,'* which is visible when 'teachers reject, negotiate, or reconfigure particular school and district policies with which they do not agree' (emphasis in original). Overall, the agency involved

in the process of identity development affects teachers' perspectives and approaches while they interact with their surroundings (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

Agency is a significant issue to consider relative to international school teachers, as their teaching environments may provide different affordances regarding their level of autonomy. At IB schools, which are often characterised as independent or private entities, teachers may have the opportunity to exercise their autonomy more freely (Bailey, 2015) since many of these schools do not have to report to local, state, or national authorities. However, as noted above, these schools are monitored by the IBO, which acts as the governing authority that ensures every IB school follows practices and standards that align with this curriculum framework and academic programme. Although international schools vary widely in terms of their priorities and approaches, as do national institutions for that matter, there is a potential for teachers to exercise increased agency in places such as independent international schools. This category of schools often establishes its own practices regarding the monitoring, support, and PD of their staff, which can correlate with fewer rigid structures associated with school inspections and quality assurance practices. In some cases, expatriate teachers may also experience a higher professional status than they would have otherwise, had they not moved to teach abroad (Bailey, 2015). Overall, the experiences of individual teachers relative to the affordances and constraints surrounding their agency are highly context dependent. The specific characteristics of the particular international school at which they work, and even the continuous changes that occur within that environment, uniquely shape the conditions and perceptions of international teachers that contribute to the agency-related elements of their TPIs.

2.8 The Personal-Professional Continuum and Conflicting Influences on TPI

Given the unique interplay of internal and external characteristics that coalesce in shaping a teacher's professional identity, I now consider how these elements from the personal-professional continuum of factors can interact, which may result in conflicting influences on TPI development.

A teacher's identity comprises characteristics that the teacher personally views as associated with the profession, combined with features suggested or imposed by others in the teacher's surrounding community and professional context. The processes through which teachers try to mediate between personal and professional influences and demands on their identity

become part of their identity formation (Beijaard et al., 2004). In some cases, the effect of one side of the personal-professional spectrum may be stronger than the other. For example, teachers with backgrounds in fields outside of the subject they end up teaching initially have knowledge, skills, and perspectives dominating those areas (Bosse & Törner, 2015). Their new professional identities as teachers in their specific subject develop over time through the unique interplay of personal identity characteristics from their past and their new professional context.

Although generalisations cannot be made about the overarching characteristics of any profession, personal investment in teaching is quite common for practitioners entering the field. Individuals who have actively chosen teaching as a career often describe their altruistic goals of making a difference in the lives of their students, having positive impacts on those they teach, and their desire to develop meaningful connections with their students. Successful teachers are often described as individuals who genuinely care about their students and are dedicated to supporting them in reaching their highest potential. Hence, the personal commitment teachers have to their profession inevitably contributes to intertwining their personal and professional identities (Day et al., 2006).

For international teachers, rather than one aspect of the personal-professional spectrum dominating over the other, Bailey and Cooker (2019) suggest that personal and professional aspects of their identities may be even more blurred compared to non-migrating teachers. They explain that 'the distinction between personal and professional identity may be less clear-cut in the context of international schooling, in which an individual's entire life may be relocated upon them taking up a new teaching position' (Bailey & Cooker, 2019:127). While international teachers adapt to their new country of residence, they rely heavily on the school community as part of their settling and integration process. The school often provides accommodation for teachers, which can be in residential areas near other colleagues. International teachers often turn to their colleagues for friendship as they settle into a new chapter of their lives in a different country because these are the individuals whom they meet first when they have relocated. In the absence of other family members and relatives, expatriate teachers often construct their friendship groups and support systems through the school where they work. Hence, the personal and professional realms of international teachers' lives may be more blended than their non-expatriate counterparts.

Concerning international teachers, Poole (2020:160) argues that their identities are informed by three intersecting domains: the personal, professional, and cross-cultural realms of their

experiences. Poole (2020:160) justifies the addition of the cross-cultural domain as a necessary sphere of influence highly relevant to the identity development of expatriate teachers due to the 'transnational nature of international schools as culturally heterogeneous.' International teachers must navigate through conflicting aspects of the blended amalgam of personal and professional identity elements generated by their unique mixture of experiences while living and working in their home countries and abroad (Poole, 2020).

A teacher's identity development can represent a conflicting journey. Some newly qualified teachers experience a discrepancy between their envisioned professional selves and the identity they enact in the classroom (Flores & Day, 2006). During their first few years in the profession, teachers may struggle with the realities of their job relative to the vision they may have had of what the experience would be like. Teachers must also navigate mismatches between their professional values and those encouraged by their surrounding school context. This tension relates to the processes that Bosma and Kunnen (2001:15) term 'assimilation' and 'accommodation'. Assimilation refers to how individuals use their self-concepts to shape their surroundings and experiences, while accommodation involves adjusting their self-concepts to reflect the realities around them (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). Bosma and Kunnen (2001:15) suggest that the assimilation-accommodation spectrum can be challenging to navigate since 'too much assimilation results in rigidity and distortion of reality, while too much accommodation results in chaotic and superficial commitments.' In other words, TPI development involves a complex process requiring individuals to compromise between their conceptions of themselves and the contextual influences that encourage certain professional identity characteristics. Ultimately, teachers must constantly navigate through opposing forces that contribute to their TPIs in unique ways, ranging from boundaries, constraints, and priorities dictated by their workplace environment to personal values and beliefs informed by past experiences and interactions.

2.9 Conclusion

This literature review delved into the background information primarily relevant to my dissertation's first research sub-question, which explores the factors influencing the pre-pandemic professional identities of IB DP teachers. Drawing from prior studies on TPI formation, this review examines how elements from teachers' pre-training, training, and practical teaching contexts can shape their TPIs. Although, at the time of writing this review,

studies on TPI during the COVID-19 pandemic had not been published yet, the insights from the available research laid the groundwork for assessing how IB DP teachers might have perceived and adjusted their TPIs amid the pandemic.

Overall, this literature review enhanced my understanding of the critical factors and contexts influencing TPI. It underscores the intricate interplay of personal and contextual factors in shaping a teacher's professional identity. TPIs evolve dynamically, favouring certain professional values and beliefs over time, depending on the influence of personal and contextual factors within a teacher's professional journey. Teachers' past experiences, spanning personal, educational, and professional domains, contribute to how they interpret and respond to the demands and expectations of their profession. Contextual features further contribute to TPI development, since a particular professional environment may prescribe or suggest certain approaches and attitudes, influencing teachers' characteristics and actions. Messages regarding what constitutes 'a good teacher' (Buchanan, 2015:700) and the expectations of the profession are integrated into an individual's TPI. Yet, teachers actively engage with their surroundings to personalise and internalise identity characteristics.

Given this literature review, I would expect the contextual changes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown to impact TPI. Teachers had to adapt rapidly to unexpected challenges, such as transitioning to remote teaching and cancelled examinations. These unprecedented circumstances may have prompted teachers to reassess their professional values and priorities. An investigation into how teachers' TPIs evolved during the pandemic could provide insight into their adaptability and resilience during that time. It also could shed light on how teachers cope with new challenges that affect both their professional and personal lives, given the intertwined nature of teaching and the pandemic's unique pressures and demands.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study developed from my interest in the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the professional identities of IB DP teachers. The plethora of sudden and radical changes that the pandemic incited in teaching and learning created an unprecedented context in which teachers had to re-consider and re-evaluate their professional roles, responsibilities, priorities, and values. I focused on exploring how IB DP teachers would describe elements of their TPIs pre-, during, and post-pandemic using the following six broad categories: 'job motivation, self-image, self-esteem, task perception, future perspective and their views on education' (Rytivaara, 2012:302 referencing Kelchtermans, 1993). I used these six components, ascribed as elements coalescing into an understanding of professional identity as a whole, to help me investigate TPI in more depth. The categories supported my exploration of the expansive and complex phenomenon of TPI through the lenses of these multiple contributing strands.

In the first interview, the participants reflected upon their perceptions of their past professional experiences and the characteristics they would use to describe themselves pertaining to the six categories mentioned above. Their reflections, related to their entry into the profession, training experiences, professional evolution through various jobs before the pandemic, and perceptions of themselves during that time, helped me explore my first research sub-question:

1.) What key elements or contexts influenced the pre-pandemic professional identities of IB DP teachers?

During the second interview, I prompted the participants to reflect on their teaching experiences throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. I used the six categories to determine their perceived TPI characteristics during the pandemic. This allowed me to address my second research sub-question:

2.) How do IB DP teachers evaluate their professional identity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?

For the last interview, I encouraged the participants to compare their perceptions of their pre- and post-pandemic TPIs. I used the six categories again as a guide to further explore aspects of the participants' identities. I asked the participants to consider any changes that may have occurred in aspects of their TPIs. This allowed me to address my third research sub-question:

3.) How has COVID-19 adjusted understandings of teacher professional identity?

This chapter discusses the narrative inquiry approach and the NI data collection method I used for my dissertation study. I begin by sharing the nature of my methodological approach, including the research paradigm guiding my study and the epistemological, ontological, ideological, and axiological dimensions that I considered as premises when establishing my research methodology. Next, I describe the characteristics and reasoning behind using the narrative inquiry approach. I then provide details about my experience recruiting and selecting participants and some information about the participant profiles. I also share the elements of my NI method, the components of my interview protocol, as well as my analytical approach by providing details about my transcription and data-coding processes. Furthermore, I discuss the ethical, validity, and reliability considerations that I addressed in planning and implementing my methodology.

3.2 The Nature of the Methodological Approach

My research centres around the unique experiences of individual teachers in the new context of the COVID-19 pandemic. An empirical research approach allowed me to gather qualitative data from each participant in three instances. Empirical research involves learning about a topic through experiential and observational means of collecting data or through experimentation (Njoku, 2017). The researcher's understanding related to a particular question develops from observations and engagement with experiences and interactions rather than solely derived from theoretical information sources (Gaskell, 2000). In line with the empirical research approach, I employed the NI qualitative method (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Kartch, 2018) to explore the participants' perceptions of their TPIs using their reflections over time. The descriptive data I collected through the multiple interviews allowed me to examine the unique perceptions that the participants developed of themselves as professionals and the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic may have had on these perceptions.

I opted for the NI data collection method to obtain the participants' descriptions, stories, and reflections surrounding their perceptions of TPI and its development in different contexts over time. This method allowed my participants to share their personal stories and experiences about their perceived teacher identities at different instances throughout their professional journeys. By using NIs, I encouraged my participants to reflect on their experiences and discuss their interpretations of the significance and meanings they associated with situations affecting the trajectory of their TPI development. I valued how 'the narrative approach places the people being studied at the heart of the study process and privileges the meanings they assign to their own stories' (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016:631). Apart from focusing on the unique experiences of each participant before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the NI approach allowed the participants to explore their identities in these contexts, which complemented the purpose and topic of this research study. Kartch (2018:2) states that 'narratives are […] inherently linked to identity' and hence are essential in representing individuals' views and interpretations of their experiences and themselves. I wanted to hear how the participants would critically explore their realities and describe themselves throughout their experiences within the teaching profession over time.

The NI approach supported the purpose of my dissertation because it allowed my participants to guide the direction of the discussion surrounding each interview topic (Kartch, 2018). It encouraged the participants to share the most important content to them in ways that allowed them to make meaning of it. Unlike a stricter question-and-answer interview structure, the NI approach is not dictated by a 'fixed agenda' imposed from the beginning of the data collection (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016:631). NIs allow the participants to share their experiences and thoughts in a more open rather than directed and rigid setting. In this way, NIs 'come closer to representing the context and integrity of […the participants'] lives' than other data collection methods such as stricter interviewing formats or surveys (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016:631). I decided to use the NI data collection method rather than a semi-structured interview approach because I did not want to limit the freedom with which my participants could share their stories. This data collection method 'is a way of finding out what others feel and think about their world,' which allowed me to 'understand experience and reconstruct events' from their lives (Dilley, 2004:129 referencing Rubin & Rubin, 2004). The NI style includes guiding prompts that 'are open, inviting descriptions, comments, opinions,' allowing the 'interviews [to] flow naturally' and supporting the participants to share their experiences (Perks, 2018:n.p.).

My trial study, completed during the Open Studies 2 (OS2) course of the EdD programme, provided useful insights that supported the development of my dissertation study's interview protocol.

- I identified that an opening prompt was a key element that would support my participants in reflecting on the interview topic. Rather than abruptly asking a guiding question, the preliminary descriptive prompt would help the participants recall past experiences before beginning their narratives.
- I carefully worded the guiding questions to ensure they were succinct but descriptive enough so as to encourage the participants' storytelling. The length of some of the questions in my trial study confused the participants. They did not grasp the essence of the question and were not sure where to start with their response because the question was too convoluted and verbose. Hence, they asked me to clarify or rephrase certain questions, which prompted me to remain extra cautious about the clarity of my dissertation's interview protocol.
- Lastly, I considered follow-up questions that I could ask to support a participant's narration, since I knew that the flow of each narrative would be dependent on factors such as the participant's level of comfort with the interview format. Hence, I developed an opening prompt, six main guiding questions, and potential follow-up questions or themes that could build upon the research topic for each interview (see Appendix K).

Overall, my trial study was an invaluable opportunity for me to plan and carry out the methodology that I intended on using for my dissertation. I was able to practise the narrative-style interview approach, which helped me improve my dissertation method. I was able to understand how I could formulate and structure the opening prompts, guiding questions, indicative themes, and follow-up questions most effectively to support the participants in sharing their stories for my dissertation study. Furthermore, by implementing the narrative inquiry methodology and the narrative interviewing method in my trial study, I was able to clarify the components of the four phases of my interview protocol, as described in section 3.6 below.

The NIs allowed for the inquiry to focus on the participants' lived experiences (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007 referencing Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and prompted them to share their stories related to their perceptions of their TPI development. I used my literature review on

the professional identities of international teachers to inform the indicative themes that I wanted to investigate through my interviews, in line with my research questions.

3.2.1 The Research Paradigm

According to Guba and Lincoln (2000:19), a paradigm is 'a basic set of beliefs that guides action, containing the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological premises.' As an 'interpretive framework' that helps guide a researcher's study, the paradigm driving a particular research activity shapes the perspectives and approaches taken throughout the exploration (Admiraal & Wubbels, 2005:324 referencing Guba & Lincoln, 2000).

My empirical study followed the interpretivist research paradigm, as the research question aimed to explore the participants' unique life experiences related to the perceptions of their TPIs in the contexts before, during, and in the immediate period after the COVID-19 pandemic. By taking an interpretivist stance, the study aimed to explore the participants' views of the world and their experiences (Avramidis & Smith, 1999) through the multiple unique stories described from their perspective (Weaver & Olson, 2006). Based on their accounts, reflections, and the meanings the participants attributed to their experiences (Weaver & Olson, 2006), I sought to identify the potential changes that happened to their TPIs as influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. An interpretivist stance supported my investigation because it acknowledges the importance of context in impacting experiences. I sought to consider the participants' behaviours and perspectives related to the meanings they attributed to experiences that they identified as having impacted their TPIs. Furthermore, rather than reaching an overarching generalisable theory through this study, my interpretivist approach allowed me to honour the nuances and unique elements of each participant's lived experiences.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Trochim (2006) defines epistemology as an exploration of the different types, sources, and characteristics of knowledge we can develop from the world around us. The epistemological stance of an investigation considers the relationship between individual knowers and how they seek and develop knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In line with interpretivism, 'knowledge is relative to particular circumstances—historical, temporal, cultural, subjective—and exists in multiple forms as representations of reality (interpretations by

individuals)' (Benoliel, 1996:407). I focused on exploring the multiple unique factors and contexts that shaped the participants' understandings of their TPIs. The understandings shared by my participants reflect the subjectivist epistemology, as their identities shaped their knowledge and were 'filtered through the lenses of [… influencing characteristics such as] language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2004:21). I learned from the unique perspectives of my participants and their views on professional world, which I further examined through my own interpretive lenses when I analysed the data. Rather than obtaining 'unaffected and universal knowledge of an external reality,' the learning from my dissertation study reflects my perspectives and those of the participants (Levers, 2013:3). As a researcher, I have not maintained a distanced, objective stance relative to my participants and their experiences. Instead, the understandings that have emerged from this exploration represent the realities that the participants shared through their interviews, which were subsequently filtered through my interpretations as a researcher analysing their stories.

3.2.3 Ontology

Ontology involves the 'study of being' (Levers, 2013:2 referencing Crotty, 1998). The ontological stance of an investigation refers to the perspective taken on the nature of reality and the knowledge that can be obtained from it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Following the interpretivist paradigm, my dissertation reflects the relativist ontological perspective, as it focuses on the participants' personal, subjective, and individually constructed realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Weaver & Olson, 2006). The stories shared by the participants in my study have been moulded by their backgrounds, subjective interpretations, and interactions with their surroundings (Baronov, 2004). I have valued my participants' unique experiences and their perceptions surrounding how those experiences shaped their identities. I allowed the participants to describe their realities and identity perceptions without frequent interruptions so that I could listen to their reflections and the development of their thoughts as their narratives unfolded.

3.2.4 Ideology

The abovementioned epistemological and ontological positions shaped certain ideological characteristics that affected my research method. Through the interpretivist research approach guiding my investigation, I maintained an awareness of my position as a researcher and my role in making interpretations from my participants' narratives. In line with

interpretivism, I acknowledge that my investigation does not represent an objective, unbiased representation of the participants' identity perceptions since researchers cannot distance themselves entirely from the realities described by others (Baronov, 2004). Hence, throughout my dissertation research, I have recognised my role in making interpretations based on the stories that my participants shared with me. I became a part of the worlds and experiences they described and contributed to how understandings from there were shaped in my analysis. Although I did provide the participants with some freedom in their narratives to explore topics that they deemed relevant and that dominated their memories or reflections, I still maintained implicit control as the facilitator of each interview. I guided each interview and directed the participants in sharing their narratives surrounding topics related to my overarching research question.

3.2.5 Axiology

Guba and Lincoln (2000) describe axiology as the values and ethical perspectives that shape a research activity. My axiological position involved valuing the researcher-participant relationship that developed during my study. I interviewed each participant three times and learned about their personal experiences, which spanned a large portion of their lives. I valued any questions and feedback they had for me throughout the process. Additionally, I was transparent with them about the aim of my study and had a genuine investment in learning about their experiences. Throughout my research, I experienced how a relationship forms between the participants and the researcher while they explore and learn about past experiences during their interactions (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007).

3.3 Methodology – Narrative Inquiry

Congruent with the interpretivist paradigm guiding my research approach, I sought to identify a qualitative methodology that would suit the scope of my study. As Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe, qualitative research studies participants' experiences and explores their interpretations of and meanings attributed to those experiences. This type of methodology would support my research question, as I was interested in exploring the experiences of IB DP teachers through the COVID-19 pandemic while learning about their past reflections and future projections related to their perceived professional roles and identities.

Although narrative research encompasses several different investigative strategies, this form of research generally studies participants' stories and descriptions of their experiences (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). Despite the various ways the approach has been used, narrative inquiry centres around the participants' descriptions of their lived experiences. This type of investigation starts with these experiential stories, which the researcher interprets together with the background theories and literature grounding the study (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007 referencing Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The narrative approach seemed to complement my desire for a more open-ended and less rigidly structured exploration of the participants' experiences through COVID. I felt that it would allow me to explore the unique meanings and significance the participants attributed to their professional experiences through the pandemic, while they considered how it might have shaped or changed their identities. To collect data from my participants, I set up NI sessions to allow them to share their unique stories surrounding the topics associated with my research question. I let the participants take their storytelling in whatever direction they naturally gravitated towards (Creswell et al., 2007) so that they could freely discuss the experiences and reflections they felt were most relevant surrounding each interview topic.

3.4 Participants

Before recruiting participants for my study, I emailed the Director of UIS at the beginning of the 2021 academic year. I described my dissertation study and asked permission to contact the IB DP teachers at UIS. With the Director's approval, I emailed the High School Secretary to obtain the IB DP teacher email list. By the end of November, I had contacted all 39 IB DP teachers at UIS. I shared some information about my study and asked whether any of them would be interested in participating. The only condition I shared as an eligibility requirement for prospective participants was that they needed to have taught at least one DP class at UIS for at least two full academic years. This would mean that, at the latest, they began teaching at UIS for the 2019-2020 academic year.

I decided to recruit participants for my study from only one school for several reasons. First, I was doubtful that other schools would be willing to support my dissertation investigation. My apprehension stemmed from a few sources. Some schools where I worked or volunteered at in the past had strict protocols surrounding external visitors or interactions with members outside of the school community. I knew that even my initial inquiry into recruiting potential volunteers from certain schools would be challenged or dismissed due to their privacy and

protection policies. Furthermore, the pandemic context had already placed a strain on faculty members, so I was expecting that my participation request would likely be declined by many schools, since it would involve an additional demand on their teachers' already busy workloads. Although I had left UIS six years prior to collecting my data, I still had some ties with this school, which prompted me to believe that it could be more likely for teachers to accept my inquiry for volunteers.

Second, although there were some parallels and similarities between how IB schools experienced the pandemic, there also were stark differences in approaches. I wanted all of my participants to have experienced similar parameters around online learning, which would make it easier for me to discuss their identities evolving within a similar context, despite them interpreting and experiencing their surrounding context differently.

I received 11 responses from teachers who shared their initial interest. One of the teachers was keen on participating, but she asked if I could carry out the interviews in her native tongue. Unfortunately, I shared that I would have to conduct the interviews and receive the responses in English because, otherwise, the terminology and language would affect my understanding and interpretation of the data. Two other interested teachers had only been teaching at UIS for one academic year. This meant that they had not experienced teaching IB DP classes at UIS pre-COVID, which I wanted to learn about through my research. Out of the remaining eight potential participants, two of them did not reconfirm their interest in volunteering. Hence, I was left with six participants, of which I randomly had to select four.

There were several reasons why I selected four participants rather than interviewing all of the six teachers who had volunteered. First, I wanted to follow my original plan, as described in my Ethical Approval form, to conduct a study with four participants. I had decided on four participants because I needed to be realistic with the number of teachers I could expect to recruit, given the challenging circumstances at the time of my study. I anticipated that it would be difficult to recruit a larger number of participants, considering the numerous difficulties they were facing at the time of the study. Within this context, most of the DP teachers at UIS could not take on an additional commitment. Additionally, I knew that the three NIs I intended on conducting with each participant would be a significant demand on their time and mine. Given the three hours of interviewing that each participant needed to complete, I expected that many DP teachers would be unavailable to volunteer for my study. Furthermore, given the timeline I had for completing the interviews and analysing the data, I knew that I needed to decide upon a manageable cohort and data set.

Second, based on my trial study, during which I conducted two NIs with two participants, I knew that having three interview from four participants would represent a significantly large body of data that I would need to carefully transcribe, code, and analyse. Hence, I knew that I would have an appropriate variety of different stories from my four participants and a plethora of data to discuss my research questions in depth, while also having a data set that was feasible for me to analyse in the given timeframe for my study.

Last, I had set clear expectations for the volunteers when I emailed them, explaining that I was looking for four teachers to participate in the study. I explained that I would randomly select four if I had a greater number of volunteers (see Appendix M for the email communication). Hence, I simply kept my original plan and followed through with the guidelines I had outlined for the participant recruitment process I would use for my study.

I randomly selected four out of the final volunteers by entering the six names into an online random selection website ('Random Selection Generator,' 2019) and programming the unique random selection of four elements from the list. This generated the list of four randomly chosen participants I would interview for the study. A summary of the four participants is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: General characteristics of the study's four teacher participants.

Pseudonym	**Gender**	**Subjects Taught**	**Years of Teaching Experience**
Daniel Pine	Male	DP History DP English	22
Helen Turner	Female	DP Design Technology DP Theory of Knowledge (TOK) DP Theatre	17
Michael Kenny	Male	DP Geography DP Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS) DP Theory of Knowledge (TOK)	20
Oliver Harper	Male	DP Physics DP Mathematics	26

After receiving Ethical Approval from the University of Glasgow (see Appendix A), I contacted the participants to share the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix B), Consent Form (see Appendix C), and Privacy Notice for the study. Communication with the participants was delayed in various instances, as some needed follow-up emails and reminders before I could schedule the first interview with each of them. One participant missed one of the interviews, so it had to be rescheduled, and another participant got sick with COVID-19, which changed the timeline of the interviews.

Overall, the planning and risk management established for this study's data collection helped me overcome the challenges that appeared along the way. Since this study took place during unpredictable circumstances and in a surrounding context of continued uncertainty, I knew that I needed to allow for greater flexibility throughout the entire process. My dissertation timeline allowed for delays in communication and scheduling, which were unavoidable in the circumstances surrounding the context of this study. I was also aware that teacher workloads naturally fluctuate and that I would need to navigate periods of heightened stress and demands that the participants needed to face throughout their professional and personal lives.

3.5 Method – Narrative Interviewing

I completed three NIs with each of the four participants who had taught DP courses at UIS before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Owing to the ongoing context of the COVID-19 pandemic at the time of my data collection and the associated restrictions, including school closures, social distancing measures, and even local lockdowns, the interviews were conducted remotely and recorded via Zoom. The interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes.

As a facilitator of the NI process, my role was to provide the participants with the overarching themes or topics of discussion before allowing them to flexibly develop their narratives and drive the conversation towards experiences related to the topics that were most meaningful or relevant to them (Kartch, 2018). I attempted to release any expectations I may have had of the findings that could potentially emerge from the data (Kartch, 2018) to allow the data to represent the participants' perspectives (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). This data collection method allowed me to use an inductive approach in my analysis. I identified key ideas and themes emerging from the NIs rather than imposing certain pre-determined, expected, or sought-after themes on the data. The inductive approach

complemented my research question and the purpose of my study because it begins the analysis from the raw data collected from each participant. Rather than ignoring or diminishing certain themes following a deductive approach driven by theories and rigid pre-determined parameters for the research findings, the inductive approach allows for greater flexibility in addressing the dominating themes that appear significant to the participants throughout their narratives (Thomas, 2006). The approach places fewer restraints on identifying themes because the researcher can focus on the raw data as the starting point of the analysis rather than imposing theories or preconceived notions onto the data (Thomas, 2006). Through iterative and repeated data readings, the researcher concentrates on the transcripts themselves and develops a code for the themes surfacing from the participants' narratives. The analysis does, then, draw connections between the data themes and the research objectives, as well as background theoretical frameworks. However, the initial focus is on the raw data itself and the key themes arising from there based on the importance that the participants attributed to those topics (Thomas, 2006). The researcher does discuss the findings using theoretical lenses, but these theories do not drive the thematic identification.

Søderberg (2006), referencing Czarniawska (1998, 2001), acknowledges that NIs can be challenging since a researcher may tend to take control of the conversation and drive the discussion towards more rigid parameters. However, narrative researchers should 'acknowledge that what matters is not the interviewer's own categories and research questions, but rather what the narrators themselves select for their plot construction in order to make sense of their own world' (Søderberg, 2006:404). This resonated with me as I thought of my interest in allowing the participants to share their perspectives and experiences more openly and freely rather than following a more rigid interview scheme (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). I wanted to maintain a facilitator role because, although I still upheld some control of the interviews by establishing the parameters of the guiding questions that directed the participants' narratives, I gave the participants more freedom in sharing their stories openly and focusing on the areas that they felt were personally significant. I established the aims and purpose of each interview, but I was less strict in controlling the direction the participants' narratives moved towards. This approach complemented my use of an inductive stance in interpreting the interview data since it allowed me to explore the themes the participants identified as dominant in developing their TPIs.

I restrained the study to three NIs, which allowed me to focus each interview on three separate periods. More specifically, the first interview encouraged teachers to share their

pre-pandemic experiences and thoughts relative to the six features of TPI (Rytivaara, 2012 referencing Kelchtermans, 1993). The narratives from the first interview included the participants' stories of how they entered the teaching profession, their experiences with teacher training, how they would describe their character traits, teaching approaches, and self-perceptions of their professional roles in the past, and how their identities as teachers may have changed as the years passed throughout their different teaching experiences. The second interview focused on the participants' experiences with teaching DP classes during the COVID-19 pandemic and their perceived TPIs during this time. I explored the same themes as the first interview, related to the six features of TPI, but in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The third interview aimed to have participants concurrently reflect on their IB DP teaching experiences before and during the pandemic, encouraging them to contemplate their future in the profession. I was keen on hearing their narratives about their future roles as teachers, including how they anticipated their professional priorities, values, and goals would potentially evolve. Additionally, this interview served as a final opportunity to revisit any topics from the previous sessions. As the concluding interview for this study, it prompted participants to merge their past and pandemic-era experiences and consider the lessons they integrated into their practice. Appendix K provides a detailed summary of the three interviews and the topics used to guide the participants' narratives, while Appendix L shows the timeline of the conducted interviews.

3.6 The Interview Protocol

While reflecting on my experience with the NIs during my trial study, I started considering whether I would want to share the opening prompt and opening research question with my participants before the dissertation interviews. This would give participants extra time to think about the topic and reflect on their experiences. I considered whether it would make it easier for them to develop their narratives during the interviews. However, this approach would require a greater time commitment from the participants. They could feel additional pressure associated with spending time thinking about and preparing for the interviews. Furthermore, some participants may have been unable to look at and reflect on the interview questions, while others may have spent quite a lot of time preparing for the interviews. Hence, I decided to maintain my original approach of sharing the questions solely during the interviews. In line with the interpretivist paradigm guiding my dissertation and the inductive approach I used for my analysis, I wanted the participants to freely answer the interview guiding questions without additional preparation because I was curious to see what they would think about first and what narrative would develop spontaneously.

3.6.1 Phase 1: Introduction and Verbal Consent

I began the first online interview by briefly introducing myself. I was conscious of valuing my participants' time, so I tried not to share excessive personal details. However, I still wanted them to develop some rapport with me (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016), especially since they would provide me with detailed information about their lives. This first step of the interviewing process was important in establishing an initial connection with my participants (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). I was hoping to create a positive interview experience for my participants by being open with them, attempting to set them at ease with the interview process, and encouraging them to ask for any clarifications about the study based on the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix B). Next, I read through each statement on the Consent Form (see Appendix C) and allowed the participants to provide their verbal consent, which I recorded via Zoom.

After receiving the verbal consent, I briefly discussed the interview process and format. Following my trial study, I learned that I needed to spend more time talking about the NI approach, especially during the introductory phase of the first interview. I knew that some participants may expect multiple shorter questions rather than a narrative-style interview with one main open-ended question (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Additionally, some participants may naturally feel comfortable talking in a monologue format, while others may be more inclined to answer a question briefly and rely on many follow-up questions. Hence, as suggested by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000), I decided to dedicate some time to discussing the NI approach before my dissertation interviews to prepare and encourage the participants to share their stories. I informed the participants that the interviews would begin with an opening prompt to help establish the context of the interview questions. I would allow them to consider the opening prompt before sharing the first open-ended guiding question. The participants were told that the questions were meant to encourage them to freely speak about their experiences and provide their thoughts in the form of an extended narrative since my intention was to facilitate their storytelling through the NIs (Søderberg, 2006). I mentioned that I would not interrupt them and would allow them to freely share their stories, which they could unveil and describe to the best of their abilities (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

3.6.2 Phase 2: Narrative Phase

The opening prompt was quite helpful because it got the participants to start thinking about the context of the research topic. I made sure to give the participants time to think silently to themselves about the opening prompt before I shared the first guiding question. Apart from reading out the opening prompt, I also added it as a text in the Zoom chat so that the participants could have a visual, written version of it. Participants referred back to the opening prompt at different points throughout their narrative, so it was helpful for them to have it available in the chat rather than asking me to repeat it. Since I knew that my participants would come from different international backgrounds, and, in some cases, English would not be their first language, I found it would be helpful for them to see the text rather than simply having to listen to me reading it out once. The text version of the prompt also helped increase the flow of the narratives and it encouraged the participants to look back at the context and consider how they could develop their narratives further.

Each NI then began with an open-ended question related to the research topic, which was meant to encourage the participant's storytelling (Kartch, 2018). Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000:n.p.) refer to the beginning of a narrative interview as the 'initiation phase.' This phase identifies and triggers the beginning topic for the participants' narration (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000) so that they can share experiences and thoughts related to the topic within the timeline suggested in the question. During the narrative phase of the interview, I was minimally involved so that I could allow the participant's narration to develop and flow freely (Earthy et al., 2015). I informed the participants that I would write down some notes as they were speaking in order to remind myself of topics they mentioned or questions that I had based on their narratives.

3.6.3 Phase 3: Questioning Phase

Although the NI approach aims to obtain the participants' stories rather than fixed answers to discrete questions (Kartch, 2018), I still prepared a set of additional guiding questions or themes that I could refer to after the participant's main narrative would end (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). The purpose of this questioning phase was 'to elicit new and additional material beyond the self-generating schema of the story' (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000:n.p.) and to follow up on any topics shared during the interview.

From my trial study, I found it extremely important to prepare guiding and follow-up questions for the interviews. In some cases, I knew that I would need to rely on these questions to get more information from the participants. I developed guiding questions to

help prompt the participants' narratives, especially those struggling with the NI style. I only asked the follow-up questions relevant to the participants' previous narration, which would build on their responses. I also referred to any clarifying questions I wrote down while listening to the original narrative. Since the topics that the participants discussed surfaced organically from their narratives based on their professional journeys and lived experiences, I tried to adapt and respond to each interview as it happened while keeping in mind the follow-up questions I had prepared that stemmed from my research question.

3.6.4 Phase 4: Concluding the Interview

Once I completed the narrative and questioning phases, I concluded each interview by thanking the participants. I also mentioned any subsequent steps I would take in my research process (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). For example, I explained how I would transcribe the interview and share the transcription with the participant to allow for any feedback. Out of the total of 12 interviews, I received four replies to the emails I shared with the transcripts (see Appendix N). Helen and Michael replied once, Oliver replied twice, while Daniel did not respond with any comments on the transcripts I shared. The participants did not have any feedback on the transcripts and fully approved them. I also reminded the participants of the next interview and followed up on its scheduling. When I concluded the last interview, I mentioned the expected timeline for the data analysis and that I would share the final dissertation upon its completion.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

I was mindful of important ethical considerations throughout my data collection. First, I ensured that the participants knew that their engagement with my study would be entirely voluntary, that their participation or non-participation in the research would not affect their employment, and that they would be free to withdraw at any time without providing any reason. Given the sensitive and uncertain nature surrounding the context of this study, I wanted to ensure that the teachers did not feel pressured to continue if there would be changes in their circumstances or participation availability. The post-pandemic context was still highly unpredictable, so I wanted to set the participants at ease by reminding them that volunteering to participate would not be binding or could be subject to change at their discretion.

Another key ethical concern revolved around the time commitment and pressure the study could place on the participants. Since NIs can be demanding and time-consuming, I ensured that each interview was a maximum of 60 minutes. The interviews were arranged to accommodate the participants' schedules to decrease any stress associated with this time commitment. Additionally, in a few instances, the interviews were rescheduled to a more convenient time for the participants than the originally planned date.

Since I knew I would be interviewing my participants during the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, I was aware that this context could bring about unexpected circumstances. These could include changes in the participants' teaching contexts, such as having to adjust their teaching practices to online or blended learning scenarios, or changes in their personal lives, such as health issues or new restrictions and lockdowns. I was prepared to postpone an interview, as needed, to decrease the stresses and pressures associated with adjustments that the participants might need to make in their professional or personal lives. I allocated a five-month window, with the flexibility to extend it to six months, for the interviews to provide an appropriately wide scheduling timeframe. Ultimately, I prioritised my participants' well-being and was conscious of my responsibility to plan and conduct my dissertation study in a way that would carefully consider and minimise or completely eliminate any potential stressors or burdens associated with my data collection.

Although the study asked about the participants' professional experiences, I was aware that the nature of the NIs could give rise to other more personal issues. I was mindful of fostering a comfortable interview environment that would decrease potential anxieties as much as possible. I also informed the participants that they would be free to discuss any topics they liked and omit anything they would not feel comfortable discussing. However, I was prepared to respond with empathy and increased sensitivity if the participants would discuss issues related to coping with the COVID-19 pandemic or personal matters related to stresses in their lives, including professional pressures or concerns. I was aware of different services and resources I could share with the participants to help them navigate the challenges they experienced during the interviews. I was also prepared to refer the participants to different individuals or organisations if they needed additional support, including the head of their subject department, the secondary school counsellors, the Council of International Schools safeguarding and well-being resources, and the Truman Group for online counselling which was included in the participants' insurance coverage. Additionally, although the research topic was not intended to lead to content related to issues of safeguarding or risks of harm, I was prepared to provide support and guidance to the participants if they did share

information that may have suggested a risk of harm to themselves or others. I would have encouraged them to report the issues to the appointed safeguarding representative at their school so that appropriate measures and procedures could be taken in line with the school's well-being and safeguarding protocols.

Since I knew that my participants would share aspects of their personal lives through the NIs, I was careful to honour their confidentiality and maintain anonymity by removing all references that could potentially make their identity known. While processing and analysing the data, I replaced the participant names and other personal, sensitive information with pseudonyms. My study in particular warranted heightened care and consideration of all the possible ways in which I could de-identify the data given: (1) my study's small sample size, (2) the fact that my participants were all from the same school, and (3) the significant level of biographical detail they provided about their professional experiences across their lifetime. In order to achieve such a high level of anonymity, I altered all characteristics of the participants' stories and experiences that could potentially reveal their identities. For example, any details related to the time, place, and people involved were removed and replaced with pseudonyms or other references in order to effectively de-identify the data. This would mean that, although the essence and meaning behind the participants' stories remained intact, the exact details surrounding those experiences would not compromise the participants' anonymity.

I also ensured that the information the participants discussed with me would not be shared with others. I stored all of the data related to the study safely and securely in a password-protected folder on my computer. These files were deleted following the completion of the study. I conducted the interviews and transcribed them at home, in a separate room on a different floor, away from any family members. Additionally, I used headphones to ensure that interview content could not be overheard. This eliminated the chances of disruptions or discomfort caused by my surroundings, while also ensuring interview confidentiality.

I also considered the affordances and drawbacks of conducting the interviews via Zoom. The advantages of this approach included that the interview timings could be scheduled more flexibly, and the participants could choose to complete the interviews in an environment that was most comfortable for them (Hanna, 2012). To decrease the discomfort related to the remote interview process, I told the participants they could turn off their videos or use the background overlay function through Zoom (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). Still, there were some drawbacks associated with online interviewing, which included it being a more distant

and less inviting interview environment compared to a face-to-face setting (Adams-Hutcheson & Longhurst, 2017). I was conscious of these potential barriers and made the participants as comfortable as possible with the interview process. To decrease discomfort, I provided the participants with information about the structure and format of each NI. I clarified that they could choose not to discuss a particular topic at any point throughout the interview.

Another issue I addressed was the integrity and accuracy of the interview transcriptions. I used the audio transcription feature available through Zoom to provide a rough transcript of each interview. However, I listened to each interview multiple times and compared the transcript with the recorded audio to correct any mistakes and inaccuracies from the automatic transcription. I also shared the transcripts with the participants so that they could provide feedback on their integrity and accuracy (see Appendix N).

3.8 Transcription

The interviews were recorded using the University of Glasgow Zoom client, through the desktop Zoom application authenticated using my University of Glasgow email address and Glasgow's Unique Identifier (GUID) login. The interview recordings were then downloaded immediately and encrypted. All automated backups of the audio or audio-visual files in the User Account were immediately deleted from the server. During the interviews, I enabled the audio transcription feature, which produced a rough transcript of the spoken content from the interviews.

While discussing transcription within the context of the NI approach, Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000:n.p.) state that 'the level of detail of the transcriptions depends on the aims of the study.' More than that, the transcription approach should reflect the theoretical and paradigmatic underpinnings of the research (Davidson, 2009:38 referencing Jaffe, 2007). I fully transcribed each interview. My goal was to develop transcripts that accurately represented the verbal statements made by each participant. I started out with the auto-transcription generated by Zoom. I saved the text into a Word Document and opened it next to the audio recording file. The auto-generated transcription from Zoom was instrumental as a starting point for the transcript. However, editing it in line with the audio recording was still quite a slow and lengthy process. I went back and forth between the text and audio versions of the interview, making corrections to the written version based on the audio recording. During this process, details that could personally identify the participants, such

as their names, references to places, students, classes taught, and any contextual information that could be linked to their personal identity, were replaced by codes. This process was completed to de-identify the data to the greatest extent possible.

Although I knew that completing full verbatim transcriptions of the 12 interviews would be lengthy, it was still a worthwhile experience (Tilley, 2003). Transcribing each interview helped me develop a stronger understanding of the data (Tilley, 2003). I cared about listening to the details of the narratives and paid close attention to the content shared. The transcription process helped me go through each interview closely and supported my understanding and observation of important themes that surfaced from the narratives.

I kept a written log of my personal reflections and any transcription decisions. As suggested by Lapadat (2000), these notes supported my own reflections throughout the transcription process, including an acknowledgment of assumptions, decisions over the use of certain conventions, and contextual aspects impacting the transcription. The downloaded versions of the interviews were deleted following their complete transcription. The transcripts have been stored on the University of Glasgow OneDrive and transferred to the Enlighten Research Data Storage. This data will be retained and disposed of in line with the University of Glasgow's protocols after 10 years. Any physical notes were stored in a locked cabinet, then shredded and disposed in confidential waste upon the completion of the study.

A researcher must always be selective in developing a transcript, following certain transcription decisions based on the envisioned purpose and goals of the research (Lapadat, 2000). Regarding my transcription approach for the dissertation data, I decided that, since I was primarily interested in the content shared by the participants in their narratives, I would omit paralinguistic features such as pauses, voice inflections, volume, or tone (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000; Lapadat, 2000; Oliver et al., 2005; Riessman, 2008).

While transcribing, I also had to make decisions about the structure and formatting of the text. I organised the narratives into paragraphs based on the different topics or stories shared by the participants. I also added punctuation to the text, such as commas and full stops (Bucholtz, 2000; Davidson, 2009). This approach helped make the text easier to read and organised the content to support its thematic analysis (TA). In each transcript document, I created two columns. I placed the transcribed text in the left column and included my notes in the right column (see Appendix O). This allowed me to record any interpretations and observations of key content (Lapadat, 2000) while going through the long narrative sections.

The transcription helped me look at the data more closely and familiarise myself with the contents. During the interviews themselves, I was absorbed in the participants' narratives. I did record some keywords and topics, but going back to transcribe the interviews helped me gain a firmer grasp of the narratives (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). As suggested by Lapadat (2000:204), 'the process of doing [the] transcription […] promotes intense familiarity with the data, which leads to the methodological and theoretical thinking essential to interpretation.' I decided to transcribe the first interview before scheduling the second one with each participant because the transcription process would help me reflect on potential follow-up questions that I would want to ask. I repeated the same approach for the second interview and only scheduled the last one once my transcriptions were complete.

3.9 Coding

I began the six-phase TA of my dissertation data by 'familiarizing' myself with the contents of each interview (Braun & Clarke, 2006:87). My attentive, detailed, and repeated readings of the narratives during the transcription process facilitated my increased understanding of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Once I completed all the transcriptions, I read over the entire data set without writing down any notes or codes. Next, I focused on one interview at a time. I actively re-read it multiple times while recording any patterns and key ideas that I noticed, as well as initial meanings that I attributed to the narrative content (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I also highlighted keywords to help me remember potential themes or essential thoughts the participants had shared (see the blue highlighting in Appendix O). I proceeded to do the same with the other participants' first interviews.

I continued with the second phase of the TA process for the first interviews from my four participants. I assigned codes based on the meanings and interpretations I made of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006:84). Whenever the participant mentioned a new idea or topic, I assigned a word or phrase to represent that content (see the words and phrases written in black within Appendix O).

I repeated the first two phases of the TA approach for the second and third interviews from each of the four participants. My coding started at quite a micro-level, as each unique detail, even if it could be considered a minor comment within one particular interview, was still assigned an individual code. I did not want to start being selective with my coding too early, so I cared about attending to even the more minor and unique aspects of the interviews.

For the third phase of the TA process, I took my original list of codes and tried grouping some of them into broader themes and sub-themes (see the different color-coded groupings within Appendix O). During my first attempt at determining underlying themes, I questioned the groupings of my different codes and explored assigning different labels to each theme. I found it helpful to use sticky notes and move codes into different 'theme-piles' (Braun & Clarke, 2006:89). When I created the first version of my thematic mind map, I realised there seemed to be some overlapping, repetitive, or unclear codes. At this stage, I repeatedly went back to the interview extracts to clarify the initial codes and organise them more effectively as part of the third phase of the TA process.

I moved back and forth between phases two and three of the analysis a few times while I considered whether certain themes needed to be re-grouped, either by combining or separating them into other categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I revisited some of the initial codes and either clarified or changed them. I then moved into phase four of the TA process, where I reviewed the themes that I had identified through the previous analytical phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and I developed the second version of my thematic mind-map (see Appendix P). I returned to re-read the coded data to determine whether the groupings seemed to fit a coherent pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I changed some of the labels I used for the overall themes and removed a few smaller categories with insufficient content to remain as sub-themes. As part of this fourth analytical phase, I checked the interviews to determine whether the themes seemed valid representations of the content (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During the fifth phase of my TA, I went back to provide clarifying or refining explanations of each theme based on the contents expressed through the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Lastly, as part of the final step of Braun and Clarke's six-phase TA, I developed the written report of my findings and interpretations.

3.10 Steps Towards Analysis

My trial study informed my decision to use inductive TA for my analysis, whereby the data was my starting point for identifying themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As part of my trial study, I applied both Riessman's (2008) thematic narrative analysis (TNA) and Braun and Clarke's (2006) TA in order to make an informed decision regarding the approach I would follow for my dissertation data analysis. I found that Riessman's (2008) TNA was more difficult to follow due to the lack of structure and steps available to guide me in applying the analytical approach to my data. I was able to understand the general stages I would need to

follow while using TNA in my analysis, but Braun and Clarke's (2006) TA approach provided clear steps that I felt more secure in implementing. I was worried that, because of the more open-ended guidelines surrounding TNA, I would struggle to stay consistent with my data coding approach, potentially compromising the trustworthiness of my coding. Additionally, although I searched for examples of other studies that used TNA, these were vague and unclear in describing the processes of theme identification. By contrast, Braun and Clarke (2006) provided detailed steps and explanations for each of the six phases. The specific guidance they offered at each stage of the analysis, together with examples of the ways in which themes could be assigned, enhanced my level of comfort in reliably applying the analytical approach to my dissertation data. However, Braun and Clarke's (2006) TA did not limit my analytical flexibility. Instead, I felt comfortable and secure in following the TA steps, as the clear guidance provided by the authors helped me systematically analyse the NIs (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I followed the 'semantic approach' (Braun & Clarke, 2006:84) to ascertain themes since I focused on the explicit content and apparent meanings suggested by the participants, which I then interpreted in conversation with theory. I was comfortable starting with smaller codes and, using a 'recursive process' (Braun & Clarke, 2006:86), 'sorting the different codes into potential themes, and collating all relevant coded extracts within the identified themes' (Braun & Clarke, 2006:89). I found that the process of creating different thematic maps to organise codes into themes and sub-themes helped guide my analysis into developing a more refined understanding of the interview content.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

Issues related to reliability, validity, and trustworthiness are part of an extensive debate within the social sciences (Riessman, 2008). A concern with defining specific criteria to judge the rigour of qualitative research has often led to rigid, unsuitable standards misapplied to narrative studies (Riessman, 2008). The discussion of a study's validity should stem from and match with the paradigms characterising the study, allowing it to be assessed relative to the specific research stances that guided the study (Riessman, 2008).

Since my dissertation study involved the collection of the participants' stories through NIs and then analysing these for emerging themes, I had to ensure that I could provide a supporting discussion for the validity of both components – the trustworthiness of the stories obtained from the participants and that of the re-storied analysis that I created. One way I could provide support for the validity of my study was by being as transparent as possible about my research, including how my data collection was carried out, as well as my approach

to analysing it (Riessman, 2008). Although my data collection method was not as prescriptive as others since my NIs had more of an organic, open-ended, and free-flowing nature, there still were planned elements and structures to the interviews, which were clearly outlined in the interview protocols I devised (see Appendix K). Hence, I still attended to the considerations surrounding the dependability of my study as a way of supporting the authenticity of my dissertation by ensuring that I described the systematic processes I followed in collecting and analysing my data (Morrow, 2005 referencing Patton, 2002).

By planning to complete a set of three interviews with each participant, I was aiming to increase the 'thoroughness' of the study by allowing a deeper exploration of my research question (Cope, 2014:90). This increased my level of engagement with each participant and provided the opportunity for developing enhanced understandings of their experiences. Although I could not predict the way each interview would unfold and how my relationship with the participants would develop, I was hopeful that the multiple interviews and the exploration of the topic in more depth would allow me to create a rapport with the participants that would then encourage more developed responses (Cope, 2014). By showing respect, appreciation, and consideration for my participants, I tried to support the development of a positive researcher-participant relationship. This fostered a research context more conducive to developing authentic and credible interpretations surrounding the participants' stories.

By being transparent and descriptive about the driving perspectives and paradigms underlying my research approach, I was able to consider how my research question could be complemented by congruencies between my methodology, analysis, and discussion of findings relative to my literature review (Cope, 2014). Since I aimed to learn from the lived experiences and perspectives of my participants, I prioritised the development of an understanding of the participants' views over the factual verification of their stories (Riessman, 2008). In line with the interpretivist paradigm driving my study, a key element of my dissertation involved 'acknowledging – and even embracing – *subjectivity*' (Morrow, 2005:253, emphasis in original). By explaining the underlying interpretivist paradigm and the associated ideological perspectives underpinning the study, I was able to honour how the participants were individually reflecting on their experiences, which I then analysed with my own interpretive lenses (Riessman, 2008). Since my role was to evaluate the participants' own interpretations, this added an additional layer of subjective understanding to the study. Hence, under these conditions, the validity of my research lies in staying truthful to the views and descriptions shared by the participants, supporting the '*particularity*' criterion for

credibility, which involves 'doing justice to the integrity of unique cases' (Morrow, 2005:253 referencing Patton, 2002, emphasis in original). I have been attentive towards honouring the stories shared by the participants while remembering that the narratives represent their perceptions of their identities. I have tried to enhance the 'authenticity' of my study by faithfully sharing the participants' thoughts and emotions (Cope, 2014:89).

Since I have read and analysed the participants' stories through my own perspectives, I have paid attention to the considerations surrounding '*researcher reflexivity*' (Morrow, 2005:253, emphasis in original). By reflecting on my own TPI, the way my identity evolved over time, and my experiences through the pandemic, I have considered how my background has influenced my research. My past experiences shaped the perspective through which I analysed the data (Morrow, 2005). By explaining and justifying my thinking in reaching particular understandings and drawing specific conclusions from my data, I have acknowledged how my own position and professional experiences have contributed to my analysis. My intentions have been to remain considerate of and transparent about my reflections and assumptions throughout the study in the hopes of supporting a more trustworthy presentation of the new understandings that surfaced from my research (Tracy, 2010).

Another way in which I considered the validity of my dissertation work was by being as descriptive as possible regarding the process I went through in planning, collecting data, and analysing it for the study. In my descriptions, I carefully mention the considerations involved in my approach and the supporting resources that have shaped it. Since I had three interview sessions with each participant, I reflected on previous interviews and prepared any follow-up questions that could provide additional clarifications in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and the meanings they attributed to these realities (Morrow, 2005). Furthermore, I was considerate of the language I used to make any claims from my data. Instead of suggesting generalisable interpretations, I was cautious with how I discussed the degree to which the understandings from my data would be representative of broader experiences. I sought to remain faithful to the fact that the narratives shared by my participants retain a level of uniqueness that will not necessarily be more broadly applicable to other cases. However, I have discussed the connections between the theoretical underpinnings of my research topic, the data, and their practical implications, which suggest ways the research findings may have some 'transferability' to other individuals and experiences (Cope, 2014:89). Although the purpose of my dissertation was not to suggest an over-arching theory related to the potential impact of COVID-19 on

teachers' professional identities, I believe that the discussion from my dissertation may resonate with other practitioners.

To support the trustworthiness of the personal accounts and my discussion of them, I tried to immerse myself in the interpretive process, through 'active listening' (Morrow, 2005:253), 'repeated readings of transcriptions, listening to [… recordings multiple times], and review of field notes' (Morrow, 2005:256). In this way, I aimed to carefully develop my interpretations and provide explicit, detailed explanations of how my understandings developed from the data. I sought to closely couple my discussion to the participants' narrative statements to provide evidence of how my interpretations emerged from the data itself (Cope 2014).

Overall, throughout all stages of my dissertation inquiry, I closely attended to the issues of research trustworthiness (Cope, 2014; Morrow, 2005; Nowell et al., 2017). I aimed to address the 'credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability' criteria (Nowell et al., 2017 referencing Lincoln & Guba, 1985) throughout my data analysis to ensure that my approach and interpretations were effectively explained and clearly justified. I followed the guidance that 'clarity on process and practice of method is vital' (Braun & Clarke, 2006:80) in supporting my development of a trustworthy dissertation study.

3.12 Conclusion

Overall, the narrative inquiry approach I used as part of my qualitative empirical study allowed me to explore my participants' stories about their professional experiences before and during the pandemic and the perceptions of their TPIs in these contexts. I started with learning about the experiences and contexts that shaped the participants into becoming teachers and the characteristics they would use to describe their profession in the past. I then sought to explore the participants' experiences and TPI perceptions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, while encouraging the participants to consider their pre-pandemic TPIs together with their experiences during the pandemic, I aimed to explore the lessons the teachers learned from having taught during the pandemic. I prompted the participants to reflect on their stories and TPI perceptions while supporting them to consider the possible implications of their experiences in shaping their future professional identities.

The NI data collection method allowed the participants to share their narratives and stream of consciousness about their professional experiences and perceptions of their TPIs across

their career timelines. The participants spoke freely based on the guiding questions provided. They could flexibly develop their narratives using the memories, thoughts, and ideas that surfaced as most relevant to them. Through the transcription and TA approaches I used in my study, I aimed to inductively identify the themes that naturally surfaced as the foci of the participants' stories.

My dissertation has drawn on literature about elements shaping international teachers' TPIs. However, my analysis was initially anchored in the raw data before theories and past research findings related to the topic were brought into the conversation. In this way, I aimed to honour the dominant concepts and themes emerging from the participants' narratives and then interpret the meanings from their stories while creating connections between the study's findings, research question, and theoretical grounding.

Chapter 4 – The Participants' Pre-Pandemic Professional Identities and Factors that Shaped Them

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the first research sub-question:

1.) What key elements or contexts influenced the pre-pandemic professional identities of IB DP teachers?

To discuss this research question, I focused on the participants' narratives during their first interview, where I asked about their professional traits, beliefs, and priorities before the pandemic. I coded their answers to the guiding interview questions, as described in section 3.9, and proceeded with writing descriptive sections of prose surrounding the topics they discussed, while incorporating direct quotes from the interviews. Following this process, I grouped content into broader themes while I noted differences among participants.

This chapter contains eight sections. Section 4.2 acknowledges a few considerations regarding my data collection timeframe. Section 4.3 discusses the contexts and factors that led the participants into the teaching profession, while section 4.4 explores the participants' journeys into becoming IB teachers. The following sections present four themes that emerged from the participants' narratives surrounding their pre-pandemic TPIs. Specifically, section 4.5 discusses the participants' student-centred teaching philosophies. Section 4.6 presents the elements of the participants' professional identities that were related to their professional community interactions. Section 4.7 examines the effects of external professional demands and pressures on the participants' pre-pandemic TPIs. Next, section 4.8 discusses the theme related to technology-mediated teaching, which was only mentioned by one participant as part of her pre-pandemic TPI. Still, it is explored in more depth within Chapter Five. Lastly, section 4.9 summarises the chapter and provides several concluding considerations.

All of the sections in this chapter follow a similar structure. The data related to each theme are organised by participant. Each section starts with content from Daniel's interviews, followed by Oliver's perspectives, then Michael's data, and finally Helen's thoughts on each theme. There was no specific reason for presenting the data following this structure, apart from the fact that this was the chronological order in which I completed the set of three

interviews with the four participants. Before analysing each theme, I wanted to present the data grouped by participant because this allowed me to honour the elements specific to their identities before discussing any similarities and differences that arose.

Since my data collection method involved NIs, the questions were exploratory and open-ended. The participants addressed the guiding questions more flexibly and took the discussion of the topic in a direction of their choosing. I did ask follow-up questions to clarify certain points. However, the themes that surfaced from the participants' stories depended greatly on the topics they decided to focus on and how their narratives unfolded. Hence, the lack of detail attributed a particular theme or the absence of a theme from the participants' discussions may suggest they naturally gravitated towards other topics that they expanded upon instead. They might have omitted or limited their discussion of certain topics in favour of others. Rather than postulating a particular reason for the presence, level of detail, or absence of certain themes in the participants' discussions, I have instead tried to present the data authentically based on their narratives and then provide insights into the participants' pre-pandemic TPIs from this data.

4.2 Considerations Regarding the Pre-Pandemic Data Collection Timeframe

My data collection took place between March and July 2021. The participants had all gone through multiple scenarios related to teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, including asynchronous online learning, synchronous online learning, and then different iterations of a hybrid teaching model that combined virtual and in-person teaching. A few weeks before I conducted the first interviews, UIS transitioned back to full-time in-person teaching. Hence, the data from my first interview, which asked the participants about their pre-pandemic TPIs, represent the perspectives they shared in the post-pandemic period.

Although data collection often prompts participants to share information about their past, the context in which my participants discussed their pre-pandemic TPIs could be considered non-standard retrospection because of the unusual circumstances they had already experienced before the interviews. The participants discussed their pre-pandemic TPIs after they had already experienced the pandemic, which may have affected their views of the past. Unfortunately, I cannot determine how the participants' reflections on their pre-pandemic TPIs would have differed had I interviewed them before the pandemic started. However, I was still able to address the purpose of my research, which was to allow my interviewees to

reflect on their past, including their experiences through the pandemic, and to consider how the pandemic may or may not have prompted their TPIs to change. There still is value in the memories the participants shared of their past experiences before the pandemic, regardless of when they shared them.

For my dissertation research, I was not trying to analyse the effect of the pandemic on the participants' recollections of their past. To do this, I would have had to interview them about their past sometime before the pandemic and then give them another opportunity to share their memories retrospectively after experiencing the pandemic. Instead, I collected data on the participants' perspectives of their past TPIs, which they communicated when I had the chance to interview them, followed by reflections on their experiences in their most recent past, during the pandemic.

4.3 Contexts and Factors that Led the Participants into Becoming Teachers

Daniel

Both of Daniel's parents were teachers. One of Daniel's grandparents also taught for part of his professional career. The educational context in which Daniel grew up prompted him to explore the field while travelling abroad and teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) before committing to formal training and pursuing the career of being an English teacher. Although Daniel's parents never pressured him into following a similar career path, they shared their values surrounding the importance of the teaching profession. Daniel believed he 'had natural tendencies towards doing the job anyway just because of how […his parents] were and who they were.' To a certain extent, he felt that his upbringing and exposure to the profession through his parents became an ingrained part of his identity growing up. He did not consider pursuing another career path and shared that he 'always just gravitated towards [teaching].'

Daniel completed a one-year teacher training course, which he considered too short and insufficient preparation for the profession. Retrospectively, he would have preferred a longer programme with increased time for practice teaching. Daniel found 'about 40% of the actual teacher training course to be good, useful, and applicable' while the rest was 'not so much.' The educational theory-related courses seemed disconnected from the practical realities of teaching. He found that the educational philosophy considerations and the theoretical

explorations of the intersections between the field of education and other areas such as government and policies were ‘pedantic and, quite frankly, useless, to put it mildly.’

One of Daniel’s priorities as a teacher was to support his students in ‘develop[ing] an appreciation for the subject’ and for them to see ‘the worthiness of the study of the subject.’ Daniel cared about showing students ‘how, regardless of the extrinsic motivating factors of money, job, etc.,’ it would be valuable to study the subject he was teaching because of the ways in which it could ‘open their eyes to an understanding of the world that they didn’t have before they walked into the class.’

Daniel also cared about helping students appreciate the power of language and how it could be used to transmit messages in both overt and covert ways. An important lesson he wanted students to learn was related to how language could be used to influence and even manipulate others. Hence, getting students to develop an awareness of the messages to which they were exposed and the language used within those messages was a priority that Daniel attended to through his teaching.

Oliver

Oliver shared that his exposure to several teaching-related experiences led him to complete a teacher education programme. Oliver worked as a lifeguard for his last two years of high school and the first couple of years of university. His job involved two roles: teaching swimming lessons in the morning and traditional lifeguarding in the afternoon. Oliver’s experiences with supporting children through learning different swimming strokes, explaining and demonstrating the skills, and incrementally monitoring each child’s progress were valuable opportunities that played a role in his decision to pursue the teaching profession.

Oliver also shared that his Grade 10 mathematics teacher was an inspiring role model who contributed to his decision of becoming a teacher. He described Mr. Bowen as ‘an excellent mathematics teacher’ who was ‘really funny.’ Oliver explained that his teaching style was completely different from that of Mr. Bowen. Still, Mr. Bowen’s teaching and personality gave Oliver the initial idea that teaching ‘might be a nice job to have.’

Oliver also remembered his experiences as a physics lab assistant and course tutor for first-year calculus students while studying at university. He would teach some students the

concepts they were struggling with and help them through their coursework, which he found enjoyable. Oliver was taking Honours Mathematics because he enjoyed the challenge but did not believe he had the aptitude to continue with a Master's or Doctorate degree in the subject. Hence, he knew he would want to apply to education after that.

Oliver's perception of the theoretical portion of his training experiences closely echoed Daniel's comments. Oliver suggested that, if he could change the teacher training system, he would 'get rid of most of what they teach in teacher training and just […include] practice teaching with some really good teachers, because […he] found the theoretical part not very useful.' Oliver provided a few examples of how he found the courses from his teacher training programme 'frustrating.' The professors and teacher trainers were pushing for group work. They would try to model group work and get the pre-service teachers to experience the process in the context of their learning. Unfortunately, it was ineffective because everyone was off task most of the time until they would quickly prepare a presentation close to the end of the group work opportunity. Oliver remembered how he would ask his mentors about some of the ineffective elements of the activities. He would be dismissed with comments that it would work with students in a classroom. Oliver and his colleagues found it 'ridiculous' since they had 'constant experiences' where they would discover clear unsuccessful elements of a particular approach and 'didn't really learn anything out of it.' The theoretical experiences of the training programme seemed displaced from the realities of a teacher's experiences in a classroom.

In his teaching practice, Oliver was driven by his concern for supporting the development of his students' understanding of the content. He was personally passionate about the subject, but especially when he started teaching physics without any prior experience, his TPI was shaped by his priorities of helping students grasp the course material in preparation for their examinations rather than the standalone values of the subject itself. When Oliver was hired to teach IB DP Physics at an international school in Vietnam, he experienced a steep learning curve. He did not have the experience of the course content and had to go through the material, with the help of a colleague at the school, to learn the material and understand the laboratory components of the course. Oliver realised that he was already working with a group of passionate students, so he mostly focused on creating learning experiences that would allow his students to excel in the subject and their assessments.

Michael

Like Daniel's upbringing, Michael grew up in a teaching family. Specifically, his 'dad was a history teacher and a principal,' while his 'mum was a geography teacher.' Unlike Daniel, however, Michael shared that he resisted becoming a teacher for a while because of his natural desire to do something different than his parents. Michael believed this was similar to 'a lot of kids who grew up with parents who are teachers' since he perceived they would tend to avoid the profession, at least like he did initially. Despite his pursuit of a different career path as an urban planner, Michael was influenced by his mother's engagement with the subject of geography. He developed a 'passion for […this] subject, geography, especially urban geography,' which contributed to his career choice.

Although Michael's first job was working as an urban planner, he 'found [himself] doing things like […] volunteer-teaching literacy in libraries' in his area. Additionally, even at work, he found himself receiving the role of teaching new staff members at his office about their job responsibilities. When Michael decided to take a year off from his work as an urban planner and backpack around Asia, he 'found [himself] visiting schools and being pulled that way.'

Michael described his unique teacher training experience in the United Kingdom (UK), where he was considered a foreigner. Michael shared that a key lesson he took from his tutor was that having perfectly planned and 'really finely tuned lessons' would not necessarily be the most successful. Instead, being highly responsive to the students, feeding their curiosity, and being more organic with teaching content in engaging ways would be more powerful. Michael also realised that going through teacher training in the UK meant he was not trying to 'fit the model that […he] had in […his] head of what secondary school should be like.' Apart from this, Michael shared some of the more pragmatic parts of his teacher training experiences rather than significant instances impacting his TPI development.

Michael described himself as an enthusiastic teacher. His love for geography, in tandem with his passion for travelling and curiosity for exploring the world, were ways in which he created connections with his diverse student cohorts. Michael also mentioned that his geographical knowledge and the expertise developed through his professional experience while working in the field before moving into teaching gave him a strong foundation of content knowledge that made him an effective teacher. Michael pursued urban planning and practised within this profession for a few years before he decided to train as a teacher in his early thirties. He valued the fact that he did not go into teaching from the beginning because his experiences as an urban planner helped him develop a passion for geography.

Helen

Unlike the other three participants, Helen did not recognise any particular elements of her upbringing that led her to the teaching career. Helen 'initially trained as a product designer and […] worked as a designer.' However, while Helen was at an event, she met the director of the first IB school in Zagreb. During their conversation, the director became interested in Helen's background as 'a former IB student' and invited Helen to 'join her school' as the Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) coordinator. Helen explained that her entry into the teaching landscape was not 'linear or traditional' since it was her experiences as an IB student that got her hired 'to work with students on connecting them to […] service learning and real, meaningful, authentic projects, outside of the school community.' She had no training as a teacher, but her exposure to the IB school context soon inspired her to redirect her career path. Ultimately, Helen wanted to get more involved with the school outside of her role as CAS coordinator. Following different conversations with the director, she was given the opportunity to teach IB DP Design and Technology because of her training as a designer.

Because of Helen's unique circumstance of being recruited to teach IB DP Design Technology due to her experience as an IB graduate and her background in the field, she went through her teacher training experience while on the job. She was assigned an art and design mentor teacher while she taught and completed the university courses required for her certification in Croatia. Helen described how her mentor 'was much older and he […] came from an older sort of system and approach.' His experience teaching the National Curriculum in Croatia and his training in a more traditional teaching style did not align with Helen's approach. Having experienced the IB programme as an international student herself, she was used to a more inquiry-based, practical, and applied pedagogy. Still, despite realising that elements of her developing teacher identity would not match that represented by her mentor, she found her interactions with her mentor valuable in different ways. She was interested in his 'wealth of life experience' and extensive years of teaching practice. Helen valued the information and knowledge he shared while cross-connecting and reflecting on her own perceptions, approaches, and teaching inclinations.

Helen discussed the role that her background in the design field played in her professional teaching experiences. She characterised herself as 'very passionate' about her subject and the topics she taught. During her first teaching job in Croatia, she was training for her teacher

certification and maintained her job as a freelance designer. This was important to her because she was devoted to the field itself and cared to work on different design projects. Helen emphasised that she really enjoyed that she 'was able to be a teacher and maintain […her] job as a designer, as a maker, as a practitioner.' In her opinion, it was important, especially for 'teachers of creative subjects, […] to be practitioners of the craft […] because it just enriches their connection with the students and what they're able to bring to their lessons.' Helen mentioned that the students themselves could 'see the level of passion and engagement that [… she] put into what […] she was teaching.' Additionally, she cared to stay true to the hands-on elements of her subject, so she tried to ensure that she would provide as many practical and authentic project opportunities for her students as possible.

While teaching in Indonesia, Helen was no longer allowed to work as a designer on the side of her teaching job. She was contractually obligated to work solely in the school setting. Helen described herself as 'a creative person,' 'a maker,' someone who 'love[d] to tinker,' to work with her hands on different 'DIY passion projects.' She stated: 'That's just who I am. That's what I do.' These characteristics were a natural part of her identity as a professional. Hence, Helen found it 'really difficult' to be restricted in her ability to continue practising as a professional designer outside of her teaching experiences. She realised that 'it took away such a big part of who […she] was as an educator.'

4.4 Contexts and Factors that Led the Participants into Becoming IB Teachers

Daniel

Several contextual characteristics surrounding the teaching profession in Daniel's home country coalesced into directing his attention towards the international teaching landscape. The competitiveness and limited spaces at Teacher College programmes, combined with Daniel's belief that he did not have teaching experiences in his background that would help him stand out as a candidate, prompted him to look for job opportunities outside of the United States (US). Once Daniel completed his teacher training, he found himself in a home-country context with a surplus of teachers. He explained that, in 'an already tight teaching profession, there were no jobs' due to school restructuring that decreased the demand for pre-university teachers. Hence, he directed his attention to 'the international teaching scene,' which provided a wider selection and variety of job opportunities.

Daniel knew other people acquainted with international teachers or with international teaching experiences. These individuals encouraged Daniel to at least try the international teaching route because they had had great experiences with it. Therefore, the encouragement and reassurance from Daniel's entourage sparked his curiosity to apply for an ESL job in South Korea.

Another motivating factor that attracted Daniel to the international teaching community was the increased travel opportunities. Being able to earn money while travelling was appealing to him. The travel he was able to do while teaching ESL in South Korea right after university during his early twenties inspired him to pursue a teaching career and return to the international teaching network after his certification.

Oliver

When Oliver was applying to teacher training programmes, he intentionally was searching for opportunities across Russia outside of his home province. He 'wanted to leave […his] family and go somewhere else.' Oliver then mentioned that it can be easier for a teacher to move to teach internationally than moving from one Russian province to another. Once he completed his training Oliver knew there were long waiting lists for teachers and supply teachers, just like Daniel had experienced. Hence, he decided to initially apply to an extremely remote area in the northwest territories, in a small town of about 1500 people, a school size from Grade 9 to Grade 12 of maybe 100 [students].' Although it was a tough first job, with 13 preps, he received a higher salary because of the area he was working in, and he was grateful for the teaching experience.

Oliver went 'international simply because […his] partner was going international.' In fact, before he was faced with the prospect of his partner moving overseas, he 'didn't even know anything about the international school system.' Oliver described how his 'partner at the time worked for the Russian embassy, and there was a chance she was going to be posted overseas.' She received a position in Vietnam, so Oliver applied to as many schools as he could 'at the last minute.' Many schools had already completed their hiring for the upcoming academic year, but Oliver was offered a job at a small, unpopular school, but one where he enjoyed working.

Oliver was happy to apply to work abroad because he started to feel frustrated with teaching in Russia. He recognised that many of his experiences were tainted by challenging classroom

management issues. He felt like most of his job was about class control. He was even considering leaving the profession after those years of teaching in his home country. Oliver found that even 'all the professional development was on how to control your class.' He was also demoralised by the fact that 'a lot of the students didn't want to learn.'

Michael

Since Michael completed his teacher training outside of his home country and started teaching there, he found his experience in the UK 'very interesting' because 'the schools were pretty different from the schools […he] grew up in. They had the standardised exams at the end, which […he] didn't have as a kid.' Additionally, he mentioned that aspects of the school, such as the funding and facilities available and the general focus, were different. A greater priority was placed on academics, while back in Australia, sports and activities were more strongly emphasised. Michael also explained that 'the rigour and the challenge of the curriculum for students and the activities and the way they were pushed in the schools' hooked him into remaining an international school teacher rather than returning to Australia. He felt that 'the level of material in the curriculum' and the overall experience there was 'kind of flat.'

Michael embarked on an international school teacher career with 'a hunger for travel as a geographer.' His experiences growing up and travelling with his parents over the summer, camping, exploring, and taking 'big adventures' cultivated Michael's natural curiosity about places. Michael was initially 'lured' into joining the international teacher network because of travel. Travel was also linked to Michael's motivation to continue teaching internationally. He explained that 'being able to move countries and teach in different settings is a refreshing thing that occurs for international school teachers.' He found it important to work through 'a new set of challenges, a new set of experiences.' Novelty and change were important aspects of making Michael feel that he was not stagnating in his career.

While travelling in Asia, Michael met the woman who became his wife. She was training to become a teacher. Based on his unofficial experiences and encounters with the profession, Michael had considered returning to Australia to pursue teacher training there. However, he 'ended up going to the UK instead of teaching in Australia and trained in the UK' since his partner was doing so too. Following his teacher training experiences in the UK, he remained there to teach Key Stage 3 and 4, as well as some A-Level Geography at a comprehensive

school there. Although Michael was 'pretty content working there,' it 'wasn't great pay,' and he 'wanted to get overseas again because […he had] been travelling for a while before […he] got into teaching.' Hence, he started searching and applying for international teaching jobs outside of the UK. He landed a job in Malaysia, where he stayed for a total of 12 years. Michael mentioned that the opportunities to 'travel all over Southeast Asia' as part of school trips with his students were other reasons why his experiences in Malaysia were so wonderful and why he stayed there with his wife for such a long time.

Helen

Helen's story was unique from the other three participants because she grew up attending international schools. She clearly described the key role that her experiences as an international school student played in her eventually pursuing an international teaching career:

> Part of my journey or decision to become a teacher stems from that place of me being so deeply uprooted and, you know, struggling with this, sort of, whole concept of culture and identity and belonging, in the sense that, I often joke around and say, "the only two places where I feel at home are airports and international schools."

Having grown up as a student at different IB schools, Helen felt 'really at home' in the context of an IB classroom. When she had the opportunity to join an IB school in Zagreb as the CAS coordinator, she realised that the IB school environment felt 'so natural' and 'comfortable' to her. Helen 'loved every minute' of her experiences at the school, which prompted her to pursue teacher- and IB-training to embark on a career as an IB DP Design and Technology teacher.

Ultimately, after getting her teacher certification, one of the main reasons why Helen decided to transfer to an IB international school was because of her children. She was fine having her children attend a local kindergarten when they were younger. However, after her son completed Year 2, she and her husband realised they wanted their children to 'have the international experience.' They wanted their children to be 'IB kids.' Helen mentioned that she considered that the IB Primary Year's Programme (PYP) and Middle Year's Programme (MYP), with their highly research-supported curriculum frameworks, could 'not compare to what any national curriculum can offer.'

4.5 Theme 1: Student-Centred Teaching Philosophies Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel explained that an international curriculum such as the IB DP interested him because of his experiences with the national curricula in South Korea and the US. The rote learning characteristics of these traditional educational contexts and the 'painfully slow' processes through which he experienced some reforms there deterred Daniel from wanting to continue teaching within these types of academic settings. His experiences with less motivated and more challenging students at these schools further prompted him to seek a job at an IB curriculum school.

His first teaching job at an IB school in Greece opened the horizon for Daniel to experience a different type of academic setting. He felt the IB model allowed for increased opportunities for student inquiry while serving 'all students' needs.' Furthermore, Daniel highly enjoyed his IB training for teaching courses like TOK. He found that TOK was a unique experience that students could have at the end of their high school years, providing great exposure to critical thinking.

Daniel found increased flexibility through teaching courses like IB English since he had some choice in selecting different texts that the students would study and 'tailor […the] programme to what, maybe, […the] students were interested in.' Daniel appreciated that some aspects of his teaching experiences were less prescribed or rigid. Additionally, the large variety of world literature that he could explore with his students, including works from various time periods from countries around the world, was intriguing and engaging for Daniel. Another aspect of his international teaching experiences that Daniel appreciated and aligned with was the fact that, up until recently, only half of the IB English courses were exam-based. This was more realistic regarding the demands placed on students and gave them some additional flexibility.

Oliver

Even early in his career, Oliver cared about being an engaging teacher who involved his students in active learning. This characteristic developed during his practice teaching opportunities from his teacher training programme when he realised that the rote, traditional teaching style did not fit him. He wanted to do labs with his students, even in school contexts where other teachers would discourage him from doing so due to their concerns with the students' behaviour. He wanted students to have fun, though he did have challenging

moments with tough students and frustrations with their behaviour. He acknowledged that those difficult experiences shaped him into a better teacher who could handle any situation with tact and expertise.

Despite Oliver's clear focus and commitment towards academic results and content mastery, he did not lose sight of the importance of student engagement and involvement in their learning. With DP Physics, it was 'really easy to make stuff hands-on' and he cared to do the same for DP Mathematics. In his first year of teaching mathematics, he arranged for whiteboards to be installed around his room. From day one, he got students moving out of their seats, problem-solving, communicating their thinking in various ways, interacting with each other, and actively working through the content. Oliver described that 'there's not a lot of me just teaching […while the students] sit there for a long time. They're up at the board, they're trying the questions. I'm helping them […] instead of me showing them how to do stuff, I'm constantly getting them to try it.' Hence, Oliver became increasingly more focused on doing 'a lot more inquiry-based stuff' and was more conscious of doing so over time. Oliver was motivated 'to recreate the maths.' He was adamant about making the course more interactive and hands-on. He did not want the students to simply sit in his class, but he wanted to get them physically up, moving around the room, and working more actively.

Oliver shared that his views on education revolved around student-centred learning. He wanted 'students to try things for themselves.' He described that he found it essential for students to be engaged in their own learning and that they needed to be fully involved in the process. Rather than teachers showing students or directly transmitting content to students while they remained passive learners, Oliver emphasised the importance of students playing an active role in their education.

Michael

Michael identified that creating connections between his teaching subjects and the real world was a meaningful aspect of his job. He cared about relating the work he did in geography with service learning. Additionally, topics such as those surrounding sustainability in ESS were meaningful and would become more so if he could 'bring that to life for [the students].' Michael considered that his responsibility to prepare his students with skills they could use to make a difference in the world after they finished school was a crucial component of his professional role. In this sense, Michael lauded the DP for its critical focus on current events, international mindedness, and real-world situations.

Apart from teaching IB DP Geography, DP ESS, and MYP Humanities, Michael also had other pastoral roles, as well as roles outside of the classroom. He was a Year 12 adviser and supported some students through their CAS requirements. In particular, he 'really loved the service part of the IB' and was extensively involved in service activities at the various schools where he worked. He also led a social entrepreneurship group and a recreational floor hockey club. He mentioned that he found these activities outside of the classroom highly important because they provided opportunities through which he could learn more about his students. Michael found such roles highly rewarding, fun, and effective in deepening the relationships he was developing with his students.

Helen

Helen's role as coordinator of the Design and Innovation Centre at UIS strongly aligned with her 'whole educational philosophy that teaching and learning should be authentic, there should be student agency and creative centres or spaces that can drive that type of project-based learning, as concept-based learning pedagogies is the way forward.' She advocated for these aspects of teaching and learning. She emphasised the importance of giving students 'interdisciplinary opportunities' and supporting them to cross-connect concepts using transferable skills within project-based learning environments. Helen viewed teachers as having more of a mentorship role while students should be allowed to 'pursue passion projects.'

Helen closely intertwined her expertise in design with her teaching. She was attentive towards giving her students a realistic sense of design in a real-world context. She was 'able to connect them with experts in different fields,' bringing many guest speakers into her classes, allowing students to collect primary information through interviews. Helen helped students realise that designers 'are experts in the methodology' but are 'not necessarily experts in every single [project area]' they work on. So, they must always conduct effective primary research. A key trait that characterised Helen as a teacher was that she provided engaging lessons and experiences for her students. The guest speakers and experts she brought to her classes 'enriched her lessons,' and the students loved engaging with these opportunities.

Helen also cared to prepare her students for their futures and their careers. She found that any real-world, transferable, and career-oriented experiences she could give her students

were extremely valuable. Past students would give her this feedback too, as they remembered the authentic projects and valued the lessons they learned in those contexts.

Another important aspect of Helen's teacher identity was that she viewed 'cross-connecting across disciplines […as] a good way to keep on growing as an educator and enriching […her] practice.' From her diverse teaching experiences, she considered elements from other disciplines that she could incorporate into her classes. For example, she described how she was asked to be a long-term substitute for a DP Theatre class. It was an interesting, engaging, and enriching experience because she applied some of the skills, pedagogies, and approaches while teaching Design. For instance, she found that the improvisation activities and other games used in Theatre represented transferable skills that would help support her students' learning in other subjects. She would use these activities to help students build empathy in TOK or step into a different role and see things from different perspectives in Design.

As part of Helen's desire to continue developing in her profession, she was attentive towards crafting the DP Design course in ways that would best fit the students she was teaching. She explained that the subject itself was so 'versatile' and 'broad.' She found that there was 'so much opportunity within the subject area itself to do so many things and there's so much flexibility and freedom.' Helen would base her lessons on the resources she would have available, the knowledge base and expertise that she could tap into, and the interests and passions of the students. Overall, Helen paid close attention to reinventing the course and herself as a professional by reinvigorating her teaching 'with new knowledge, concepts,' and connections to current events.

4.6 Theme 2: Professional Community Interactions Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel described himself as a 'fairly engaging' teacher. He cared about his students' interests and sought to make connections to those interests through his teaching. Daniel identified this area as a strength since he focused on finding content and lesson components that 'students could really sink their teeth in to talk about.' He would support students to develop skills such as 'argument formulation' and text interpretation within this engaging context. In fact, student engagement, fostering meaningful relationships, and positively impacting students were elements that Daniel identified as crucial parts of his professional experiences.

Daniel stated that the interactions he was able to have with colleagues represented another meaningful and rewarding part of his professional experiences. Other department members often relied on his expertise because he had been teaching at UIS for so long. As the TOK coordinator, he enjoyed supporting other faculty members in incorporating TOK into their lessons. This additional responsibility and his associated interactions with his colleagues added significance and value to his role as a professional.

Oliver

In line with Oliver's active learning approach, he incorporated frequent opportunities for individualised student feedback within his lessons. He would talk to each student on a personalised basis while walking around the room. He could see his students' work and problem-solving approaches as they developed while they were actively engaged at the whiteboards. Oliver found it 'nice' and 'special' to talk to each student frequently and in such individualised ways. This approach allowed Oliver to differentiate more effectively among his students. The more advanced students could tackle more challenging questions sooner, with less of his help, while struggling students could receive more support and scaffolding directly from him at the appropriate pace that would move them forward. He would give each student the advice and guidance they needed at any given point in time while he would walk around the room. Students appreciated this differentiated personalised support, which strengthened Oliver's connection with them.

Oliver also mentioned the importance of his interactions with colleagues while teaching in a face-to-face context. He described how teachers would receive more feedback, encouragement, and support from others within a physical school setting. For example, as the mathematics department learning leader, he would walk into other colleagues' classrooms and make sure to identify elements of the teacher's practices that he found effective and positive.

Michael

Michael emphasised the importance he placed on connecting with his students. He found the interactions with students highly rewarding, particularly in a teaching context such as an IB school with a curriculum 'full of critical thinking and challenges for [… the students] to think about.' Michael greatly valued the interchanges he could have with students through his lessons, which allowed him to establish and cultivate strong teacher-student

relationships. Michael shared that he placed great emphasis on having fun while teaching. He incorporated humour into his practice and ensured that his approachable demeanour would support the development of strong connections and positive student-teacher relationships.

Michael also mentioned valuable interactions he had with his colleagues, as part of professional collaboration opportunities, engagement in teaching teams, and participation in PD experiences. He considered that these interactions increased a teacher's effectiveness. Michael found it important to focus on his interactions with his colleagues and develop effective working relationships with them. He felt that teachers who would prioritise their students would also naturally work well and connect quite easily with their colleagues.

Helen

Connecting with students was a crucial characteristic of Helen's identity as a teacher. She mentioned that students found her 'approachable' and that she was able to 'connect well with them.' One reason for the relative ease with which she developed meaningful relationships with her students was that she could identify with their experiences since she had been an IB student herself. She would refer to herself as '"an IB survivor"' and this was a way students could relate to her since she understood what they were going through. Helen's attention to relationship-building and meaningful connections with her students made working with her students 'much easier and fun.'

In her interview, Helen spent more time than the other participants reflecting upon the important role that her colleagues played in both her personal and professional life. She felt that 'liberal expats' and international teachers were the individuals she could identify with the most. She fit into international school contexts best because, in her own words: 'these are my people […], my colleagues are my friends. That's my network. Those are, like, people that I hang out with privately outside of the teaching setting.' Helen found it difficult to build the kinds of relationships that felt meaningful to her when she was 'immersed in a homogenous local setting.' She felt like a foreigner in those contexts and struggled to fit in. She did not feel accepted by the locals, whereas she thrived in a diverse international context where everyone had a range of backgrounds from around the world and hence was more accepting of differences.

Helen attributed significant parts of her professional development and growth to her interactions with colleagues. She prioritised learning from others and would use free periods during her school schedule to observe other colleagues. She would ask colleagues from other disciplines and subject areas, especially ones she found interesting, like geography and mathematics, or teachers that she found 'had a unique style of teaching', to visit their lessons. She naturally participated in this 'intuitive' form of PD. Helen found it important to 'step outside […her] classroom, outside of […her] bubble and see and connect a little bit with what others […were] doing.'

At the same time, Helen acknowledged that her experiences in Indonesia helped her 'learn[…] to work more collaboratively with […her] team.' She had the opportunity to 'adapt[…] something else that […she] loved,' which was co-teaching. She found great colleagues at the school with whom she loved working. In fact, she kept in touch and continued to share resources with this group of teachers. They 'started to co-teach and tap into each other's strengths and weaknesses because […they] felt so comfortable with each other'.

4.7 Theme 3: Professional Demands and Pressures Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel discussed some of the elements of his experiences teaching DP courses that did not align with his professional values. First, he explained that the level of complexity and degree of difficulty on some of the assessments, such as the TOK essay and the English oral examinations, reached unrealistic levels. Additionally, he criticised the ways in which the course evaluations were used to 'somehow create a strata of what […the IB] considers to be high-performing students, well-performing students, middle-performing students, low-performing students.' Then, especially in courses like TOK, Daniel felt that the criteria used to evaluate students have become an increasingly 'strange mixture of being highly prescriptive, and yet, at the same time, very subjective.'

Daniel described how he would ask students at the beginning of a TOK course if they could take it without thinking about the mark they would get in the end. He wanted them to focus on the original intent of the course, which included 'opening [… the students'] eyes to the world around […them], the ways in which knowledge, language, etc. are intersecting, the ways in which claims can be evaluated.' He wanted students to truly get the valuable lessons

that the course offered rather than focusing on the pressures associated with their performance and assessment outcomes.

Daniel was disheartened by the further heightening of the exam-based pressures and priorities advocated by the IB programme. He was disappointed with the recent changes in the new iteration of the DP English course, which included an increase in the examination contribution to a student's final grade from 50% to 70%. However, in some cases, such as the DP History course, Daniel believed that the assessments were realistic and meaningful. Still, he criticised that the format of the assessments, including characteristics related to wording or examination time limits, was put into place to differentiate between students' performances. Along with the more 'idealistic' values and priorities that Daniel identified as part of his IB DP teaching position, he acknowledged that he often found himself 'caught up with the same stresses that […] other teachers have: to try and help students towards the particular score, numerical results in the course, that they seem so driven to get.'

Oliver

Oliver identified that his biggest challenge with teaching DP revolved around the time restraints of covering the course content over a short period. This difficulty was exacerbated by the densely packed DP syllabus and the level of complexity of the course content, which Oliver found problematic. Oliver suggested that the DP demands too much of high school students, especially considering that the courses can be accepted as university credit. Oliver always struggled with rushing through the content, ensuring he adequately covered it to prepare the students to the best of his abilities. The stressful time restraints, quantity and degree of challenge of the course content, and the high-stakes aspects of the DP all coalesced into intense pressures for both students and teachers.

Despite being new to the IB DP curriculum framework and courses, Oliver found that, even when he first started, he 'was very proud of the fact that […he] could deliver clear explanations to the students.' Oliver's students highly 'appreciated that.' In line with this, he was 'very exam-driven.' Pragmatically, he explained that students must take several high-stakes exams at the end of the DP, so he 'make[s] sure […his] teaching is towards that exam.' Oliver always remained conscious of the time restraints and pressures associated with the DP course content that needed to be covered at a particular pace. Hence, he did not include 'a lot of fluff,' 'extravagant stuff, or extra stuff' as part of his lessons and teaching style, especially due to the limited time available for teaching the entire syllabus. From his

students' IB scores and survey results, Oliver could determine that he was highly successful at supporting them through learning the course content and performing at a high standard on the final examinations since 'the physics scores were better than any of the other scores,' and more students wanted to take the course.

Overall, Oliver's DP teacher character traits aligned closely with his key roles and responsibilities. Specifically, he expressed a high sense of responsibility towards preparing his students for their final IB exams. His description of his exam-driven nature and focus correlated with a strong feeling of accountability towards setting the students up for success on their assessments. Relatedly, Oliver mentioned that he was responsible for effectively managing his time with his students since he would always feel pressed for time while covering the DP course content.

Over time, however, Oliver believed that he became less exam-driven since, although he continued to prioritise thoroughly preparing students for their assessments, he was more understanding of his students' varying levels of commitment and priorities. He showed increased empathy towards students who would not necessarily need mathematics after high school. Apart from asking his students to do 'maths in maths class,' he ensured they understood that it was alright for them to choose their level of effort and the time they spent on mathematics outside of the classroom. He advocated for each student to determine what was best for them, what they would like to commit to, and he reassured them that he would 'help […them] with it however […they] want' and in whatever ways they needed. Oliver found that he could set the students at ease with this mindset and approach, which also resulted in many students wanting to put in more effort. Students appreciated the perspective that Oliver shared with them and the way he supported them with their individual goals and aspirations. Oliver became less focused on his students' exam scores as representations of his effectiveness and success as a teacher. Instead, he shifted his focus towards supporting them in ways appropriate for their individual needs.

Michael

Michael discussed that the IB was too demanding for the students, placing them under excessive pressure and stress. He mentioned that 'the DP always promised to reduce the tensions on kids, but they never really seem to. They always kind of sneak in a little bit more content in all the courses.' Michael felt such 'an awful lot of concern with just making sure […he was] getting through that massive amount of content.' He acknowledged that 'nobody

wants to teach to exams, but the reality of the DP, and maybe its shortcoming, is those massive exams at the end.' He emphasised that a key aspect of being an effective DP teacher involved 'working on the skills that the students' would need at the end of the two-year programme. Although he mentioned that this should not be the sole purpose or the overbearing focus of DP teachers, Michael underlined the reality of DP teachers' responsibilities to prepare the students for their high-stakes final examinations. Regardless of teachers' opinions about the programme, it was crucial for them to 'really understand the ins and outs of the assessment criteria' to effectively support their students through the course and towards a strong performance on the final assessments. Michael considered that his extensive knowledge of the DP course, his length of time teaching the subject, and his experiences as an examiner all gave him heightened levels of insight into the exam tips, tricks, and strategies he could teach his students. He found that this expertise made him an effective IB DP teacher, which was noticed and appreciated by his students.

Michael described himself as highly empathetic and sensitive to the demands that IB DP students experienced throughout their academic journeys. He acknowledged the level of stress that DP students were under, and he remained conscious of this while interacting with them and considering the workload he would give them. In line with his empathetic character traits, Michael cared about supporting students in developing their skills to succeed in his class. He would give them multiple opportunities to practise, apply, and refine skills they might not have developed enough before entering the DP. Additionally, he cared to provide his students with numerous chances to learn and improve. For example, if a student would not be successful on a particular assignment, Michael would give that student additional opportunities to re-write the work. Since Michael was hyperaware of the time commitment, restraints, and level of effort that the DP asks of its students, he wanted to reciprocate by being patient and generous with his time. He was happy to spend additional time providing feedback and supporting students to improve since he knew that they were putting a lot of time and effort into their studies. Michael's level of empathy was amplified by the fact that his daughter went through the DP herself. He knew, from a parent's perspective, of the demands and stresses that DP students experience, so this increased his level of understanding and compassion for his students' struggles. Michael shared that supporting students to feel comfortable and as confident as possible in his class was a key priority.

Helen

Related to the DP, Helen disclosed that she was increasingly sceptical about her continuation as a teacher of the programme due to the stark misalignment between her philosophies and the practices encouraged by the IB. She explained that, in theory, the IB supports forward thinking and learning to prepare students for the future. In practice, however, the rigid, traditional, and 'old fashioned' high-stakes final examinations juxtapose their mission. Helen point-blank stated that she 'hate[d] everything about assessment in the DP.' During her narrative, she reflected upon how she might have become 'jaded with things' since she had been teaching within this programme for so long. Although she cared about reinvigorating her practice, she seemed to think that she might have started to stagnate. Her considerations of the future and her rhetorical question regarding whether the DP might be 'the dinosaur in the room' made her doubt whether she wanted to continue growing and developing as an IB DP teacher. Helen reflected upon whether her feelings might have stemmed from her saturation level with the DP since she had not only taught the subject for so long but was also an examiner and had been involved in curriculum development for an extended period. Still, she attributed her frustrations to the ways in which the DP seemed to have 'stopped growing' and was restrained by their need to be 'catering to the universities and to the academia.' Helen felt that there was an incongruity between how, on one hand, programmes such as the IB deemed to care about 'preparing kids for 21st-century learning and for future jobs' while they maintained the 'old-fashioned' elements related to rote learning and assessments on the other hand.

4.8 Theme 4: Technology-Mediated Teaching Linked to TPI

Helen

Helen was the only participant who discussed technology and its role in her pre-pandemic TPI. A key characteristic that defined Helen as a teacher was that she remained at the forefront of Educational Technology (EdTech), which she experimented with in her classes. She was naturally curious and would try to incorporate new tools and resources into her lessons. Helen described her use of blogs, wikis, and other digital tools to create a richer and more diverse 'digital resource centre' that her students could access any time. This allowed her to experiment with approaches such as those of the flipped classroom, where she would give her students content, readings, and theoretical materials to consume independently outside the classroom, so they could do more applied learning in class. She wanted to 'maximise class time or contact time' since she 'saw the value of being in class with students

doing hands-on things and giving them that sort of experiential learning and project-based learning.'

Helen also paid close attention to how she could differentiate her lessons to cater to students with different learning styles, abilities, and needs. She explained that her online resources made lesson materials more accessible to all her students. Especially with video content, students could 'always turn on captions,' and 're-watch it […] at their own pace,' which made a big difference to English Language Learners (ELLs) or students with different learning needs.

Helen discussed her use of technology to enhance her students' learning experiences. She explained how she ascribed to the 'just in time concept,' which she incorporated into her lessons because she wanted students to realise that they needed access to information and content at the specific times when they would find it useful. So, the online library and digital collection of resources made available would provide personalised and valuable support to her students at the exact time, with the specific information they would each need for the different components and stages of their work on particular projects and tasks.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the data associated with my first research sub-question: What key elements or contexts influenced the pre-pandemic professional identities of IB DP teachers? Family members, acquaintances, or individuals already working in the profession played a role, to varying degrees, in prompting the participants to enter the field of education. Additionally, formal or informal teaching experiences gave the participants a sense of the profession and ultimately encouraged them towards this career path. For three participants, the professional circumstances within the field of education in their home countries encouraged them to seek employment elsewhere within the international school network. Other personal circumstances contributed to some of their decision-making to teach abroad, including the desire to travel and personal relationships they had at the time. One of the participants experienced the international school system as a student herself, meaning she strongly identified with that educational setting. Once she became a teacher, she knew that the international school context would be the right fit for her.

Regarding the participants' pre-pandemic TPIs, four themes emerged from the first interview data. First, the participants discussed the how a student-centred teaching philosophy

contributed to their professional personas. They cared about providing engaging experiences for their students that would support their motivation and enjoyment of learning. Another factor the participants mentioned as having impacted their pre-pandemic TPIs, but to a lesser extent, was their interaction with students and colleagues. Third, all participants discussed the professional demands and pressures associated with the IB DP context, which strongly impacted their pre-pandemic TPIs. They felt restrained by the limited time they had available to cover the breadth and depth of the highly challenging curriculum. The expectations imposed by the DP dictated many aspects of the participants' teaching practice and identity as IB teachers. Lastly, only one participant mentioned technology-mediated teaching as a factor impacting her pre-pandemic TPI. Her subject area was naturally linked to technology-supported teaching and learning, while the other participants did not mention educational technology affecting their pre-pandemic identities.

In Chapter Five, below, I present the data related to the participants' TPIs during the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of their second and third interviews, the participants were encouraged to reflect upon their experiences during the pandemic and the impact that different factors had on shaping their identities during that time. Additionally, the participants considered how their experiences through the COVID-19 pandemic may have contributed to their post-pandemic TPIs.

Chapter 5 – The Participants' Pandemic Professional Identities and Factors that Shaped Them

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the second and third research sub-questions, which inquire:

2.) How do IB DP teachers evaluate their professional identity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
3.) How has COVID-19 adjusted understandings of teacher professional identity?

To discuss these research questions, I focused on the participants' narratives during their second and third interviews, where I asked about their professional traits, beliefs, and priorities in their teaching contexts during the pandemic. I followed the same process I used in analysing the first interview data to code, describe, and then group the data into broader themes related to the participants' pandemic TPIs. All the sections in this chapter parallel the structure of Chapter Four.

This chapter contains seven sections. Section 5.2 provides contextual information on the COVID-19 pandemic as it affected UIS. The following sections present five themes that emerged from the participants' narratives surrounding their pandemic TPIs. Specifically, section 5.3 explores the participants' reflections on their student-centred teaching philosophies and how these shaped their pandemic TPIs. Section 5.4 presents the elements of the participants' professional identities related to building relationships within their professional community during the pandemic. Next, section 5.5 discusses the participants' TPIs while considering the continued demands and pressures they experienced. Section 5.6 revisits the theme related to technology-mediated teaching as part of the participants' pandemic TPIs. Lastly, section 5.7 explores the participants' future perspectives on the role of in-person schooling based on their experiences through the pandemic. Section 5.8 summarises the chapter and provides several concluding considerations.

5.2 Background Context on the COVID-19 Pandemic Experience at UIS

UIS began preparing for online learning in January 2020 by providing training for teachers on technology tools like Zoom and Google Classroom. The school adjusted class schedules and expectations, initially managing distance learning well. Daniel explained that UIS did

not simply transpose the schedule of the regular school day 'onto a virtual day.' Instead, they reduced class time and provided some guidance on the amount of instruction time versus more flexible time given to students. However, as the novelty of online learning wore off, both teachers and students experienced 'digital exhaustion.' Daniel shared that, as UIS moved into the second academic year of online learning, its approach 'became a little less organised, and a lot more problems began to surface.' The school started trying to replicate in-person schooling again despite the unchanging online context. It went back to a rotating timetable, there was less regularity, and continued changes with the schedule made adjusting to virtual learning after the summer holiday more difficult for teachers and students.

When infection rates declined, UIS attempted a hybrid model by combining in-person and virtual learning, which burdened teachers. The attempts to combine pre-COVID in-person teaching with a socially distanced model, while concurrently merging in-person and virtual learning, was ineffective and extremely taxing on teachers. Eventually, when COVID restrictions lifted, UIS returned to pre-pandemic norms by the end of the 2021 academic year.

5.3 Theme 1: Student-Centred Teaching Philosophies Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel described how his online classes typically involved delivering material to students in a more prescriptive, slide-show format. He characterised his teaching during the pandemic as 'routine' and 'regimented.' Daniel would usually start the lesson with an introductory activity to help the students remember content from the previous lesson or make connections to a task they had done independently. Daniel would usually move on to a 15-minute teacher-directed, lecture-style session to present information. He would then continue with a more discussion-based activity and finish with a group-based or independent task. Although Daniel acknowledged that he did not waver from this approach, he shared that his students appreciated it and found the sense of routine reassuring because 'they knew what to expect.'

He found it important to continue incorporating humour and presenting or 'performing' in front of his class to make his lessons more engaging. These were characteristics of his teaching that he found 'translated well to the online format' since he could effectively 'give a good TedTalk-style presentation' that could be more captivating to his students. Daniel

remained as attuned as possible to his students' levels of engagement and he would 'try to draw them in with something humorous, funny, intriguing, interesting.'

Daniel described the challenges associated with maintaining his students' levels of engagement and motivation. He explained that it was much easier for students 'to tune out' if they wanted to and that 'it was very difficult, […] it was near impossible' for teachers to prevent this. With in-person teaching, Daniel explained that the physical presence and the closer interactions would mean that teachers could do more to engage students or decrease disengagement. Whereas online, maintaining student focus and trying to 'help get every student through the course' became complicated. Students sometimes would use technology-related challenges and excuses as means through which they could disengage.

Daniel suggested that the pandemic emphasised the importance of student engagement in lessons. Regardless of context, he considered it a prerequisite for teachers to support students in being active rather than passive learners for them to learn effectively. Hence, Daniel was reminded of the need to vary activities within lessons to support student engagement. For Daniel, the pandemic encouraged a reconsideration of the flipped classroom model, where students could receive content and theory to look at independently using technology, so that class time could be used for more interactive activities such as group discussions and hands-on tasks.

Although Daniel found a reliable and predictable lesson structure that was generally effective and reassuring for the students to follow, he did recognise that he could have 'been a bit more experimental in […his] teaching.' In retrospect, if the pandemic had continued for longer, Daniel suggested that he would have wanted to change some of the routines that he had fallen into, 'try new things,' and work on adapting some of the teaching and learning methods he used in person to fit the online setting. He would have spent more time reflecting on ways to effectively support the development of his students' skills online and how they could do different activities in an engaging online format.

Oliver

Oliver described how he was always the kind of teacher who did not want his kids sitting passively in his classes. He avoided lecturing for extended periods. With the shift to online learning, he struggled to find a way to engage the students in that format. During his first online classes, he 'just showed […his students] a bunch of mathematics problems and how

to do them because [… he] didn't know what else to do.' During those lessons, 'there wasn't really any interaction' and Oliver felt that it was 'awful.'

Oliver quickly realised that he could not teach this way online. So, he started 'trying to mimic what [… he] did in class.' He knew that he needed 'to get the students involved.' To do this, he used the private Zoom chat function to guide students through mathematics problems in differentiated ways to fit their needs. He would provide a question for the students to work on and then engage with them to support them wherever they were in the problem-solving process. In this way, he 'was helping students where they were stuck, rather than just showing them the whole question when some students could do it without any help, while others needed guidance along the way.' Oliver 'got a lot of positive feedback from the students' because they were 'more engaged in the mathematics Zoom than any of the other classes because they were just constantly on.' Oliver would not put the students on the spot to have them engage with the class and he was also sensitive towards not sharing the struggles students were having with the entire class. Hence, the private Zoom chat function worked well.

Of course, Oliver did have some students who would not stay on the Zoom call and 'just weren't interested,' but, for the most part, he 'had a lot of positive feedback that the students felt very engaged.' The 'individual feedback' made them feel supported through the process while the responsibility and ownership were placed on them. Of course, as Oliver noted, the issue was that the students 'had to be motivated to actually do that.' At the DP level, though, students became accountable for putting time and effort into their learning.

Upon returning to in-person teaching, Oliver initially felt that students were almost going through the same learning experiences they had via Zoom, except within the confines of a classroom. He felt that teachers needed to move away from excessive amounts of computer-based work in favour of experiences where students would be actively engaged in their learning. Ultimately, Oliver felt that some curricular requirements made students more detached since they were simply learning *about* a subject rather than being immersed in experiencing it.

Oliver stated that he would describe his teacher character traits during COVID as 'less effective.' He found that, no matter how hard he tried to combine his use of videos, interactive Zoom chats, and private messages, he felt unable to teach as effectively as he did in a physical classroom setting. In fact, he emphasised that, within all the roles and

responsibilities he continued having as an IB DP teacher in the COVID context, he felt less effective at doing all of those. Additionally, he thought that the lack of physical interaction made the students 'less motivated.'

Michael

Michael described that one of the most challenging aspects of Zoom teaching was that it was 'much harder to judge [student] engagement.' It was difficult for teachers to manage the different processes of sharing content via the screen while monitoring the students and their level of focus. Even seemingly attentive students could have been distracted by something else on their screen. To keep his students alert and engaged with the class material, he would intentionally ask certain students specific questions and try to stimulate each of them while going through the lesson to ensure that they were focusing on the topic they discussed. He tried using a 'random lottery' approach to get students to answer questions. Even if it did put students on the spot, Michael's primary concern and purpose was to increase student engagement and participation, which was challenging to do in other ways online since students could more easily get distracted and disconnect from the lesson. Michael found that the students 'became more adaptive at ways of avoiding engaging.' Hence, he felt the need to 'become more in tune with that as well, picking up on the cues that maybe the kid […wasn't] actually participating and […was] doing something else.'

Michael felt that the difficulty with perceiving student engagement also impacted his ability to explain content effectively. In the online context, Michael felt less able to gauge his students' level of understanding, while his students were also more reluctant to ask questions online. Hence, he felt this hindered his ability to provide explanations to the same level of detail, clarity, and effectiveness as his pre-pandemic teaching. To diminish some of these challenges and negative ramifications of teaching online during COVID-19, Michael actively sought to improve the explanations and level of detail provided to students within the materials he shared with them. He tried to provide more links, background explanations, and higher quality material to 'compensate for not being able to communicate and explain things as effectively.' Ultimately, he now feels like he has 'richer resources' to share with his students, even outside of the pandemic.

In terms of his teaching approach, Michael explained that he would initially provide a brief introduction to the lesson and then assign asynchronous tasks for the students to work on. Soon enough, though, the students asked him to assign less asynchronous work and teach

them directly instead. He explained that students ‘wanted more discussion of the content, more exchange back and forth.’ Michael emphasised that the students ‘didn’t feel as engaged through that process.’

Helen

Although some aspects of teaching DP Design online were relatively easy and manageable for Helen, she faced some challenges related to the practical component and technical skills she needed to support students in developing through the course. She made many adaptations to allow students to apply and hone their hands-on skills. For example, she ‘deliberately taught them online how to use CAD [Computer-Aided Design] models and software.’ With the help of tutorials, she would ask her students to create various models, which the students would send to her via email so that she could go on campus and 3D-print and laser-cut them for her students. In other cases, she prepared materials such as sewing kits with sewing machines and delivered them to her students’ homes. Again, with the help of tutorials, she would support them in developing their practical skills.

Helen discussed how she felt she needed to adapt her approaches to engage her students while teaching online. She explained that, as a parent of two teenagers, she was exposed to the ‘copious amounts’ of content they were consuming online. Helen would pay attention to what they enjoyed listening to and watching. She considered how the information was shared and presented by the producers of that content. Helen then ‘kind of adopted a little bit of that theatrics in some of [… her] Zoom lessons’ because she cared about finding new ways to engage her students on screen. She felt she needed to ‘step on their level and meet them where they [… were] at and speak their language, understand their culture.’ She realised that, especially with the shift to online learning, she needed to teach in a different way than the world she grew up in or, in fact, any situation that both she and the students ever experienced.

Helen was mindful of the time students needed to spend on their screens. Hence, she tried to plan her lessons in a way that would include an introduction, a provocation through a short clip or video, and an assignment that ‘would deliberately mean that they [would] get off their chair’ and away from their screens. Helen cared about making her lessons as engaging and active as possible, even in the context of online learning.

According to Helen, 'COVID […] made us all realise the value and the richness of that hands-on learning and the one-on-one contact.' As a result, even during online learning, Helen 'deliberately planned activities that the students […] could do at home that would be [… an] off-screen hands-on type of thing.' Still, she clarified that it was much more effective if a teacher could be there as a mentor in person. Ultimately, she said that the pandemic made her 'recognise the value' of and remain 'more conscious' towards balancing 'screen, digital, online learning versus hands-on experiential learning,' especially in the context of a course like Design where quite a large portion of the work is naturally on the computer. Helen hoped to see the DP increasingly focus on student creativity, initiative, and hands-on learning, especially in subjects like Design which should be practical and project-based.

5.4 Theme 2: Professional Community Interactions Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel acknowledged that he found it difficult to carefully track his students' progress. He mainly attributed this struggle to the fact that online learning felt like it was happening in a vacuum. The decreased, or even absent, interactions with other teaching colleagues made Daniel feel less attuned to his students' experiences and performances in other classes. In the face-to-face teaching context, Daniel thought that the informal interactions that teachers would have with students and fellow colleagues, along with the feedback they would give each other, would provide insights into students' strengths and weaknesses more closely. During the pandemic, Daniel found that this type of communication and potential information would 'sometimes get […] lost in the ether because it's virtual.'

Daniel explained that teachers and students no longer met in large assemblies or participated in whole-school events. Instead, 'small group online advisory sessions [were held] at the beginning of every school day.' During this time, teachers would share school announcements and connect with the students. In some cases, they would then schedule one-on-one calls or two-on-one meetings whenever needed.

Daniel shared that his 'role as a mentor-adviser still continued.' Interestingly, while he described this responsibility as 'smaller in scope,' he also realised that, in some senses, it was 'magnified.' He had to connect with fewer students compared to the advisory sessions he used to have prior to the pandemic. Yet, instead of tracking bureaucratic items and

reminding students of tasks they needed to complete, Daniel felt that his responsibilities shifted towards more essential and meaningful roles. His interactions with his advisory students centred around how they were feeling and how they were managing through the pandemic. Daniel felt that he had a role of trying to encourage, support, and cheer up his students through the challenging times they were experiencing.

Oliver

Apart from the technological challenges and frustrations associated with teaching online while having more difficulty engaging students, Oliver mostly talked about the personal challenges he experienced through the pandemic. Oliver emphasised that, at the basic human level, he felt that the lack of human connection made his experiences difficult throughout the pandemic, not solely related to teaching but even in a broader context. Although Oliver described himself as an introvert who would not 'spend a lot of social time with other teachers,' he realised that the natural organic interactions he could experience, even simply while passing other members of the school community in the hallways, were meaningful. Oliver felt that he had not appreciated how the face-to-face interactions with others in the context of in-person schooling positively impacted all aspects of his life, both professionally and personally. The pandemic made him realise that he still needed and missed the interactions with his students and colleagues, who were also his friends.

Oliver emphasised that he felt it was crucial for him to continue developing connections with his students and providing them with individual attention even in the online context. He felt his students were 'still children and they need interaction, and they still need to be cared about and nurtured.' Oliver felt that his attention towards developing personal connections and attending to his students' social-emotional needs helped him be an effective teacher. He was reminded of the importance of creating a relationship with his students. As Oliver explained, 'it's not that […he] didn't care about students before,' but the pandemic prompted him to 'show the students that […he] care[d] about them a lot better.' Oliver said he has 'become better at asking questions about […his students], what's going on in their lives.'

A notable shift happened in Oliver since he realised that 'it wasn't just about explaining the physics really well.' Oliver was trying to create meaningful connections with his students even before the pandemic, but he was less aware of the extent of their importance. The pandemic made Oliver realise that the connections and interactions that students develop through their in-person academic experiences are extremely valuable and meaningful.

Michael

Michael found it difficult to get to know the students at the same personal level as he would have in a physical school context. The impromptu interactions with students outside of the classroom, even briefly in the hallways, at the end of lessons, or during breaks, were all opportunities for personal connection that would contribute to developing his relationships and well-rounded understanding of his students. Zoom created a boundary where students would not have opportunities to connect informally with teachers and share feedback on what they liked about the lesson, what they continued having questions on, or what they would be interested in learning more about. Hence, Michael found it harder to make deeper, genuine connections with his students. Michael shared the importance of connecting with students outside of the classroom and building upon those relationships through interactions outside of lessons, in contexts like CAS, service, or extracurricular activities. COVID eliminated, or at least limited, these types of interactions. For example, it was hard to undertake many of the service-related initiatives in the restrictive context of the pandemic.

Michael shared that his role as a colleague and his interactions with other teachers changed throughout the pandemic. Besides having fewer meetings, those that did occur also tended to be less effective when held online. Additionally, the most valuable interactions with other teachers, which used to happen organically throughout each day in many informal contexts, no longer occurred. The discussions surrounding resources, teaching methods, students, and curriculum planning, which would all happen interspersed over a school day, were non-existent during online learning. Although department meetings were scheduled, those could not replace or compensate for the other more frequent but less formal interactions that teaching colleagues would have during their workday. Online, teachers did not have as many opportunities to share and reflect upon their students' progress across disciplines or discuss ways in which they could specifically support a student. The monitoring systems that UIS had established to track and support student progress were no longer maintained during COVID.

Michael was happy with the return to in-person teaching, as 'activities […came] to life again' such as sports and service learning. He valued being able 'to build that relationship with kids through those things outside the classroom.' He felt that the ability to gather and interact in person, in all of the contexts surrounding school life, including assemblies, performances, field trips, service-learning groups, and after-school activities, was invaluable

and indeed celebrated upon the return to face-to-face learning. The engagement of students and the vibrant school life flourished with the transition back to in-person schooling.

Helen

Although she felt that her interactions with her students were more limited by the barrier created by online learning, Helen still prioritised trying to build relationships with them. She felt that, despite the challenges associated with forging genuine connections with the students, she could at least focus on ensuring that they were 'active participants in their own learning.' She wanted to encourage the creation of teacher-student partnerships rather than students feeling like their learning experiences were simply 'happening to them.'

Helen only briefly commented on the changes she experienced in her interactions with colleagues. She felt that UIS was conscious of the potential challenges teachers were experiencing on a personal level due to the strict lockdowns and isolation. Hence, they organised some 'activities and events' to '[en]sure that colleagues were interacting and meeting outside, not just for meeting capacity or professional work, but also for leisure and connecting.'

5.5 Theme 3: Professional Demands and Pressures Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel emphasised that, although the IBO made some amendments to the DP courses that decreased some of the content, the pressure remained for both students and teachers throughout the pandemic. There was no change in 'the necessity of students to perform in the course.' The reality was 'that they would still need to be assessed and evaluated, to be scored, so that they [would] get their university entrance and [… would] still [be] able to go on and do post-secondary work,' if they chose to do so after high school.

Daniel felt that he tried to be more flexible with the move to online learning. He explained that some students who had thrived academically in the traditional school setting struggled adapting to the shift to distance learning. Daniel acknowledged that he used to be stricter with students regarding rules, deadlines, and expectations before the pandemic but that he needed to adapt his level of flexibility. He tried to get more feedback from students about

their workloads and other deadlines, while consciously becoming more 'realistic about what [… his students] were capable of doing, even just on an individual basis.' His increased flexibility, understanding, and empathy provided his students with additional support, given the situation they all had to experience. Ultimately, Daniel stated that he had to realise 'that you cannot just accomplish the same things online that you can in person.'

Daniel believed he could have improved his approaches to tracking student progress and performance. He did not find that the assessments were effectively informing his teaching, as he described aspects of online teaching more as 'survival mode,' where he would try to 'deliver content, core skills' and touch upon the teaching requirements, while at least doing some form of assessment so as to 'have at least evaluated [… the students'] skills in something.' It was not a concerted, comprehensive effort to track 'the rates and the levels at which students [… were] really learning.'

Concurrently, Daniel 'tried to be a little more relaxed' regarding the expectations and standards he set for himself. Daniel was honest that, before the pandemic, he tended to actively seek validation from his students or colleagues to decrease some of his insecurities relative to his effectiveness and success as a teacher. Daniel had to re-evaluate the metrics used to judge his competencies as a professional because the online context was so new and different from his experiences with in-person teaching. He realised that he needed to give himself more grace regarding lessons that would not meet his level of expectation or would not engage the students to the degree he would have liked. Instead of being as critical, he sought to reflect more closely on those experiences to learn from them and improve.

Oliver

Oliver described how the shift to online learning resulted in teachers having fewer things to do. Some of their time was freed up since they were not engaged in the school context apart from their scheduled Zoom lessons. Teachers were constantly immersed in tasks and interactions with others in a school setting. Disconnecting from school while teaching during the pandemic meant that all interactions were scheduled and more delineated. This cut down on the time taken by interactions with others during a teacher's day. However, Oliver provided the caveat that he did not find this occurrence to be 'a good thing because all those little conversations about students […] are really valuable.'

Still, Oliver described that his experience with teaching DP online during the pandemic was infused with the stress of the uncertainties surrounding exams potentially being cancelled. The students themselves were stressed about whether or not they would have to complete those assessments, while the teachers were concerned about how they could best prepare the students for them. Oliver explained that many IB DP teachers, because of the extensive content and high stakes inherent in the programme, focused on transmitting the knowledge students required for meeting assessment competencies while primarily using lecture-based teaching methods. Oliver tried to encourage the students and reorient their focus towards simply learning the material as best as possible while trying not to worry about the exams.

The pandemic context prompted Oliver to become more 'sympathetic to […his students'] workload.' Before, he used to be stricter and less flexible with the work that his students would have to do. He used to say, 'look, this is what you gotta do. You gotta do this. Yeah, I know you've got a lot, but physics is important.' With the help of another colleague in his department, Oliver changed his approach. He made homework optional and gave students a quiz at the start of each week. In this way, his students could decide how much practice they needed to complete before learning and truly mastering different skills and concepts. Oliver explained that he found this to be an important life skill that students needed to learn since they were given the independence and opportunity to develop their self-awareness related to the appropriate amount of work they needed to put in to reach their goals. In this way, Oliver showed an increased level of sympathy towards the students and the pressures they experienced throughout the DP.

Michael

Michael explained that one aspect that made teaching during the pandemic easier was the context of being at home. Teachers would have actual breaks where they could disconnect or spend uninterrupted time completing certain tasks. In a school context, teachers are 'engaged pretty much all the time.' Even during free periods and non-teaching hours, teachers 'always [have] people coming up and wanting to ask' something, which places a higher demand on their time and could increase stress. Michael mentioned that it was not necessarily 'negative stress,' but it was still a time demand that was 'energy draining.' Hence, he felt that online learning and the decreased demands on a teacher's time did 'remove some of that pressure on teachers.'

However, the pressure related to the DP remained even while the students were learning online. Michael explained that due to the content-heavy nature of the DP, he often found 'it difficult to put [… tasks] in the kids' hands.' In terms of his teaching style, he explained that he would not have the time to go through the entire load of content if he would try to incorporate more presentations, seminars, or other engagement-focused material. Instead, he needed to 'plough through the content at the DP level.' Michael felt that a teacher's role was overshadowed by the mere focus on 'dealing with [content] delivery during COVID.'

Michael felt that an essential part of teaching effectively online was maintaining 'a reasonable pace for the amount of content' the students would need to cover in their classes. He added the caveat that DP teachers often had no choice because of the syllabus pressures and requirements they needed to meet. Michael did mention that the IBO adjusted the course syllabi to reduce some of the content during the pandemic. This was done to varying degrees across subjects. He felt fortunate with the DP Geography course since it probably had experienced the 'biggest reduction.' Trying to balance working with students synchronously online versus assigning asynchronous, independent work for them to do was difficult because of the demands across subjects and the sheer amount of time students were asked to work on their computers.

Empathy and consideration, while maintaining fair but flexible expectations, were key characteristics that Michael sought to embody. He understood the burden the DP students were feeling and cared to encourage and support them effectively through the constant worry and heightened anxiety they were feeling. Given the unusual circumstances of learning during the pandemic, the students were unsure about whether they would have to complete their final DP examinations or what their diploma grades would be. Hence, the uncertainties surrounding their final exams, diploma awards, and university acceptances amplified the already high levels of pressure and concern related to their academics. Michael felt that he needed to assist with managing his students' concerns and alleviating some of their anxieties. He explained that they were 'panicked about their university entrance and their scores and everything else,' which meant there was 'a lot of management of the kids' anxiety over the two years.' Michael felt that supporting his students to 'cope with the stress and uncertainty of it all' was a meaningful part of his job during the pandemic. He felt that he did play an important role in supporting his students, even throughout challenging times, to develop into thinkers and well-rounded individuals who would be prepared for 'the next level of tertiary education.'

The IB's changes to the course syllabi during the pandemic reinforced Michael's conviction that each subject was unrealistically content-heavy. According to Michael, although 'the IB has been saying for years [… that] they recognise the stress that the DP system puts [on] students and teachers,' they returned to the old syllabi and curricula post-pandemic. Despite discussions revolving around student well-being and balance, the programme re-established the same demands once schools resumed in-person learning. Michael tried to justify this decision by stating that the IB 'is torn between meeting the needs of schools but also their reputation for preparing the kids for […] first-year university-type courses.' Michael felt that the pressures received by the IB from universities to prepare students with a certain amount of content knowledge meant that the programme would need to return to the old demands it placed on its students and teachers.

Helen

Helen echoed the other teachers' frustrations and even disbelief that the IB 'decided to entirely go back to their previous model' despite having made some modifications to the courses in the context of the pandemic. Helen went on to discuss how she was shocked by the fact that, despite there being 'staggering amounts of evidence that these models are having an impact on students' mental health, because of the sheer amount of work and expectations which [… are] not age appropriate,' the IB persists with the same approach. Helen tried to shift some of the focus within her classroom away from the exam-driven nature of the DP by providing her students with 'the flexibility and the freedom and the agency to organise their own time' and adapt their approaches according to their situations and needs. Throughout her teaching experiences during the pandemic, Helen cared about exposing her students to meaningful learning experiences rather than focusing on their assessment preparation and performance.

Helen believed that the pandemic prompted teachers to realise the degree to which 'schools are insanely busy places with so much other stuff happening that is not just about teaching.' Hence, she felt that the transition 'back into school has actually been very stressful.' She described it as 'almost like a reverse culture shock for a lot of people.' Helen had conversations with colleagues who shared how overwhelmed they felt at school. Helen explained how teachers, from the moment they step into school to the moment they leave, are 'constantly doing a million things. Doing duties, having meetings, people popping in and out of [… their] classroom.' Teachers are 'continuously surrounded by people [… and they]

do not have a moment of a breather.' In fact, she believed that a school was 'a very very intense and overly stimulating environment.'

The post-pandemic period brought Helen back to the 'busy crazy place' of her experiences before COVID. Reflecting and comparing her experience, Helen realised that she 'actually was happier' during the pandemic because she 'liked the slower pace' and she enjoyed 'being more focused on [… her] DP classes and courses rather than all of the other additional things that [… she] has to do as a teacher.' Helen stated that she 'would love to go back to that time where [… she] could then focus more on how [… she] plan[ned] to develop [… her] lessons, developing and looking for resources, continu[ing] to build the online experience.' She highly valued the time she was given back in the context of the pandemic. Now 'being back to that pre-pandemic model, [… she] feels more frazzled and more burnt out and overwhelmed, having to deal with so many other things that are on [… her] plate that [… she] actually [… has] the least amount of time to focus on [… her] craft, as a teacher.'

Helen upheld a different perspective, one she found was shared by 'a lot of other neuro-divergent families,' that online learning made everything 'quieter,' as students 'were able to work at their own place' and decreased 'sensory overload' compared to a physical school environment. Concurrently, though, Helen did acknowledge that online schooling during COVID brought about other struggles relative to issues such as 'Zoom fatigue' and exhaustion associated with all of the work and interactions occurring electronically.

The transition to post-pandemic education was quite abrupt. Helen mentioned that 'literally the restrictions were lifted overnight.' It was a 'jarring' shift that was difficult to adapt to. The abrupt approach seemed to reflect 'the push to get back to normalcy or whatever [… was] experienced as normality before the pandemic.' Helen described how she found it 'heart-breaking' that schools returned to how they were before the pandemic. She felt discouraged and disappointed that it did not seem schools had learned anything from the experiences through the pandemic. One lesson Helen wished schools would have learned 'is that there's too much going on.' She was adamant that 'we need to start taking stuff away' because 'we're burning out kids, we're burning out teachers. It's not a sustainable model.' Helen described that, from her point of view, it was frightening how kids attend school for around eight hours per day, are required to absorb and acquire mountains of information, and have work to do at home, while they are also expected, in many cases, to go through project-based learning and independent creative work.

Helen's experiences through COVID reinforced her beliefs that the 'IB DP is a dinosaur in the room.' The pandemic solidified and further enhanced her conviction that 'there's so much room for [… the IBO] to grow and improve.' Hence, she was deeply disappointed to experience how the IB did not 'embrace this pandemic opportunity to reinvent themselves.' She thought that the online learning experiences could have prompted the IB to focus on developing tools, platforms, and support materials that would allow students to move away from the traditional model of learning content and reproducing it on high-stakes final assessments. Instead of simply having students sit through content-based assessments, Helen described her vision of students being assessed through portfolios, video reflections, and other forms of sharing their learning. She continued feeling disheartened by the rigid assessment model that requires her students to take 'old-fashioned examination[s]' and 'to upload a 50-page document with static photographs and images and word limits and word counts.' She felt that this was highly limiting and old-fashioned, in a way that contradicted the push for innovation that schools and society attempt to move towards.

5.6 Theme 4: Technology-Mediated Teaching Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel discussed how the pandemic 'highlighted some technology that is really beneficial for the classroom,' regardless of the learning setting. He felt that the experience of online learning 'helped teachers to get more on board with some of the technology that can help them in traditional teaching.' Daniel explained that one of his weaknesses was having to incorporate 'certain tech or just even certain programmes into [… his] teaching.' The two-day training the school had provided before the transition to online learning helped with the changes, but the initial stages of the experience were 'somewhat overwhelming and daunting.' However, the decrease in class time, the time saved from not having to travel, and the elimination of certain responsibilities such as supervision duties and meetings were all 'liberating' elements that allowed Daniel to spend more time preparing his lessons. He could learn about and experiment with different technology tools to incorporate into his teaching.

Oliver

One change that Oliver made during the pandemic was to ask students to share their questions about their homework via email. Then, he would create videos of the solutions and

explanations for the specific problems to share them with his classes. Instead of going over the homework and showing the answers to the problems while some students would not be interested or would not find it helpful, he found that the videos would provide the most appropriate support for the students in the specific ways they needed it. Oliver ultimately felt he was doing all he could to make his teaching as effective as possible during that time through the use of technology.

Michael

Michael felt that his skills in using technology improved dramatically. He explained how, being 'an older teacher at the school,' he was now 'more confident with using all that stuff.' He identified this as one positive outcome of teaching through the pandemic. He felt the 'digital divide between students and teachers has closed a bit' since teachers became 'more proficient at using IT [Information Technology].'

Helen

Helen described herself 'as a tech-savvy and flexible teacher.' Her proficiency and level of comfort within the digital world helped inspire her and keep her position at the forefront of technology-enhanced education. She maintained a level of concern about 'reinventing' herself and her teaching practice, which meant that she was very open to trying new approaches and establishing different habits and routines. Relatedly, Helen's open-mindedness and excitement with trying new practices encouraged her to 'engage with like-minded tech-savvy educators who […were] willing to explore new frontiers in education.' The pandemic gave her 'more space and time' to do so.

To some extent, Helen experienced a milder impact of COVID-19 on her teaching practices and routines. She was already used to providing a wide variety of course materials and lesson resources for her students in an electronic format. She was well prepared for COVID because of the EdTech that she was already using and the fact that all her lessons were 'digitised on a platform, embedded' and 'Google Slides, docs, grading, commenting, everything lived digitally.' Even before COVID, she felt like she had 'a parallel school, a physical school and a digital school' for her students. Her students knew how to access all the material, obtain what they needed, and effectively make use of the resources at the appropriate time. Hence, when COVID hit and the school 'went, literally overnight, online in February 2020,' she 'did not feel it.' Considering this, 'the experience of transitioning from in-person teaching

to online teaching wasn't that severe and it wasn't that difficult' for Helen, especially relative to other teacher colleagues she knew.

Students in Helen's classes 'loved that they had a platform' that was effectively organised with all the materials they would need to help them succeed in their learning. Helen would even share screen recordings of her lectures to provide students with the content they needed in case they had missed a particular lesson or wanted to access it again. All her students appreciated these resources because they could watch and re-watch the material at their own pace and add captions if they wanted. This was especially helpful for ELLs and neurodivergent students 'who might have different learning needs.' The students had entire playlists of content and could always access any resources they wanted.

5.7 Theme 5: Future Perspectives on the Role of In-Person Schooling Linked to TPI

Daniel

Daniel expected that 'some online institutions [… would probably] crop up' to 'cater to the relatively small, but probably sizable minority, of students that actually preferred online learning.' However, Daniel emphasised that the pandemic ultimately 'reinforced the need for in-person learning, for schools as social institutions and environments.' So, he did not think that the teaching profession would significantly shift due to the pandemic. Overall, Daniel was adamant about how 'online learning has put in focus how necessary in-person schooling is for so many people, and how necessary schools, as an institution, really are.' Daniel hoped that parents and other stakeholders within the field of education would also realise the importance of teachers and schools because, before the pandemic, Daniel felt that 'there was almost an attitude that [… they] were expendable.' On a larger, more philosophical scale, he felt that the pandemic was an indicator that schools would not become obsolete, as some seemed to have envisioned or predicted before the pandemic. Daniel felt that the pandemic underlined the importance of physical schools and the inability of technological advancements to replace them.

Following his initial relative success with online learning, Daniel started thinking about whether he might want to reorient his work towards teaching online. He considered the opportunities of tutoring online or working for a company through which he could freelance

teach rather than continuing with his job in a traditional school setting. However, as the pandemic lingered, Daniel realised 'that any asynchronous-type teaching' would not be something he would wish to do. He felt that his preferred approach was the 'traditional model of in-person teaching.'

Oliver

The pandemic further reinforced Oliver's views that education 'can't be just all online, and it can't be just kids writing and bored in class.' The return to in-person teaching after the pandemic frustrated Oliver because he felt like students 'came back, and the classes got even more boring than maybe they were previous to the pandemic.' Ultimately, for Oliver, the pandemic highlighted the crucial elements of student engagement, active learning, participation, and challenge in meaningful learning experiences as part of the students' schooling. In fact, Oliver mentioned that he felt there had been a 'regression' at the school. He was adamant about 'making [… learning] fun for the kids.' Ultimately, Oliver felt that 'in education, we kill […the students'] love of […] learning.'

Before the pandemic, Oliver had sometimes questioned whether in-person schooling would still be needed since so much content and learning resources are now available online. Teaching online during COVID made Oliver realise that, although he always liked teaching, he did not appreciate it enough and did not acknowledge how much he 'actually really liked teaching with the students live.'

Michael

Regarding his view on future considerations related to the teaching profession, Michael explained that he did not think it would shift to an increase in 'working from home,' which was happening in some occupations. This was because he felt that teaching is 'just so much better in person.' He did mention, however, that the pandemic brought about a consideration of increased meaningful online learning opportunities for students who would want to continue in that format.

Helen

Helen discussed the issue that became 'glaringly obvious' during the pandemic, which was related to how schools follow a social construct driven by the working model to match

parents' schedules. When UIS was trying to implement a hybrid model to stagger the students, decrease the student density on campus, create bubbles, and maintain social distancing requirements more successfully, many issues arose because of the unmanageable variations in school drop-offs and pickup timings. The school was trying to schedule students to complete half of their learning online and half at school. Apart from the logistical difficulties, it also brought about the clear realisation that schools follow many 'social models and phenomenon and constructs' that add to their role. Ultimately, Helen pointed out that schools 'are a lot more than just places where we teach content and academics and prepare students for jobs.' To some extent, 'schools are babysitting services.'

Unfortunately, as the pandemic lingered, Helen became disheartened. She had envisioned, along with other like-minded friends and colleagues, that the pandemic would act as a 'disruptive innovation' to catalyse a revolutionary change in education. Helen explained that she had felt some excitement at the prospect of the pandemic promoting a realisation that education could not continue 'following the same model for 100 years.' She believed that the pandemic could have prompted society to rethink how teaching and education were happening.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the data associated with my second and third research sub-questions related to the participants' TPIs in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the potential ways the pandemic affected their identities. I determined that five themes represented the factors affecting the participants' pandemic TPIs based on their narratives.

The participants acknowledged the difficulties they experienced with supporting student engagement in online learning. They maintained their concern for student-centred learning, which characterised their pre-pandemic TPIs, but found it more difficult to uphold within their online teaching practice. Three of the participants used more teacher-directed, lecture-style teaching approaches, especially at the beginning, or they assigned independent, asynchronous work since they struggled with actively engaging students in their learning online. Ultimately, the challenges faced online reminded the participants of the importance of student engagement and highlighted their convictions related to the value of active learning.

A second significant theme that all the participants discussed was related to the importance of building meaningful relationships within their professional community. The participants acknowledged that the pandemic shifted their focus towards the significance of connecting with their students. The participants were encouraged to prioritise cultivating relationships with their students as a prerequisite towards supporting their growth and success, especially in an intense academic context such as the one at an IB school. Relatedly, although discussed in less detail as a minor factor, the participants also acknowledged the value of their interactions with colleagues. During the pandemic, the opportunities for the participants to interact with other teachers were significantly reduced. At the same time, the informal interactions that would naturally happen in a school setting became non-existent. The participants realised that their interactions with colleagues contributed to their effectiveness and development as professionals, while they were also a source of meaningful connections on a more personal level.

Another noteworthy theme that the participants expanded upon was related to the continued pressures they experienced, even during the pandemic. Although some professional demands and responsibilities decreased when they were teaching from home, the expectations and stresses associated with their roles as DP teachers remained. In fact, these were amplified by the uncertainties surrounding DP examinations. As a result, the participants acknowledged that DP exam preparation expectations continued to significantly delineate their TPIs even during the pandemic.

All of the participants acknowledged that the pandemic encouraged them to re-evaluate how they could incorporate technology into their practice. It was a steep learning curve for most participants and, initially, technology was just a mediating tool for content delivery. However, the pandemic provided a context during which teachers needed to experiment with technology to find ways it could support their practice in an online context. For one of the participants, the pandemic did not prompt as great of a change in her technology-mediated teaching practices because she had cultivated these even before the pandemic. Still, the pandemic prompted her to further enrich this aspect of her practice and TPI.

As a last theme, all the participants identified that the pandemic made them realise the value of in-person teaching. They felt that online learning could not replace the affordances that face-to-face schooling could provide. However, all the participants were disheartened by the traditional approaches to which schools and educational programmes continued to ascribe,

especially upon returning to in-person schooling. The pandemic did not act as a catalyst for the change and innovation for which they would have hoped.

In the next chapter, I analyse the data presented in Chapters Four and Five and address the overarching research question that guided this study, which was: To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on schools influenced the perceived professional identities of International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) teachers?

Chapter 6 – Analysis

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I return to the main research question related to the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the participants' identities as IB DP teachers. To address this research question, I revisit the themes I explored in Chapters Four and Five from the participants' narratives and reflections on their experiences pre-, during, and post-pandemic. I analyse the participants' discussions in light of literature surrounding teacher professional identity and any recent publications related to teacher identity in the context of the pandemic.

The first section of this chapter, 6.2, focuses on the four elements related to the participants' pre-pandemic professional identities: (a) the contexts and factors that prompted them to become teachers, (b) the contexts and factors that encouraged them to become IB teachers more specifically, (c) teacher training influences on their perceived pre-pandemic identities, and (d) the perceptions of their subject-area passion and expertise relative to their TPIs. These four sub-sections mirror the data presented in parts 4.3 and 4.4 above. The analysis addresses the first sub-question of this research, which asks: (1) What key elements or contexts influenced the pre-pandemic professional identities of IB DP teachers?

The next five sections, 6.3-6.7, employ the data and evidence discussed in sections 4.5-4.8 and 5.3-5.7, to evaluate the five themes that surfaced from the participants' narratives: (1) Student-Centred Teaching Philosophies, (2) Professional Community Interactions, (3) Professional Demands and Pressures, (4) Technology-Mediated Teaching, and (5) Future Perspectives on the Role of In-Person Teaching. I discuss the themes relative to the perceived impact these had on the participants' TPIs. Each sub-section considers how the participants described that theme and any changes they perceived throughout their teaching experiences. In this way, I discuss the second and third research sub-questions: (2) How do IB DP teachers evaluate their professional identity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and (3) How has COVID-19 adjusted understandings of teacher professional identity?

6.2 Key Elements that Influenced the Participants' Pre-Pandemic TPI

6.2.1 Contexts and Factors that Led the Participants into Becoming Teachers

The four participants in this study had unique stories surrounding their journeys into the teaching profession. The participants' narratives around their trajectory and career pursuit reminded me of how personal this decision is. There are no rules or generalisable trends in the factors affecting teachers' decisions to pursue the profession. Even from this small group of participants, although some had similar family backgrounds and contexts, the connection between those characteristics and the participants' career trajectories was starkly different. For example, although Daniel and Michael both came from families of educators, this context inspired Daniel to pursue the profession while, in Michael's case, it initially acted as a deterrent. For all participants, though, positive teaching-related experiences from their past ultimately encouraged them to embark on their teacher training paths. Daniel's opportunity to teach ESL in South Korea, Michael's volunteer work teaching literacy, Oliver's experiences with teaching swimming and his work as a university tutor, and Helen's opportunity to be a CAS coordinator at an IB school were circumstances that gave them a glimpse into the teaching profession. These ultimately prompted the participants to select teaching as a career.

Literature on identity agrees upon the unique process of its formation and the combination of multi-faceted components contributing to a teacher's unique professional identity development (e.g., Assen et al., 2018; Beijaard et al., 2004). Factors ranging from personal traits, family background, upbringing, and a myriad of social, cultural, and historical contextual influences uniquely contribute to the complex layers of a teacher's identity (Beijaard et al., 2004 referencing Cooper & Olson, 1996). Additionally, as discussed in Section 2.3.4, the dynamic nature of TPI and the multiplicity that characterises it make it difficult to generalise the onset and trajectory of a teacher's identity development (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004; Burns & Bell, 2011). The stories that the participants shared of their journeys into the teaching profession demonstrate how past experiences and interactions leading up to the decision to pursue this career can all contribute, to varying degrees and in individualised ways, to a teacher's professional identity formation.

Ultimately, the participants' stories support the suggestion that TPI can start taking shape long before a teacher officially decides to pursue the teaching career and outside of the formal teacher training process (Buchanan, 2015). Teachers' biographies and past experiences, even from childhood, can leave an imprint on their perceptions of the teaching profession even before they embark on that career path (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Flores & Day, 2006; Sachs, 2001). The participants' experiences through school provided them with

an initial baseline representation of the teaching profession. However, for three participants, their experiences of the profession through their work at IB schools ended up being significantly different from those of teachers they had during their own schooling. Conversely, Helen's experiences as a teacher paralleled those of her own teachers more closely since she completed her schooling through the IB education system. Regardless of the degree to which the participants' 'anticipatory socialization' (Lortie, 1975:80) into the teaching profession reflected their actual professional experiences and contexts, they all filtered the past influences through their own critical lenses to cultivate their unique TPIs.

6.2.2 Contexts and Factors that Led the Participants into Becoming IB Teachers

The four participants developed an interest in becoming international teachers for different reasons. Daniel and Oliver, having experienced similar struggles in finding local teaching jobs in their home countries, were inspired to search elsewhere for other opportunities. The challenges they faced with the national education system also encouraged them to consider teaching at an international school abroad instead. Similarly, once Michael learned about international schools and their education systems during some of his international travels, he became interested in the academic rigour and opportunities available within these schooling systems. The comparison these three participants ultimately made between their experiences with schooling in their home countries and international education contributed to how their professional identities took shape.

Helen was the only one of the four participants who experienced the international school context as a student. Once she eventually decided to make the career change to teaching, she knew she would feel most comfortable teaching within the IB school network. This choice was driven by her identity alignment with this school environment. She described feeling at home in an IB classroom while working with IB students, as she could closely relate to their experiences since they were like her own. The harmonious blending of Helen's TPI components, influenced by her upbringing in a similar educational setting and her pre-pandemic teaching contexts, encouraged Helen in her professional pursuits and the direction of her development as a teacher.

The participants were prompted to explore international education by different contextual circumstances and interactions they experienced. In some cases, the limited prospects in their

local context encouraged them to seek employment abroad. This is similar to Bailey and Cooker's (2019) findings that some teachers elect to transition to the international teaching network after they experience tensions between their local school setting and core characteristics of their TPIs. For some participants, the curiosity and interest in international travel, combined with reassurance from others who experienced international teaching, encouraged them to apply for positions in other countries. This reflects how the prospect of increased teacher mobility can act as a factor encouraging teachers to transition into teaching internationally (Bailey & Cooker, 2019; Bense, 2016). In Helen's case, her direct experience with the international school setting contributed to her vision of the type of teacher she would become and the teaching context in which she wanted to grow professionally. This seems to reflect how a teacher's 'anticipatory socialization' (Lortie, 1975:80) into the profession can act as a compass towards the type of professional setting and characteristics that a teacher then strives to embody. Like Karaman and Edling's (2021) collection of international teacher narratives, the four participants in their study represent diverse examples of situational elements, originating from both personal and professional realms of experiences and interactions, contributing to their TPIs.

Although the participants in my study reflect some aspects of the three identity groupings of international school teachers suggested by Bailey and Cooker (2019) (see section 2.6.2), the typology seems somewhat limiting. All of my participants fit into the first category of Bailey and Cooker's (2019) grouping, which includes teachers who entered and stayed within the international school landscape because of increased professional mobility. However, the participants also reflect aspects of the second group since ideological components related to their roles as international teachers, such as the diversity and open-mindedness they experienced in those settings, encouraged them to embrace and further cultivate their TPIs as international teachers. Therefore, although Bailey and Cooker's (2019) typology can be helpful in identifying certain key factors characterising the TPIs of international teachers, it seems possible that some teachers may fit into multiple, different groupings.

6.2.3 Teacher Training Experiences Linked to TPI

Before hearing the participants' narratives surrounding the formative experiences that shaped their professional identities, I anticipated that their teacher training might have played quite a substantial role. I thought that the participants' exposure to PD experiences and formal training programmes would have dictated, to a greater extent, the initial direction of

their TPI formation. The participants did not seem to attribute the development of substantial parts of their TPIs to their theoretical teacher training experiences. They mainly criticised their training programmes, especially the theoretical aspects of them, and discussed the ways in which their courses seemed disconnected from the practical realities of teaching.

The participants mostly focused on sharing memories from their teacher training that prompted them to consider ways they did not want to act or traits they did not want to portray as part of their own professional identities. For example, the more traditional and rote-teaching style of Helen's mentor and one of Oliver's teacher trainers represented traits and approaches that did not align with these participants' developing professional beliefs. Similarly, Daniel shared how some of the theoretical and philosophical elements he was supposed to learn during his training seemed inapplicable and disassociated from the realities of the classroom. Although I asked Michael about what traits or type of teacher seemed to be encouraged by the training programme he completed, he shared anecdotes of some of the pragmatic tips and reminders he was guided towards during his lesson planning and practical teaching experiences. He did comment upon how his experiences with teacher training as a foreigner in the UK prompted him to develop his teaching practice with a more open mindset. The significant differences between schooling in the UK and Australia made Michael less focused on replicating a particular professional persona or teaching approach based on his background experiences.

Overall, the connection between the participants' teacher training experiences and their TPI development was less significant in their discussions. This corroborates with studies that found teacher training can have a weak influence on shaping TPI development (e.g., Flores, 2000; Flores & Day, 2006). The participants did not attribute certain professional identity traits as directly or strongly dictated by their teacher training experiences. Elements of the participants' training may have impacted their TPIs in more covert and less conscious ways. Still, it seems the participants' immersion within the teaching profession and their practical experiences organically shaped their TPIs to a greater extent, which evolved as they naturally went through each of their teaching opportunities.

Although I do not deny that the participants' teacher training experiences represented formative professional years, it was surprising that they did not discuss the impact of teacher training on their professional identities in more detail or with more conviction. When I asked the participants how they thought their teacher training shaped them as teachers, they mostly focused on sharing how they found their training experiences less effective or useful in their

professional formation. From the participants' narratives, it seems that their formal teacher training was more of a professional requirement that they had to complete rather than a formative experience relative to the development of their TPIs. In other words, as a form of accreditation, it was a means to an end. The participants perceived their TPIs were more resilient to change based on their theoretical training courses, which seemed disassociated from the realities of the classroom and the practical considerations of their teaching experiences. This is similar to Casanova-Fernández et al.'s (2022) findings, as their participants discerned some impacts of their initial training on the construction of their professional identity, while they also identified limitations in their training relative to the practical complexities of their experiences in schools. Levi-Keren et al. (2022) explored the practical component of teacher training. They found that some aspects of their participants' professional identities, such as their active identification with the profession and self-efficacy, were continuously influenced by their practical experiences and enhanced through the practice of reflection. However, the participants' field experience did not have a significant effect on other areas of their TPIs, such as their 'confidence in professional choice and sense of mission' (Levi-Keren et al., 2022:17). The authors suggest the need for further exploration into the factors affecting the development of these components of TPI, which seem to lay outside of the impact of a teacher's field training.

Apart from the theoretical and conceptual components of an individual's TPI, more substantial contributors to the participants' TPI development were their active experiences and teaching practices in schools. This made me reflect upon the fact that, although the influence of TPI on practice seems logical, there is a strong reciprocal connection between the two. Indeed, teachers' professional values and sense of self translate into them embodying certain traits and implementing specific practices within their teaching. However, the reverse is also true since teachers' practice and interactive experiences within their teaching environments also play a role in their TPI development. The dynamic nature of identity can link back to this phenomenon, whereby teachers may enter a particular professional setting with certain TPI characteristics, but these constantly interact with their practical teaching contexts to continuously evolve (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004; Burns & Bell, 2011).

6.2.4 Perceptions of Subject-Area Passion and Expertise Linked to TPI

The participants all shared that an element contributing to their TPIs was linked to their passion and expertise for the subject they were teaching. In Helen's case, her identity as a DP Design teacher was inextricably connected to her identity as a practitioner in the field. She described how her experiences teaching in Indonesia made her realise what a big part her engagement with the practice of designing played in her identity as a teaching professional. Ultimately, the misalignment between her teaching context and the identity elements they encouraged versus those they discouraged created some dissonance in her experience. The school-imposed restrictions on her abilities to enact and practise certain key elements of her identity affected her feelings of belonging in that professional context. Helen acknowledged that the clash between her fundamental identity elements and those that her school reinforced made her feel incompatible with that job and ill-suited for the expectations there.

Conversely, Daniel and Michael felt that their professional environments aligned with their teaching values in their respective subjects. As a result of this alignment, these participants spoke about the continued professional satisfaction they experienced and their continued desire to teach and grow professionally within that teaching context. In both Daniel's and Michael's cases, their passion for their respective subjects was fuelled and enhanced by the international teaching setting where they worked. The diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives, as well as the encouragement for open-mindedness, acceptance, and the celebration of difference, fuelled their interest in exploring diversity through their subjects. For example, Daniel valued his ability to teach world literature through the DP English course and delve into debates around different perceptions of knowledge and truth as part of his TOK classes.

Oliver did not expand upon how his passion for mathematics shaped the elements comprising his TPI. Instead, later on in his interview, he mostly described the reverse ways in which his beliefs around education shaped the practices he valued in teaching the subject most effectively. It may be that subject-specific content and a teacher's passion for it can be quite personal and insular. Teachers must make this content tangible, understandable, and relevant to their students so the educational and practical component of teaching that content may strongly influence their TPIs rather than the subject itself.

Overall, the differing reflections that the four participants shared surrounding their subject area expertise and their pedagogy suggest that these two aspects of a teacher's practice mutually influence identity. In other words, teaching a particular subject matter can drive

and be driven by different teaching methods. In some cases, and for some teachers, the subject or content can shape their practices and teaching traits more strongly. However, the reverse also occurs, whereby a teacher's pedagogical approaches may affect their teaching of particular subject matter more heavily in other instances.

As suggested within section 2.5, the role and effects of a teacher's subject-area training on TPI development can vary. For example, Beijaard (1995:282) declared that 'with the exception of primary school teachers, many teachers derive their professional identity first of all from the subject they teach.' His findings from an earlier study (Beijaard, 1995 referencing Beijaard, 1992) unveiled that subject integration (meaning, the teaching of different subjects as units comprising one course) negatively impacted TPI, which seemed to stem from the uncertainties associated with the curricular changes. Studies such as those conducted by Sikes et al. (1991) suggest that the status and social esteem attributed to different subjects strongly influenced TPI. In a more recent study, Bosse and Törner (2015) found that teachers' knowledge of a particular subject area impacted how they taught the subject, especially for teachers who transitioned into the profession from a different career. For the participants in my study, the passion for their subject and its practical applications in their own lives and those of their students contributed to their TPIs. The teaching of the subject, rather than any reputation associated with the subject itself, impacted the participants' professional values. They cared about supporting their students in being able to experience the subject in real-life contexts and realise its uses and applications in the world around them. Hence, some parts of the participants' identities were shaped by their concerns with being practitioners or at least users of the knowledge and skills of their subject area.

In Helen's case, the discrepancies and dissonance between contextually imposed or expected identity characteristics compared to those she valued negatively affected her sense of belonging in that setting. The misalignment between her professional identity and the traits favoured by her surroundings at one of the schools where she used to teach made Helen feel that it was not the appropriate teaching environment for her. Her experiences reflect findings from studies that have discussed how, although teaching context naturally shapes TPI, it is not a unidirectional, unquestioned effect (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Olsen, 2008). Instead, the reverse interaction is equally significant since a teacher's TPI at a given time can also contribute to a certain level of resistance to externally encouraged TPI elements.

6.3 Evaluating Theme 1: Student-Centred Teaching Philosophies Linked to TPI

The four participants identified several similar aspects of their teaching philosophy that contributed to their pre-pandemic TPIs. In particular, they all described elements of progressive education that they valued. As opposed to rote learning, all the participants cared about actively engaging students in their learning. They discussed how student participation and involvement in their academics were crucial in cultivating their engagement and motivation. To support this teaching and learning approach, the four participants mentioned how they strove to provide their students with opportunities to authentically apply their learning. By connecting content to real-world contexts, the participants felt they could create opportunities for their students to actively engage in inquiry-based learning.

With the transition to online learning, the participants yearned for some of the elements of in-person teaching that they could not transfer coherently in the online setting. Like the participants in El-Soussi's (2022) study, they found it more challenging to engage students in dynamic, active learning and the spontaneous, organic elements of teacher-student interactions. Like El-Soussi's (2022:5) participants, the teachers described themselves as 'supporters of student-centred classrooms' and considered themselves 'facilitators' and learning 'guide[s].' However, the university teachers from El-Soussi's (2022) study seemed to transfer their role as facilitators more seamlessly into the online space while adjusting their practices to fit the new medium of instruction. Some of the participants acknowledged that, online, 'they were sometimes spoon-feeding students' (El-Soussi, 2022:5). However, the autonomous learning approach encouraged by the online environment supported the teachers into facilitating their students' learning more effectively as they gained more experience with teaching during the pandemic. The four participants in my study understandably had a more difficult time replicating student-centred learning in a remote setting because they were working with high school rather than university students. The teachers worried about providing their students with enough support and guidance to continue their coverage of the IB DP content even in a setting where they could not monitor their students' work as effectively.

The pandemic did not seem to alter the participants' student-centred teaching philosophies. The teachers yearned for the ability to embody those philosophies as well as they could while they were online. They tried to find compromises during the pandemic but, overall, their

student-centred teaching philosophies, as components of their TPIs, remained unchanged. In fact, the struggles with embodying those values during the pandemic made the teachers realise that these were core priorities that they focused on even more upon returning to in-person teaching post-pandemic. The pandemic did cause some adjustments in the teachers' practices to make their lessons fit the online context. However, the pandemic setting did not alter the foundation priorities related to the participants' student-centred teaching philosophies. Those remained, though the participants could not enact them to their envisioned or desired level in the online context due to the restrictions and challenges of having to teach remotely.

These findings ultimately show that context initially may cause a change in practice and surface-level approaches but may not necessarily have a more profound impact on core TPI values that teachers hold as essential or non-negotiable characteristics of their professional selves. The participants had to adapt to make the online environment work with the teaching requirements they had to meet. They also had to find a way to portray a certain teaching persona that was appropriate and realistic for their teaching context online. Still, the student-centred teaching philosophies that contributed to their pre-pandemic TPIs remained and were amplified by the struggles to enact those elements of their TPIs in the context of the pandemic. So, post-pandemic, and in retrospective consideration of the struggles and experiences they had in the online environment, the participants realised how their student-centred teaching philosophies comprised core values and beliefs that continued to contribute to central elements of their TPIs, which they prioritised even more.

Identity literature suggests that a teacher's workplace and its characteristics significantly impact TPI formation (e.g., Bailey & Cooker, 2019; Flores & Day, 2006). This impact can be especially strong for international teachers, who experience frequent changes in their professional contexts. The pandemic can be viewed as a new teaching context, almost like a new school and a new teaching environment to which the teachers needed to adapt. Some literature suggests that when teachers change international school contexts, they negotiate and adjust their practices, values, and approaches based on their past and new experiences, which can cultivate teacher sub-identities (e.g., Poole, 2020). However, this is a complex phenomenon since teachers may blend the TPI characteristics influenced from prior contexts with those encouraged in their new context (Bailey & Cooker, 2019; Poole, 2020). Teachers adopt or dismiss the development of certain TPI traits, as the participants did in the pandemic teaching context. The TPI characteristics they had before the pandemic represent the identities they would have had moving into a new school. Then, within the new context, they

had to explore and learn to adapt their teaching to their new professional sphere. Instead of it being a new school in a new country, it was teaching in a new learning environment online. This did not necessarily mean that foundation elements of their TPI changed; the context just remained a breeding ground or a landscape in which they could evaluate their TPI and its active evolution. Regarding the student-centred teaching philosophy elements of the participants' TPIs, the pandemic magnified them. After struggling to portray and enact these TPI characteristics, the participants refocused on student-centred teaching priorities moving forward.

Regarding contextual influences on TPI, Bailey (2015) suggests that international teachers experience an amplified impact of context because of the frequent changes in their professional setting. Bailey (2015:6) uses the term 'culture shock' to refer to how international teachers must often adapt to new systems and practices, as they move to different schools in other countries. The frequent experience of culture shock that international teachers must navigate significantly impacts their perceived professional roles and TPIs. The culture shock they encounter while travelling through the international school network could parallel their experiences of having to adapt to the pandemic teaching context. Some researchers have found an over-powering impact of context on TPI, especially for novice or early-career teachers (Flores & Day, 2006). Their TPIs might be more malleable and less established compared to senior, more experienced teachers who have had their TPIs shaped over a more extended period and have identified or established stronger core values. This is not to say that more experienced teachers do not still dynamically negotiate their TPIs and maintain a collection of sub-identities based on their multiple experiences. However, they may have a more robust, unwavering core set of TPI elements, less affected by contextual changes.

6.4 Evaluating Theme 2: Professional Community Interactions Linked to TPI

6.4.1 Perceptions of Nurturing Teacher-Student Connections

All of the participants discussed, to varying degrees, how their development of meaningful, active learning content was facilitated by building relationships with their students. The four teachers talked about the importance of creating meaningful connections with their students,

allowing them to interact in more authentic, engaging ways that would enhance their learning experiences.

During the pandemic, all the teachers found it challenging to connect with the students in the meaningful, deeper ways they used to experience during in-person teaching. The organic, unplanned, and spontaneous interactions between teachers and their students within in-person contexts could not be replicated satisfactorily online. Instead, there was less time for teachers to connect with their students on a personal level. Additionally, any non-academic interactions remained formal since they had to be scheduled in advance.

The pandemic reminded the participants of the value of the one-on-one relationships they could develop with their students through direct interchanges and connections. In fact, the participants were reminded that building strong teacher-student relationships exists at the core of their profession and informs their value system and philosophy of education. The subject matter and its delivery are not the essence since information is readily available through so many different avenues and media. However, the availability of content and the ease with which it can be disseminated does not mean that teachers will be replaced. Regardless of the medium where education is happening, the development of relationships and connections remains at the core. Human interaction is essential in-person and is just as important, if not more so, in the online setting.

The pandemic also reminded the participants that they needed to forge student-teacher connections based on a wider consideration of their students as human beings. The teachers were prompted to consider the integral formation of their students rather than focusing solely on their academic experience within their subject. Hence, the pandemic highlighted the importance of human connection in all life contexts. Although the DP students were driven by their imminent exams and the inescapable pressures of the programme, the teachers realised that the connections they could create with their students were a vital source of encouragement and support. The participants were reminded of the role of human connection in mediating some of the struggles that students may experience as they go through the DP while fostering increased positive feelings towards their academic journey and success.

Studies show that cultivating strong connections with all members of a school community, ranging from students to parents and even colleagues, represents a key quality of effective teachers (Goe et al., 2008). Furthermore, teachers' relationships with others contribute to their professional identity development (Hargreaves, 2001; Hughes & Kwok, 2007). As

suggested by Kim and Asbury (2020), the shifts in the interpersonal connections that teachers experience in an online environment can understandably affect their TPIs. In their study on the impact of COVID-19 on 24 UK teachers, Kim and Asbury (2020) found that a key theme that surfaced from the participants' narratives was the importance of relationships. The pandemic reminded participants of 'the fundamentally social nature of teaching' (Kim & Asbury, 2020:1073). The teachers in this study shared their feelings of sadness, distress, and even concern related to the 'disrupted relationships' that ensued from the transition to online learning. Concurrently, the researchers discerned the high value the participants attributed to their relationships, as the teachers remained protective of those connections (Kim & Asbury, 2020). Likewise, the participants in El-Soussi's (2022:5) study 'believed that the online classroom missed the human interaction fundamental in teaching and learning.' They found it difficult to build the interpersonal relationships they were used to cultivating with their students in the physical classroom. Hence, fostering meaningful student-teacher interactions, as a priority and key element of the participants' TPI, was amplified by the pandemic experience.

6.4.2 Perceptions of Nurturing Connections with Colleagues

All of the participants mentioned how their interactions and opportunities for collaboration with colleagues within their in-person school contexts contributed to their TPI development. Both Daniel and Oliver touched upon this topic in passing. They did not expand upon their thoughts relative to the potential impact that their teaching colleagues had on shaping specific elements of their identities. However, their comments about the encouragement and support they received from other staff members suggest that these types of interactions contributed to their positive self-esteem and encouraged their continued professional engagement within their specific teaching contexts. Similarly, Michael explained that his engagement in teaching teams and collaborative opportunities helped him improve his practice and cultivated characteristics that supported him in becoming an increasingly effective teacher, according to feedback he received from colleagues and students. These characteristics became part of his professional identity.

Helen spent more time than the other three participants discussing how her interactions with colleagues shaped her TPI. She described actively seeking PD opportunities by tapping into her colleagues' expertise. Her co-teaching experiences and her observations of other colleagues fed into the lifelong learning aspect of her TPI. Unlike the other participants,

Helen also reflected on how the personal and professional spheres of international teachers closely interact and blend. She explained how, as an expat teacher, her colleagues became her friends and constituted her social network outside of school. As an expat who grew up attending different international schools, she found that her feelings of belonging depended upon her ability to relate to and connect with other expats within a diverse professional community.

The participants mentioned how the pandemic limited their interactions with their colleagues and shifted those that did occur from an organic medium to a pre-planned and more formal online setting. The interviews did not reveal an increase in the participants' desires to interact with their colleagues online. By contrast, the participants in Kim and Asbury's (2020) study seemed to yearn for emotional support from their colleagues. Their participants emphasised the importance of their professional relationships, which also represented 'genuine friendships' that were 'an enormous source of support' through the pandemic (Kim & Asbury, 2020:1074). The researchers suggest that they expected interactions between teachers to help them navigate shared stresses and concerns by providing support even during the pandemic's periods of isolation. It is not that interactions among my participants and their colleagues were unimportant. It is just that the lack of online interactions with colleagues did not surface as an issue the participants were particularly concerned about during the pandemic. It could be that the excessive amount of time the teachers had to spend online meant they needed to limit further interactions with their colleagues, which would have had to happen in that same virtual space. Additionally, other demands on the participants' time, such as family life, meant they did not prioritise community-building with their colleagues as much in the online setting.

Identity literature suggests that teacher interactions with colleagues can significantly impact their professional identities, since the opportunities for dialogue and collaboration can provide encouragement or inspiration towards the development of certain TPI traits (Coldron & Smith, 1999). Additionally, when teachers engage with other practitioners, they go through the teacher professionalisation process, whereby they evaluate their own values relative to those of others and further develop their own identities and practices (Beijaard et al., 2004 referencing Brooke, 1994; Coldron & Smith, 1999). In some cases, though, especially in international teaching contexts where professionals come from all backgrounds with an extensive range of teacher training experiences, the TPI traits of certain colleagues may contradict a particular teacher's professional identity. The impact of the professional community on a teacher's TPI development is not straightforward or unidirectional but

rather is a factor that prompts teachers to negotiate and explore their TPIs (Flores & Day, 2006). International teachers' interactions with colleagues can be, to a certain extent, more important because, these international expats rely on their professional communities as their broader social circle as well. However, in the same vein, international teachers are used to their professional communities being more transient. Therefore, these changes may dampen their dependence on interactions with colleagues shaping and influencing their TPIs. International teachers are exposed to many colleagues with a range of TPI characteristics. In some cases, these may influence a teacher to aspire towards certain TPI traits, while in other cases, certain colleagues may have contradicting or contrasting beliefs. Regardless of the degree of agreement or dissonance between colleagues and their TPIs, interactions with colleagues can serve as opportunities for teachers to explore their identities and continue their professional development journeys.

In the context of the pandemic, interactions with colleagues significantly decreased. Although the participants acknowledged the role of their interactions with colleagues on some elements of their pre-pandemic TPI development, they placed little emphasis on their need to increase their professional community interactions during the pandemic period. Their interviews suggested that they had other priorities they needed to attend. The stresses and demands on their time online with other roles and responsibilities meant little time and effort was spent cultivating interactions with colleagues during the pandemic. The teachers did discern a change in the dynamics and affordances or attributes that pre-pandemic interactions with colleagues had given them. However, they could not attend to fostering connections with colleagues to a greater extent during the pandemic period. Hence, the pandemic did not promote a change in terms of the effect of the participants' connections with colleagues on their TPI development. The absence or lack of opportunities to develop meaningful connections with other colleagues made teachers prioritise them more when they returned to in-person teaching. But, other than that, there was no significant change in their adjusted notions of the impact of fostering interactions with colleagues on their TPIs in the pandemic or moving forward.

6.5 Evaluating Theme 3: Professional Demands and Pressures Linked to TPI

6.5.1 Perceptions of Professional Roles and Responsibilities

The considerations and deeper realisations related to human connection widened the participants' views of their professional roles, responsibilities, and impact. Connection with members of the school community was not ignored during the pre-pandemic period, but it was less of a conscious focus or priority. Some complacency related to the role of connection and a less active focus on it naturally can happen when the pressures and priorities around academic performance take the lead. The pandemic slowed the pace of the participants' lives, gave teachers some more time and space back, and redirected their focus, at least for a little while. Pre-pandemic, the participants were experiencing the 'tunnel-vision' phenomenon related to the DP course requirements, content coverage, examination preparation, and their students' grades and final results.

The pandemic somewhat decreased the extreme worry that students and teachers had around exams. Even if there was uncertainty surrounding whether they would be held, once they were cancelled, some of the teachers' worries dissipated. Pre-pandemic, teachers focused on performance statistics such as their class grade averages compared to the world average from other DP schools. They would also compare their scores with other departments and often used those assessment scores to represent their professional effectiveness and success as teachers. The pandemic somewhat reoriented the participants to a more deliberate focus on student connection. They spoke about how those connections would, consequently, support students into doing better academically, not because of their passion or skill in the subject, but because of the increased motivation they would experience from wanting to put more effort into their work. The teachers were reminded that their level of connection with the students could be a mediating factor for students doing better in their subject, especially for students who would otherwise be disinterested and lack motivation. The pandemic reminded the participants that fostering strong connections represented a substantial role since these were prerequisites to learning and positive academic experiences.

The participants agreed that, during the pandemic, most other aspects of their roles and responsibilities decreased, too. In fact, the pandemic gave teachers a break. The class period and meeting lengths were reduced, the expectations for the number of assessments and formative tasks were decreased, and teachers had fewer students to monitor in contexts such as the advisory programme. Furthermore, some activities, such as those related to the CAS programme, could not occur to the same magnitude and extent as they used to, so the teachers' responsibilities for supervising these activities were eliminated. Overall, the teachers felt that the pandemic decreased the load placed on them regarding their time commitment and task responsibilities. They felt that the pandemic prompted a simplification

in their professional lives since a conscious effort was made to decrease the roles and responsibilities of teachers down to the essentials. As Daniel stated, the focus was on getting teachers to 'survive the year' and 'hav[ing] students be successful to survive the year' too. This 'survival mode' approach meant some simplification occurred in the teachers' roles and responsibilities.

Returning to in-person teaching brought back the participants' pre-pandemic responsibilities, which involved duties, meetings, and more substantial roles in areas such as advisories and supervising student activities. With in-person schooling, teachers are fully engaged throughout the school day, with no genuine breaks since many interactions continue to occur even outside of class time. By contrast, in the online setting, the end of a Zoom call meant that the teachers could fully disconnect from the teaching environment. Hence, their in-person roles are greater and more constant than those during their online experiences.

According to pre-pandemic studies on factors affecting stress within the teaching profession, issues surrounding teacher workload and the challenges revolving around behaviour management represented the most significant stressors (Catalán et al., 2019; Kokkinos, 2007). Kim and Asbury (2020) explored whether these stressors were replaced by others due to the new pandemic context. For their participants, the school closures associated with the pandemic generated increased stress related to feelings of uncertainty and worry relative to vulnerable students and families. The stresses associated with teacher workload and behaviour management were no longer at the forefront of the participants' concerns. These findings provide a reminder of the role that school context can play in teachers' experiences. The participants in my study worked with quite an affluent student demographic. Hence, the stressors and concerns they experienced understandably differed, at least to some extent, from educators teaching in other contexts. A similarity, though, was that the pandemic did encourage teachers to consider 'more holistic approaches' relative to 'learning, assessment, and well-being' (Kim & Asbury, 2020).

I thought that the teachers' pastoral roles would have increased in the online setting. However, it was hard for the school to figure out how to provide that type of support to students online. Especially since everyone was already spending countless hours in front of a computer screen, extending that time even longer for advisories or pastoral care was ineffective.

The changes the participants experienced in their roles, or at least in the extent to which they had to perform certain roles within the online professional context, did not necessarily result in a shift in professional identity. Instead, these were more pragmatic shifts in the requirements or nature of their duties within the online context of the pandemic. Since their roles and responsibilities returned broadly to how they were before the pandemic, the participants might not have discerned any particular changes in the fundamental characteristics of their TPIs. These findings resonate with those of El-Soussi (2022:5), as her participants also 'agreed that their core beliefs stayed the same' despite their online teaching experiences during the pandemic.

Buchanan (2015) discusses how the educational policies, expectations, and regulations that structure a particular professional environment influence the position that teachers inhabit within that setting. Each school has its own job descriptions that a particular teacher needs to fulfil. For example, teachers are assigned a certain teaching load, an advisory class, and other extracurricular responsibilities. In the context of the pandemic at UIS, the participants experienced how their roles were simplified. Due to the isolation that occurred during the pandemic, many responsibilities could not be fulfilled. At the same time, because of the additional concerns related to the health crisis and the students' well-being, teachers were reminded of their roles outside of content dissemination. While they had to manage such uncertain and anxiety-inducing times, the extreme focus on exams from their pre-pandemic DP experiences became less of a priority. As discussed in section 6.4, the challenges during the pandemic reminded teachers of the importance of fostering and nurturing connections with their students. The same happened with the participants' pastoral roles and the heightened importance of interactions with students outside their subject responsibilities and expertise. All of the teachers were reminded of learning prerequisites related to student well-being and their overall willingness to learn. The teachers struggled to enact these pastoral duties online because of the limited time they had outside of meeting the pragmatic responsibilities of teaching the content they were still required to cover.

Although the participants could not fully enact their pastoral roles to the extent they would have liked due to time limitations and technological barriers, their experiences through the pandemic pushed them to carry over the reminder of this priority when they moved back into in-person teaching. Especially since students had not experienced face-to-face schooling for over a year, much of that pastoral care surfaced as a crucial area of focus because students needed to be supported, academically and socially, as they adapted to yet another change.

Ultimately, the pandemic did not change the fundamental understandings that the participants had of their roles and responsibilities. They had to return to pre-pandemic roles and responsibilities once they resumed in-person teaching. However, their pastoral role did amplify. The pandemic served as a reminder of this priority, which the participants then had to enact in person to support students in their post-pandemic schooling transition. To some extent, the participants did maintain their core beliefs about their roles and responsibilities. Still, the pandemic made them realise the degree to which their external professional environment dictated non-negotiable expectations they had to meet. The pandemic also changed the priority order of certain core beliefs, placing the pastoral responsibility further at the centre, which the participants then carried over in the post-pandemic period.

6.5.2 Perceptions of Assessment-Related Demands and Pressures

One theme that all the participants extensively discussed was related to how the academic and assessment-related demands imposed by their teaching context strongly shaped their professional priorities. The responsibilities they all felt to prepare their students for the DP examinations and the pressures associated with assessment performance dictated many of their professional approaches and demeanours. The participants acknowledged that the quantifiable measures associated with their students' exam performances were used to indicate their effectiveness and success. Initially, the pandemic's onset amplified the participants' perceptions of their role as content disseminators or assessment coaches. Especially since the pressures associated with the DP examinations lingered, with increased uncertainty and confusion surrounding these assessments, teachers felt that, at a minimum, they needed to do their best to cover the content that the students would be tested on during their final exams.

Although the pandemic seemed to amplify certain beliefs the participants had about the DP, it did not necessarily change them. The four teachers endorsed the DP's rigour, richness, breadth of curriculum, and the emphasis placed on critical thinking. However, they also criticised the overload of content, assessment-driven, results-oriented, and high-pressure learning environment represented by the programme. The pandemic seemed to fuel the participants' disapproval of these elements of the DP and their yearning for change. They wished the pandemic would have provided the incentive or drive towards the DP reinventing itself.

The performance-driven and assessment-focused approaches of the DP are not uncommon issues, especially with curricula at the culmination of high school. Additionally, these characteristics are challenging to change within any system because they are often part of the broader issue of a qualification- and degree-focused society (Buchanan, 2015). The pandemic did not shift the teachers' opinions related to the DP's assessment model. It just reinforced their conviction that having students complete numerous high-stakes exams at the end of the two culminating years of high school was a flawed approach. The pandemic highlighted the fixed, enduring characteristics of the DP, such as its more traditional assessment model, which remained unchanged even after the occurrence of radical contextual shifts associated with the COVID-19 health crisis.

The pandemic ultimately decreased the academic performance pressures placed on the participants because the DP exams were cancelled and the course content was decreased. The changes made teachers realise the amplitude of the previous accountability and performativity focus associated with their professional roles. The participants all expressed their disappointment related to how the DP returned to its original structures and guidelines once the pandemic subsided and the endemic period seemed to begin. The participants wished that the DP had realised that changing from its old models and frameworks would have been beneficial and warranted despite the return to in-person schooling. Instead, the IBO reinstated all of the components and elements included in the pre-pandemic courses rather than maintaining the pandemic's scaled-back version of the DP. The participants' teaching of the more manageable course content during the pandemic starkly contrasted the pre- and post-pandemic DP expectations. Their experiences of both scenarios accentuated their original conviction that the IB places excessive pressure and stress on students and teachers.

For some participants, their experience with the DP during the pandemic made them wonder about moving away from teaching this programme at one point in the future. Although the pandemic may not have newly incited this thought, it was amplified by it. The stresses and pressures associated with the programme were accentuated by the uncertainties the participants experienced during the pandemic. Although the curricular simplifications and the eventual cancellation of the examinations attempted to address these issues, the return to the pre-pandemic DP model made some of the teachers reconsider the strengths and limitations of the programme. They were all adamant about wanting to decrease content and remove some of the stress associated with the courses. They believed this would allow the students more time and space to engage with the content, think about it more deeply, and

further develop their critical thinking skills. By contrast, the current model seems to value students covering great breadths of content, acquiring it quickly, and then reproducing it under extremely pressured conditions.

The participants described the tensions they experienced between TPI elements that they valued, juxtaposed with the traits imposed and encouraged by the accountability and performativity characteristics of their professional environment. As suggested by Meyer and Rowan (2006), the continued increase in expectations associated with standardised assessments and student academic performances significantly impacts TPIs. In line with Buchanan's (2015) descriptions of how teachers ultimately are delineated or restricted in complying with certain TPI elements that match with dominant policies and expectations surrounding student performance, the participants in my study experienced a similar phenomenon. Although they openly expressed their frustration and disappointment, they had to accept these circumstances.

Literature on academic performance priorities and the effects on TPI suggest that, in some cases, international teachers may be less affected by these expectations and requirements. For example, Day et al. (2007) claim that some international schools have lower levels of accountability pressures. Due to the absence of institutionalised inspections such as those imposed within many national systems, Bailey and Cooker (2019) also found that the international teachers in their study expressed fewer concerns related to the academic performance pressures of their professional roles. The participants in my study do not seem to fall within this category, since one of their main areas of concern was related to supporting their students with their DP achievements, which would then impact their future acceptances and their continued academic journeys.

Overall, the participants' desire to see the DP change from its extreme exam-driven practices was amplified by their experience through the pandemic. However, as Oliver clarified, he realised he did not have a particular solution to the persisting problem. He mentioned that he did not feel the performance-based and exam-driven nature of the DP could change if higher education and universities did not change as well. Despite educational research and the widespread discourse on topics such as the importance of applied learning, change has been slow and difficult. Notwithstanding the incorporation of elements to give some semblance of constructivist learning, the DP remains extremely traditional in its approach and expectations of its students.

6.6 Evaluating Theme 4: Technology-Mediated Teaching Linked to TPI

The term 'technology' encompasses a vast set of tools and media. In this study, technology refers to online learning platforms such as Google Classroom, communication software such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom, and electronic tools, programmes, and software that the participants used to teach during the pandemic. Helen was the only one who mentioned the incorporation of technology within her teaching as an element contributing to her pre-pandemic professional identity. Of course, technology was a key element of her subject area and the content that she taught. As part of that, it was important for her to model the use of different technology tools throughout her lessons. The other three participants did not mention their use of technology within their teaching practices in the interviews about their pre-pandemic professional identities. They did not discuss any traits or values related to technology-supported teaching and learning in their narratives about their pre-pandemic professional personas. This does not mean that they did not use technology. However, it suggests that educational technology was not in the foreground of the participants' reflections on the characteristics and elements that constituted their pre-pandemic TPIs. Other qualities, traits, and areas were of greater focus during that time. Hence, they did not attribute sections of their narratives to describing elements related to technology-mediated teaching and their perceived pre-pandemic professional identities.

Although teachers often attend PD opportunities related to educational technologies, these trainings do not necessarily guarantee the application and usage of these tools within lessons. The pandemic seemed to act as a catalyst that forced teachers to use more technology tools. While technology was previously lauded as a way for teachers to improve their lessons but was not a requirement, the pandemic shifted the teachers' approaches when educational technology became a necessity. The pandemic prompted teachers to experiment more with technology, as they were forced to familiarise themselves with a broader range of tools that could help them deliver their lessons in an online setting.

The pandemic seemed to prompt teachers to consider how technology could make a positive difference in their teaching practices rather than it simply being an add-on tool they used. In fact, they experienced how technology could support them to use class time more effectively. The discussions surrounding technology made me realise that teachers often still view technology cautiously. Indeed, they sense technology's potential in moving education

forward, but concerns related to technology's distraction potential sometimes seem to take precedence. Returning to the previous model of teaching in-person, through more traditional means, seems to be the safest option. As Helen mentioned, in her role as a parent before the pandemic, she placed strict rules around screen time for her children. Once the pandemic happened, all of this changed because technology became everyone's 'window into the world.' The amount of content consumed through technology, the learning that can happen through all forms of digital consumption, and the potential role that technology can play in performing certain tasks warrant a re-evaluation of what schools ask students to learn and the skills they are supported to develop.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, El-Soussi (2022) investigated the impact of the transition to online learning on the professional identities of a cohort of university teachers. El-Soussi (2022:1) posited that the differences between in-person and online learning could prompt the development of an 'online teacher identity,' especially since even seasoned practitioners could feel like novice teachers again. The researcher considered how a transition to full, long-term online teaching would require more than just a superficial use of technology tools to disseminate information. Instead, genuine online teaching and learning would require a shift in teachers' 'underlying beliefs' about their practice and a change in their view of 'their roles as educators' (El-Soussi, 2022:2). Teachers' pedagogical beliefs relative to how technology can or should be incorporated in their teaching can act as hindrances or encouragements towards change. Regarding the transition to online teaching practices, teachers whose professional beliefs align more closely with technology-enhanced learning will likely experience greater success in adapting to a distance-learning context (El-Soussi, 2022 referencing Gerbic, 2011). Conversely, teachers with incongruent beliefs relative to incorporating technology in their pedagogy 'tend to either avoid using it or utilise it in ways unrelated to their pedagogical beliefs' (El-Soussi, 2022:2 referencing Jonker et al., 2018; Steel, 2009). The four participants in this study were not novice users of technology, as they had a range of technological aptitudes and employed technology in their pre-pandemic face-to-face lessons to varying degrees. However, apart from Helen, the other three participants mostly relied on technology as a tool for content-dissemination purposes, both before and during the pandemic, rather than consistently using it as an integral part of their students' learning. Once the pandemic forced schools to transition to virtual teaching and learning, the participants realised that elements of their in-person teaching personas could not simply transfer into the online space. They had to renegotiate their interactions and professional presence through the technological medium. At the same time, they did not entirely lose sight of core elements that they strove to maintain as part of their TPIs. With

their school's support, the participants explored the use of new educational technologies that allowed them to provide students with learning experiences related to the curriculum content.

It is difficult to categorise the level of congruence between the participants' pedagogical beliefs and their use of technology since they went through a complex process of negotiating their TPIs while they experienced the sudden radical shifts of the pandemic. As suggested by McNaughton and Billot (2016), who explored the impact of technological contextual change on teacher identity, an alignment between the participants' pedagogical values and those of their surrounding context did not mean that their daily practice with teaching online was devoid of incongruencies and struggles with identity ambiguities. Going back to Sahling and de Carvalo's (2021) typology of international teachers and their TPIs, the participants in my study did take the stance of 'learners' in the context of the pandemic. The pandemic prompted them to cultivate learner aspects of their TPIs since they were required to explore and adapt to this new professional context, similar to their experiences with moving to different countries and new schools. The participants did approach the transition to the pandemic online learning environment with an open mind and a willingness to adapt to teaching in new ways to the best of their abilities. This resonates with the suggestion that, although not unique to this group of practitioners, the TPIs of international teachers may favour adaptability to change since they have experienced radical shifts in their teaching contexts more often, even outside of the pandemic. The participants accepted the changes that needed to happen due to online learning, but their abrupt nature meant that the degree of choice and opportunity for exploring options were limited. Out of necessity, the participants' underlying beliefs about the use of technology as part of their teaching approaches were not as relevant. Instead, their drive and ambition to support their students' learning meant that they took on the challenge of having technology play a more significant role in their practices and identities. Hence, for this group of participants, their pre-pandemic technology-related TPI characteristics supported a more exploratory and accepting approach to the pandemic experience, where they recognised their roles as learners in finding new approaches to technology-enhanced teaching.

Similar to Baran et al.'s (2011) observations of participants who shifted from traditional teaching into an online environment, the four teachers in my study approached the transition to the pandemic context of online learning with an open mind and a willingness to adapt and teach in new ways. As Baran et al. (2011) note, their participants could adjust their practices to an online setting, while their underlying teaching and learning beliefs remained unchanged. The current study resonates with these findings that, despite the unique context

of the pandemic, it was still a temporary experience, which did not necessarily mean that the fundamental characteristics of the participants' TPIs changed. They were prompted to view technology as more of an essential tool in supporting teaching rather than a surface-level optional add-on. However, the pandemic still encouraged a more 'survival mode' approach for teachers to get through the days and the content as best as possible. It provided teachers with an opportunity to trial different tools, technology-supported teaching options, and experiment with different platforms, which the participants found valuable. Nonetheless, the transition back to in-person schooling also meant a return to older practices and approaches.

6.7 Evaluating Theme 5: Future Perspectives on the Role of In-Person Schooling Linked to TPI

Even before the pandemic, the participants valued education and their profession as essential to society. The pandemic reinforced and amplified their feelings that in-person teaching cannot easily be replaced with online learning. In particular, the experience with online learning made the teachers realise that the interactions, relationship-building, and socialisation aspects of education, which usually happen in person, cannot be replicated in a virtual environment. The pandemic reinforced the participants' perceptions that physical schools still play a crucial role in society, not simply because of the responsibility of educating the younger generation but also simply in terms of their usage as locations where children spend most of their day while their parents are at work. Ultimately, although the participants could adapt to online teaching to support the students as best as possible, they all felt some elements of in-person learning could never be replicated within the virtual environment.

Overall, the participants seemed to have reached the consensus that the pandemic reinforced the idea that schools, as institutions where people physically meet and interact, are vital even in today's technologically oriented society. The belief that the continued advancements in technology could replace teachers or schooling has surfaced over the last decades, as new waves of technology tools infused all aspects of society, including education. However, the pandemic seems to have suggested that the values and benefits of in-person schooling cannot simply be replaced or replicated by an online version of the same experience. Of course, various learning environments can benefit individuals differently based on a range factors and considerations. Still, online learning may not be the desired direction that education should head towards. So, although elements of online learning and the tools used in that

context may transfer into the classroom in the post-pandemic period, the pandemic did cement the idea of the essential role that physical schools play as locations where students can go. Based on their personal experiences in their specific contexts during the pandemic, the participants agreed that in-person teaching is unparalleled.

Only one participant shared an additional perspective on in-person schooling versus the online format. Based on her experience teaching DP Design in both settings, Helen developed a firmer opinion that the course could be taught effectively, even online. She envisioned that DP Design could be taught like a 'Massive Open Online Course' (MOOC), with appropriately trained teachers in the content and online teaching and learning pedagogies rather than in the traditional format.

Although the participants described their views of the essential role that in-person teaching offers students, they mentioned that some students were thriving in the online environment. Time management skills and self-motivation abilities seemed to be critical factors affecting the students' abilities to focus and excel in online learning. So, although the participants agreed that the pandemic reinforced the importance of in-person teaching, it also gave teachers and students alike the chance to experience what online education is like, which could allow them to make an informed decision surrounding the format and environment they preferred.

Simon (2012) found that the transition his participants experienced from in-person to online teaching disrupted their professional identities, given how their traditional teaching approaches could not directly translate into the virtual space. He discussed a phenomenon of seemingly fragmented identities, as the participants experienced struggles associated with shifting and merging their face-to-face teaching selves and online teaching identities. Simon's (2012) findings resonate with the narratives shared by my participants, as they recalled elements of their pre-pandemic TPIs and realised they could not directly transfer those into the pandemic's virtual teaching space. The participants held onto pre-pandemic professional values and beliefs but had to make adaptations to the ways in which they could enact those while teaching online. The differences between virtual and face-to-face teaching, as well as the new educational parameters imposed by the IBO during the pandemic, foregrounded some sub-identities over others and prompted the teachers to discern key elements of their TPIs that they missed or wanted to cultivate further upon returning to in-person teaching. Additionally, like the teachers in Simon's (2012) study, my participants

shared their preference for in-person teaching and their yearning to maintain the characteristics of their face-to-face teacher identities.

6.8 Conclusion

Before hearing about the participants' experiences through the pandemic, I expected that some elements of their identities might not have been affected. I believed that some core aspects of their TPI would stay intact, regardless of the pandemic changes and challenges, because I thought these represented traits that would remain at the foundation of the professional individuals they represented and enacted, independent of context. In fact, I thought that the pandemic would reinforce and amplify some of those identity characteristics, given the challenging context of teaching during that time. For example, I was expecting that the participants' original motivation to work with students and support their learning would translate into a renewed drive to help them through even more difficult circumstances. This may have been an idealistic hope of mine rather than an expectation since I know of the significant demands of the DP, which requires highly invested teachers. Following my discussions with the participants about their pre-pandemic identities, I could sense that their levels of commitment to their students and the efforts they put into teaching during the pandemic were unwavering or even heightened by the demands of online learning.

At the same time, though, I was not sure what to expect relative to the participants' level of motivation while teaching during the pandemic since I did not understand the full extent of having to teach multiple whole classes virtually. I imagined it could be draining and demoralising, but I did not know how much this affected the participants' job motivation, self-image, or self-esteem. The participants were highly resilient to the trials they faced during the pandemic. They treated the changes as a chance to reflect and explore ways in which they could become better teachers, even in a virtual context. Their pre-existing concern for self-development meant that they were receptive to the challenges posed by their roles and responsibilities of teaching during the pandemic, which helped them adapt relatively smoothly to the new situation.

Overall, I was surprised and somewhat disappointed to sense that the pandemic did not seemingly have as large of an impact on education as I would have expected. I thought it could have acted as a catalyst for change and an opportunity for everyone to reflect on some of the long-term, enduring components, approaches, and priorities endorsed by education

systems such as the IB DP. The pandemic ultimately seemed to be a relatively short intermission from the established norms that teachers, students, and whole school systems were set to follow. Of course, it might be too early to discern what changes the pandemic will bring. Yet, at least in the short-term since the pandemic restrictions have been lifted, the main priority has been to return to the pre-pandemic model.

Despite the pandemic being, in quite a few senses, less demanding for teachers relative to the constant burdens and responsibilities they experienced during in-person teaching, all of the participants realised how much they missed and valued teaching in a physical classroom setting. Regarding their perception of their professional roles, the pandemic did not seem to increase their pastoral responsibilities. The challenges associated with connecting with students and forming meaningful relationships, and the logistical concerns of decreasing screen time as much as possible, meant that the participants did not experience increased demands in their non-teaching roles. The teachers were somewhat limited to teaching as best they could, in whatever capacity and through whatever means they could use, while waiting for the return to in-person instruction.

The pandemic prompted teachers to reflect upon their values and priorities, although it may not have incited a lasting change in these. The participants expressed their concerns about the pressures and unrealistic expectations of programmes such as the IB DP and their hopes that education would move away from heavily content-based courses and rote-learning expectations. However, the ultimate realisation was that, without a change in the system itself, changes at the level of school structures, expectations, and teaching practices are difficult and unwarranted. Hence, the participants' TPIs seemed minimally affected by the pandemic, especially since they were required to return to their pre-pandemic professional norms and expectations. Once the pandemic restrictions lifted, the drive towards the 'old normal' seemed to attempt to erase any memory of the experience. This made elements of the participants' online TPI seem rather fleeting.

Chapter 7 – Conclusions and Implications

7.1 Introduction

My dissertation aimed to investigate the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the perceived professional identities of IB DP teachers. I decided to research this topic by examining the stories of four participants related to their pre-, during, and post-pandemic teaching experiences. Through three NIs, I used open-ended prompts to guide the participants into reflecting on their teaching journeys and aspects such as their professional self-image, self-esteem, teaching motivation, professional roles and responsibilities, and their perspectives on the future of education. I investigated these elements of their TPIs to learn whether some aspects may have been affected by their teaching experiences during the pandemic. Quite expectedly, the answer to my research question is far from simple or straightforward.

In this chapter, I revisit the data presented in Chapters Four and Five, as well as my analysis from Chapter Six, to summarise my findings and answers to my main research question and sub-questions. Next, I reflect on my learning relative to the topic of TPI. I also evaluate the methodology, including its strengths and limitations. In light of this, I suggest areas for further research. Finally, I discuss possible implications of this research for ongoing teacher professional development (PD) and school communities.

7.2 Addressing the Research Questions

Teachers must navigate through the demands and challenges they face in their work context to make sense of themselves as professionals in that environment. Their self-image and role as teachers affect their actions and decisions during their interactions with those around them. With the unprecedented context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions imposed during that time, I wondered whether IB DP teachers experienced a shift in their perceived professional identities. I wanted to know whether the pandemic would remind teachers of elements of their past TPIs that may have changed as they progressed through their teaching careers, or whether their TPIs would take on new forms in the challenging context of the pandemic.

7.2.1 Sub-Question 1 Findings: The Participants' Pre-Pandemic TPIs

The participants identified some contextual factors that influenced their career choice and contributed to their initial TPI development. Three of the participants shared that they were engaged in various teaching-related activities before officially training to become teachers. Their volunteer work, teaching opportunities in the context of their travels abroad, and even teaching responsibilities as part of their previous jobs, helped them realise that it would be a profession they wanted to pursue. The three participants also identified certain role models or key individuals who contributed to their ultimate career decision. These individuals provided inspiration and insight that conferred some interest in the profession before the participants ultimately enrolled in teacher training. The fourth participant followed a more unexpected trajectory into the teaching profession. Helen was offered a non-teaching role at a newly opened IB school without intentionally seeking or applying for the position. Her experiences as an IB student encouraged her to accept the position, eventually inspiring her to train as a teacher. Ultimately, my interviews suggested that positive experiences within the world of education, whether through direct teaching-related experiences, individuals already in the profession, or the participants' experiences in school, were key elements in influencing the participants' pre-pandemic professional identities. Based on this finding, I developed Figure 2, an edited version of the diagram in Figure 1 from page 27 above, to highlight how the situational contexts (labelled as an additional element in the light green sphere) that individuals get to experience are key sources of influence in shaping their initial TPIs. I also added a background sphere (in dark green) to represent how professionals interpret all of the contexts they experience and filter the external feedback they receive through their own perceptions and interpretive lenses. It is through the interpretation and interaction within these contexts that their TPIs take form and evolve.

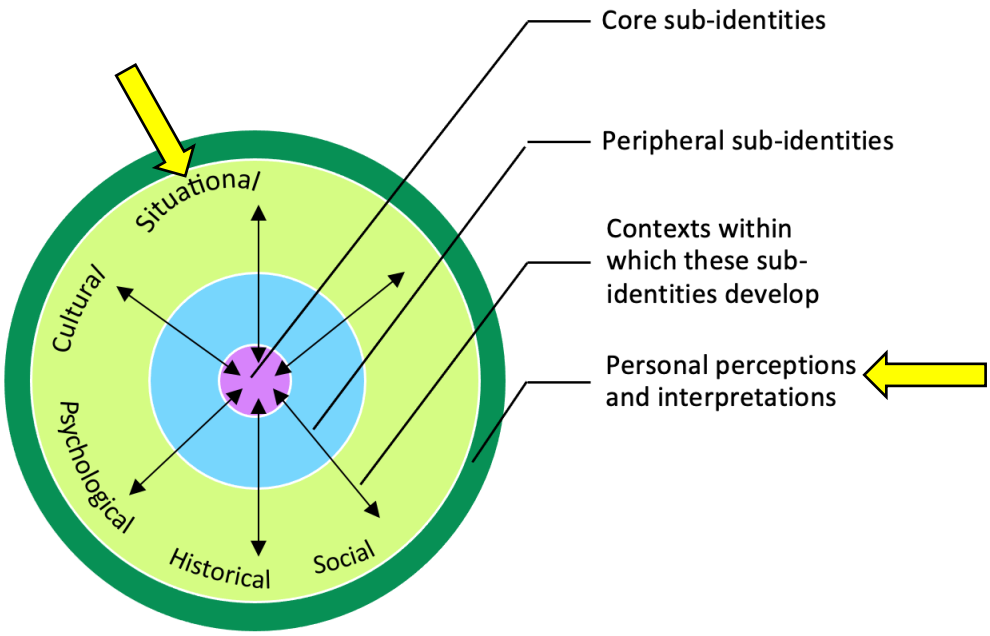


Figure 2: An edited version of Figure 1 from page 27 above to include the role of individuals' situational contexts, as well as their personal perceptions and interpretations of those contexts, in shaping their overall TPI.

The characteristics of the educational system the participants experienced while growing up and in the early phases of their professional development impacted their decisions to become international teachers and cultivate their international TPIs. Three of the participants were encouraged towards the international teaching arena by certain flaws in the professional opportunities and academic provision available within the national system in their home countries. The teacher surplus, competitive professional environment, frustrations associated with classroom management issues, and the lower level of curricular rigour, prompted Daniel, Oliver, and Michael to pursue an international teaching career. Like these three participants, Helen valued the high standards and more progressive, research-supported approaches at IB schools relative to national curriculum ones. In Helen's case, her experiences as an IB student further enhanced her motivation to become an IB teacher. Her sense of belonging and alignment with the characteristics of IB schools were crucial elements that contributed to her pursuit of an IB teaching career. Overall, the participants' stories of how they ended up teaching internationally indicate that a combination of push factors discouraged them from teaching or continuing to teach at a national curriculum school. At the same time, other characteristics attracted them to the international school

context. These included the academic rigour and diversity at these schools and personal reasons such as the novelty associated with increased travel opportunities.

The participants' narratives surrounding the elements they identified as having influenced their pre-pandemic TPIs suggest that both 'push' and 'pull' factors encourage a teacher's identity to change in a particular direction. Some contextual influences can prompt an identity evolution that foregrounds and accentuates specific values and beliefs. In other instances, a contextual factor can act as a deterrent that prompts a different trajectory for an individual's TPI development. To represent this finding (see Figure 3), I added horizontal double-sided arrows beneath each example of contextual influences labelled in Figure 2.

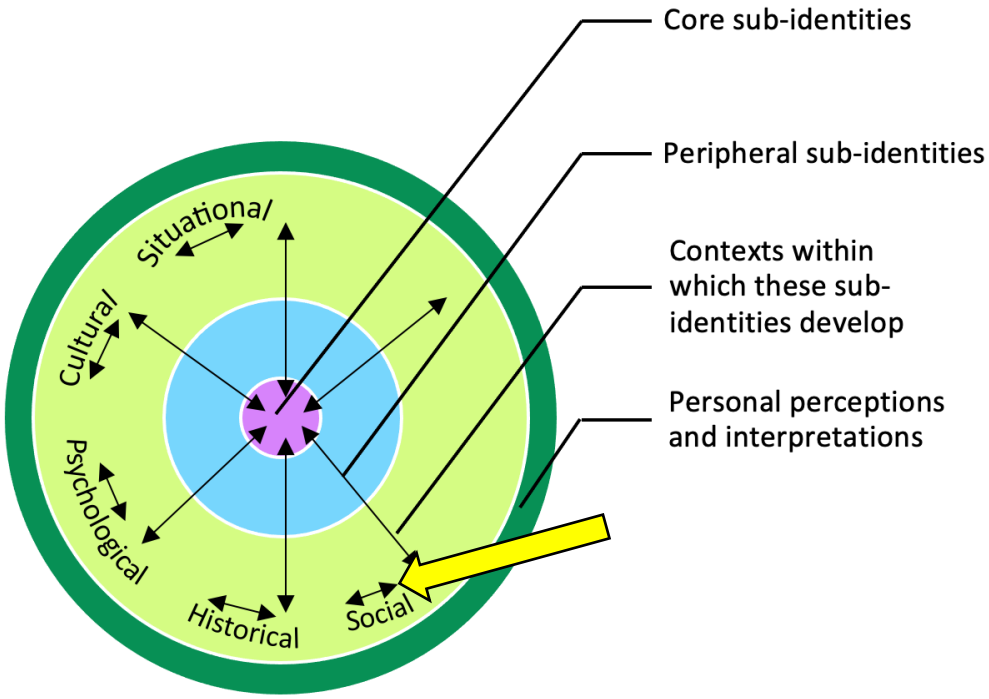


Figure 3: An edited version of Figure 2 to represent the push-pull characteristics of the contextual factors influencing an individual's TPI.

The findings from the participants' pre-pandemic narratives also highlight that TPI development is an extensive, long-term process shaped not just by a range of contexts but by influences from across an individual's lifespan. Past contexts, ranging from a teacher's childhood and upbringing to pre-training experiences, can contribute, to different degrees, towards their TPI development. To represent this finding (see Figure 4), I added vertical double-sided arrows beneath each example of contextual influences labelled in Figure 3. Therefore, these four-directional arrows signify the push-pull characteristics of the

contextual factors influencing TPI as well as the past-present continuum over which these influences span.

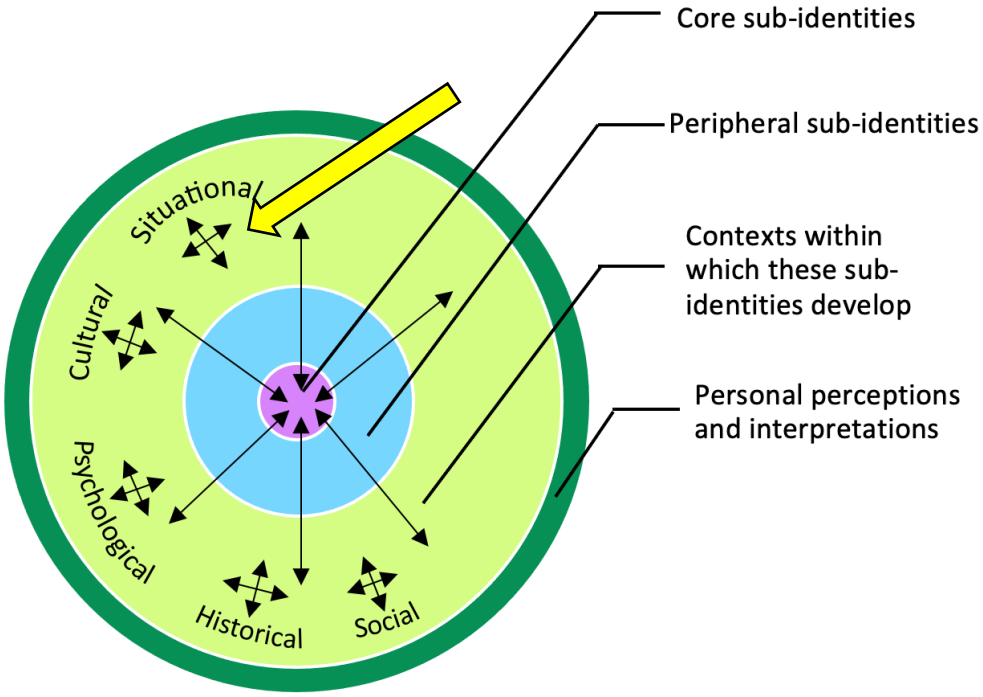


Figure 4: An edited version of Figure 3 to represent the past-present continuum over which the influence of contextual factors on TPI spans.

The participants' narratives surrounding their journeys through teacher training suggested that their experiences associated with obtaining their professional certification did not play a significant role in shaping their TPIs. Three participants considered that the theoretical aspects of their certification programmes were minimally impactful in shaping them professionally but that the practical components of their training more significantly influenced their TPIs. They perceived a disconnect between their training courses and the teaching realities within a classroom setting. All the participants described how they resonated, to varying degrees, with the practices and suggestions of their mentor teachers. In some cases, the characteristics of their mentors' teaching styles represented traits they followed as exemplars for their own TPI formation. In other instances, the practices of certain mentors portrayed professional characteristics that the participants realised did not align with their own developing TPIs. Hence, the data from my study suggest that, rather than viewing teacher training as a key influencing context in shaping TPI, the interactions between the individuals within that context and the practical aspects of their experiences are more critical in impacting TPI development. Additionally, the formative experiences that the

participants had during their teacher training were still shaped by certain cultural, psychological, historical, and social characteristics. The participants agreed that their practical, applied experiences and interactions during their different teacher education contexts played a role in their TPI development, not the theoretical components of their training courses.

The participants also discussed their subject-area expertise and their TPI formation, although there was no unidirectional connection. For some participants, the perspectives they developed relative to the content knowledge they were teaching shaped their professional identities and practices. The reverse was also true, since some participants shared the perception that their pedagogical expertise shaped their identities more strongly as teachers of a particular subject matter.

Ultimately, the participants' narratives surrounding their pre-pandemic TPIs highlight the key finding that an individual's exposure to and interaction within multiple contexts across their lifetime, even from an early age, can shape their professional identity. Characteristics such as the social, historical, psychological, cultural, and situational features of a particular context, along with an individual's interactions within that context, act as push-pull factors that are filtered through each individual's perceptions and interpretations. In this way, each professional's identity uniquely (trans)forms across their various experiences in different contexts over time.

7.2.2 Sub-Question 2 Findings: The Participants' Assessment of Their Pandemic TPIs

Given the findings surrounding the clear impact that contexts and the interactions within those contexts have on an individual's TPI, the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a new landscape where the participants continued cultivating their professional identities. In fact, just like the participants had to navigate through new school environments during their travels within the international school network, the distance learning context of the pandemic could be considered another school in itself.

The five themes that surfaced from the participants' NIs provided an insight into their perceived professional identities across their experiences before and during the pandemic, as well as those immediately after the return to in-person teaching.

Theme 1: Student-Centred Teaching Philosophies Linked to TPI

The first major theme that emerged from the data was related to the contributions of student-centred teaching philosophies on the participants' TPIs. All participants emphasised that their pre-pandemic TPIs were strongly impacted by their aims to follow inquiry-based teaching approaches, which would allow students to actively engage in applied learning opportunities that encouraged the development of critical thinking skills. Additionally, the participants valued authentic, contextually relevant learning that gave their students experiences with the applications of their education to real-world situations. The pandemic context challenged the participants' abilities to enact the student-centred teaching philosophies they valued. Although some participants were able to transition to online learning more seamlessly than others, they all found it more difficult to engage the students in the practical and applied aspects of their courses. The participants' experiences during the pandemic with acting more as disseminators of content knowledge, rather than facilitators of active learning, prompted them to re-assess the importance of the student-centred teaching philosophies that drove their practice. During the pandemic, the four teachers in this study strove to portray the elements of their TPIs informed by student-centred teaching philosophies. The context of the pandemic made it more difficult for the participants to transfer and enact some of these TPI traits into their teaching online. Hence, some shifts did occur within the participants' different sub-identity layers. In this case, the pandemic could be viewed as a temporary disruptive background setting that caused a ripple effect in shifting the participants' various peripheral sub-identities. To visually represent this concept (see Figure 5), I added multiple concentric circles (in white) within the blue circle denoting an individual's peripheral sub-identities.

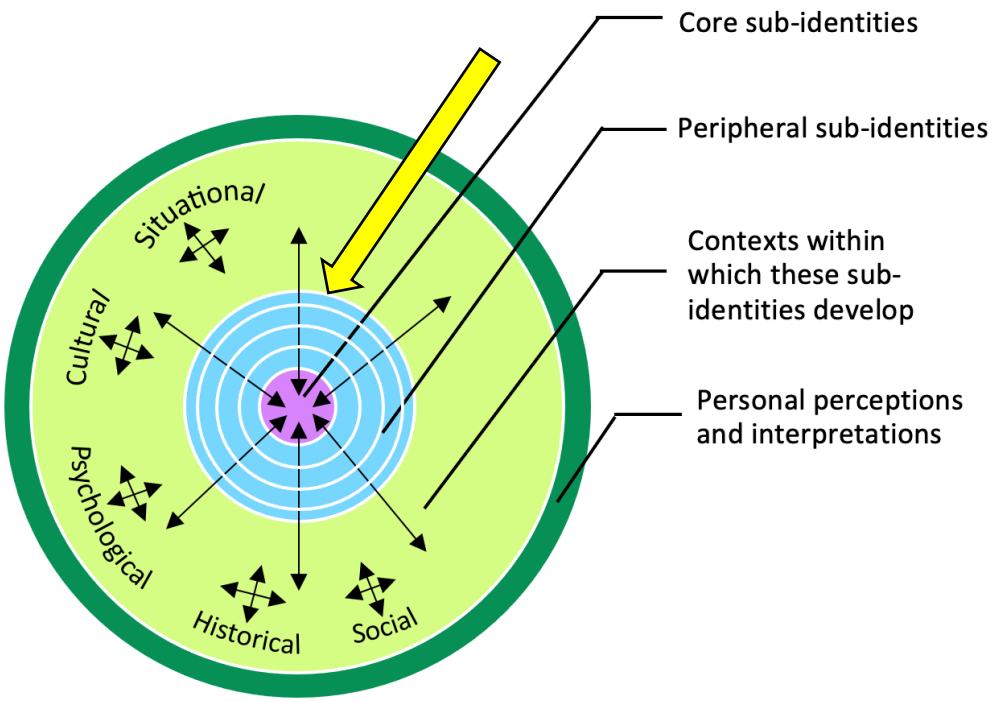


Figure 5: An edited version of Figure 4 to represent the fluctuations in a teacher's peripheral professional sub-identities.

However, some of the participants' core identity values, such as the ones associated with their student-centred teaching philosophies, remained intact. In fact, these core identity values were amplified by their experiences through the pandemic, even if they had to adapt their practices to teaching online. Ultimately, my findings suggest that, while the pandemic caused rippling shifts in the participants' more malleable sub-identities, it did not alter their core beliefs, which, for these highly experienced teachers, seemed to be reasonably well-established perspectives surrounding themselves as professionals. TPI, therefore, can be conceptualised as both a process and a product of an individual's professional experiences. TPI evolves and fluctuates through a teacher's contextual interactions. Elements of a teacher's professional identity can adapt and shift in priority or intensity based on context. Concurrently, the experiences that teachers accumulate over time contribute to some core TPI components, representing foundation beliefs that may be more resilient to change.

Theme 2: Professional Community Interactions Linked to TPI

Similar findings surfaced from the participants' discussions of the second theme related to their interactions with students and colleagues. All participants discussed the importance of fostering meaningful relationships with their school community members. They considered

that nurturing authentic connections with their students was one of their fundamental responsibilities as teachers. The participants acknowledged that building strong teacher-student relationships increased student engagement and supported their learning. Hence, nurturing connections with students constituted another core identity element for all of the participants. Again, the participants' struggles with adapting to communicating and interacting with their students in a virtual setting, which created a barrier and a more formalised context for these connections, ended up amplifying the importance of this core component of their TPIs. The pandemic prompted the participants to remember the crucial role that human interaction played in their profession, especially after the isolating experiences of the pandemic and the challenges they faced with fostering such interactions in the online setting. Furthermore, it reminded the participants of the importance of holistically cultivating connections with their students to support their development as individuals rather than simply focusing on the pragmatic responsibilities of teaching a particular subject.

Although the participants identified that their pre-pandemic interactions with colleagues shaped their TPIs, the pandemic limited their ability to maintain these connections. The conversations and opportunities to collaborate with colleagues were limited in the online context since the participants were already spending excessive time on the computer. Continuing to cultivate connections with colleagues was not a priority during the pandemic, as the participants focused on adjusting their teaching to the online setting. Therefore, the isolation enforced as a response to the pandemic significantly impacted the participants' interactions with their colleagues. Interactions with colleagues used to be a source of PD, but during the pandemic the participants engaged in professional development more independently. One participant described how, as an international school teacher, fellow teachers become friends who fill some of the void that expats experience being away from their families back in their home countries. The personal and professional spheres of an international teacher's life blend strongly because the school community develops into their personal support network. The pandemic had two paradoxical effects. With the participants having to teach from home, the pandemic forced aspects of their professional and personal lives to overlap more significantly. The participants needed to set new boundaries and find ways to navigate the blending of both areas of their lives. By contrast, the pandemic concurrently forced teachers out of their physical school environments, which resulted in increased distancing and detachment from that community. Interactions with members of the school professional community were more limited, which hence severed some of the ties between their personal and professional lives. Although the participants did not feel they

could continue nurturing connections with their colleagues online, the pandemic encouraged them to value these interactions upon their return to in-person teaching. They made a more conscious effort to develop these relationships post-pandemic.

Theme 3: Professional Demands and Pressures Linked to TPI

A third theme from the interview narratives was related to the effects of professional demands and pressures on the participants' TPIs. The pandemic encouraged the participants to redirect some of their focus on roles and responsibilities they had somewhat neglected. The priorities associated with exam preparation and assessment performance had strongly shaped the participants' pre-pandemic TPIs and had overpowered or masked other duties, including the participants' pastoral roles. DP exams were cancelled and course syllabi were shortened during the pandemic. Although the participants still felt accountable for preparing their students to the best of their abilities in mastering the content knowledge and skills associated with each of their courses, they also reoriented their focus towards supporting the development of the student connections that would enhance learning.

To some extent, the pandemic affected the participants' roles paradoxically. While there was some simplification and decreased workloads, the participants were burdened by additional stressors and worries associated with the COVID-19 health crisis. The participants found it difficult to enact pastoral duties online but were reminded of their importance. The participants directed increased focus towards their students' well-being. They were encouraged to approach their profession more holistically to support their students' growth and development as individual human beings rather than just academically in a particular subject. Ultimately, although there were shifts in the professional demands that the participants faced online, these were all temporary. The pandemic did remind them of the significance of their pastoral roles, which became more of a priority even when they returned to in-person teaching since students needed social-emotional support to reintegrate and readapt to the school environment. Upon the return to in-person teaching, the school's expectations of the participants' professional roles and responsibilities returned to those they had pre-pandemic. The DP assessment-related demands resumed as well, accentuating the tensions the participants felt when they tried to reconcile their TPI characteristics with those imposed by their professional environment. The participants were disheartened that the pandemic had not encouraged modifications in their professional contexts upon the return to in-person teaching, which made the pandemic more of a temporary intermission rather than a disruptive circumstance catalysing change.

Theme 4: Technology-Mediated Teaching Linked to TPI

The fourth theme that emerged from the data was related to technology-mediated teaching and its impact on TPI. For one of the participants, the use of technology in her teaching was inextricably linked to her professional identity since she was teaching a technology-related subject. However, for the other participants, technology represented a tool they could use to support students in learning particular content or skills rather than a key source of influence in shaping their TPIs. The pandemic shifted the participants' practice to an online setting and required them to adapt their lessons to the virtual medium. Rather than simply acting as an add-on tool that teachers could incorporate as part of their lessons, the pandemic created a technological professional context where teachers had to enact their TPIs. It represented the context of learning and the location of all the interactions the participants experienced with their professional community. It was not just about teachers using more educational technology tools as part of their practice but about experiencing a new learning environment altogether. Hence, the participants' pre-pandemic professional values and beliefs, such as the degree to which they embraced rather than avoided technological changes and their willingness to adapt and experiment with other technology options, affected their approach to technology-mediated learning.

The technological medium the participants experienced during the pandemic encouraged them to explore different tools and teaching approaches, which foregrounded their professional identities as learners. The pandemic also highlighted the participants' adaptability and resilience to change, which could be attributed, at least in part, to their experiences as international teachers. They had previously experienced multiple transitions to countries and schools worldwide, where the school communities in themselves were naturally transient, too. Ultimately, the participants' experiences with the technological medium during the pandemic highlight how the interaction between their TPIs and their context was bi-directional. It was not just that the pandemic online teaching context was shaping their TPIs but that their incoming TPIs affected how they viewed and navigated through their experiences during the pandemic. Hence, the double-headed arrows are essential elements of Figure 5 since they depict how individuals' interactions within a particular context shape and are shaped by their core and peripheral sub-identities.

Theme 5: Future Perspectives on the Role of In-Person Schooling Linked with TPI

The fifth theme that arose from the participants' narratives was related to their future perspectives on in-person schooling. The pandemic caused a temporary contextual change, not just a teaching strategy or tool modification. The online learning environment and technology-mediated teaching experiences during the pandemic represented a new professional context, almost like a new school setting, where the teachers had to portray and enact their professional identities. This context was characterised by increased distance and isolation, challenges with fostering meaningful interactions and connections, and struggles with building a sense of community. Hence, it prompted the participants to re-evaluate the importance of in-person schooling. They were reminded of the fundamental role in-person schooling plays in promoting human connection and interaction, supporting the development of social skills, and cultivating the moral and ethical values of students as young members of society.

7.2.3 Sub-Question 3 Findings: Adjusted Understandings of TPI Following the Pandemic

The five themes that I identified from the interview data provided insight into how the COVID-19 pandemic adjusted some understandings of the participants' TPI.

Understanding 1: The pandemic highlighted that the participants had some core TPI elements they held onto that were fundamental to their overall identities, irrespective of the context or new challenging circumstances they faced. Some facets of the participants' professional identities were unwavering, even in the face of the adversities brought about by the pandemic. Hence, some TPI elements carried over from the participants' pre-pandemic selves into their experiences during and after the pandemic. These principal elements of the participants' TPIs were essential to what made them who they were as unique professionals.

Understanding 2: Peripheral sub-identities fluctuated regarding priority and strength while the participants negotiated their position within a particular context. A new context, such as the pandemic, foregrounded certain TPI characteristics while it pushed others into the background. These were more malleable TPI characteristics, which varied depending on the values promoted by the environment and community with which the participants interacted.

Understanding 3: TPI is dynamic in that it is a constant process of negotiation, conversation, and interaction between individuals and their surroundings. Individuals portray professional

values and beliefs in practice. They receive feedback from their environments and interactions, which continuously inform how their TPIs continue to evolve. Hence, even if some elements of TPI may remain unchanged, this does not mean it is a static set of traits. Instead, the dynamic nature of TPI refers to how teachers actively engage in making sense of their surroundings, along with their professional roles, responsibilities, and position within those contexts.

Understanding 4: Although this study investigated the potential effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had on TPI, it highlighted the reciprocal impacts that context and TPI have on each other. The participants faced the pandemic context using the perspectives informed by their pre-pandemic TPIs. Their existing professional identities affected how they interacted and interpreted the pandemic setting in which they maintained certain core values and beliefs. Concurrently, the COVID-19 context shaped how the participants' TPIs continued to evolve as they re-negotiated other TPI elements that shifted in priority level while they navigated through the pandemic teaching circumstances.

Understanding 5: TPI is dynamic but not volatile. The pandemic was a change of teaching context to which the participants had to adapt, just as they would have done while moving to a new school. Although the participants experienced the provisions and conditions associated with the pandemic for almost two years, and that timespan may have seemed relatively lengthy, changes in TPI do not necessarily happen quickly or easily. TPI represents the fundamental values and beliefs, blended and altered over time through various contexts and interactions, that frame who teachers are and how they act as professionals in their practice. As such, although some identity elements adapted to the online teaching context and became more pronounced, the pandemic did not seem to incite massive shifts in the participants' TPIs.

Understanding 6: TPI development and transformation is a lengthy process. Upon the return to in-person teaching, the attempts to shift back to pre-pandemic schooling made any identity shifts incited by the pandemic seem like a distant memory. The main priority of returning to the 'old normal' seemed to attempt to erase the memory of the pandemic and its effects. The contextual changes during the pandemic were seemingly temporary and fleeting, while shifts in an individual's TPI are a longer-term process. Therefore, although COVID-19 was an unprecedented massive disruption to all aspects of society, the immediate priority to return to pre-pandemic norms and expectations undermined the strength of the pandemic's impact on TPI.

Understanding 7: TPI can be conceptualised more as a process than a distinct collection of professional traits. The participants' narratives surrounding their TPIs across their pre-, during, and post-pandemic experiences underline the critical role that practice plays in its development in a particular context. Professional identity does not evolve through passive reflections and theoretical considerations surrounding the profession and its roles. Instead, TPI develops actively while an individual is in the process of enacting that identity. Hence, rather than viewing TPI as a noun comprising a set of static characteristics, it should be treated as a verb since a teacher's professional identity exists and evolves through lived experiences and interactions in context.

7.3 Reflecting on My Own Learning Relative to TPI

Through this research, I got to know four highly experienced DP teachers, all with over 10 years of teaching experience beyond my own. I admired them for their perseverance through the pandemic as full-time teachers. I was not faced with the same circumstances as they were since I was a stay-at-home mum, a part-time mathematics and science tutor, and a part-time postgraduate research student when the pandemic started. I could not fathom teaching an entire class of students over Zoom. I tried to envision it, but I was limited in my perception of the challenges associated with the lack of face-to-face interactions and the limited hands-on learning. If I had been in a similar position as the participants, my TPI would have been shaken by self-doubt relative to my teaching abilities. Hence, my interviews with the participants were eye-opening since I gained a glimpse into their professional lives through the pandemic. I was inspired by the grace, tact, and compassion with which they faced the unfathomable challenges they experienced in all aspects of their lives. I was encouraged and motivated by their empathy for their students, their perseverance through struggles, and their resilience while adapting to change.

My dedication to this study for the last two years has continued to fuel my passion for and conviction surrounding the importance of TPI, especially because of its link to a teacher's sense of purpose. I have personally experienced how teachers can face tensions between the TPI characteristics they prioritise versus the ones their surrounding context aims to cultivate. Teaching roles that prioritise student content mastery and examination performance above everything else can neglect the crucial ways teachers can support the holistic growth of their students. Teachers can then experience frustrations associated with the misguided purpose

of the profession. Their yearning for change, combined with the disheartening reality that change is not just difficult and excruciatingly slow but also challenged by massive oppositional forces, can impact their motivation to remain in the profession. Conflicts between personal and contextual TPI priorities can lead to a loss of professional direction, demotivation, and a decreased sense of purpose. Teachers may pragmatically complete expected tasks and attempt to keep up with the demands of their jobs, but other than that, they can lose their drive surrounding the meaning of their profession and their role within it. The participants in my study remained resilient through the pandemic, as core elements of their TPIs sustained their motivation and drive to support their students even during highly challenging times.

My exploration of TPI through this study has developed my understanding that, although the concept of identity is complex and quite abstract, it is significant in supporting teachers in their continued growth and fulfilment within the profession. A sense of purpose is a deeply ingrained human need, inextricably linked to an individual's identity. Beyond the pragmatic elements of teachers' professional roles, the underlying meaning of what they do affects their sense of belonging and fulfilment, which feeds into their sense of purpose and practice.

My journey through this EdD study has transformed my understanding of my past experiences while I was a full-time teacher. I have carried feelings of disappointment and regret with me since I decided to discontinue full-time teaching. I knew that the incongruencies between my last professional environment and the values I upheld at the core of my TPI led to a level of professional demotivation and disenchantment that ultimately resulted in me losing sight of my fundamental passion for teaching. I accepted the situation and did not consider how, in a different setting, I could regain my drive, ambition, and commitment to the profession. The findings from this study have emphasised the dynamic interaction between teachers' professional identities and the characteristics of the contexts within which they enact those identities. A school setting supporting the development of my TPI in alignment with my non-negotiable professional values and beliefs would encourage a renewed sense of professional purpose and meaning. This study has transformed my perspective on my own identity as a teacher and the fundamental priorities that characterise my professional self. It has generated the conviction that, perhaps one day, I may return to full-time teaching within a professional setting that is better aligned with my TPI.

7.4 Evaluating the Methodology

7.4.1 Strengths of the Methodology

The complexity and unique features of professional identity, which were further amplified by the pandemic focus of my study, made it a topic well-served by a narrative research methodology. The topic was well-suited for the narrative inquiry approach because it was studied through the participants' individual lenses and unique experiences. I was able to focus on each of the participants and their unique stories. I allowed the participants to share their stories in a more open-ended manner, which meant that they could share what was most meaningful, memorable, or relevant to each of them, within the parameters provided by the research topic and guiding questions. Using an inductive approach, rather than a more prescribed framework to analyse the data, further supported my intention to develop my understanding of TPI in the context of the pandemic through the participants' unique perspectives of their own specific circumstances.

Another strength of my methodology was that I had three opportunities to connect with the teachers and multiple chances to ask follow-up questions based on previous interview content. My small sample size made it manageable for me to plan for these multiple opportunities and lengthier conversations with each of the teachers in the timeframe I had for undertaking this research.

My transcription approach was another strength of my methodology since it supported my detailed familiarisation with the data and a careful identification of key ideas and themes from the narratives. Although it was a lengthy process, the multiple iterations I went through to obtain the final detailed and annotated transcripts were paramount in supporting my data analysis.

7.4.2 Limitations of the Methodology

One limitation of my study is related to the age profile of my participants. The four participants had between 17 and 26 years of teaching experience. One associated drawback of this cohort characteristic is that the participants' pre-pandemic TPIs spanned and developed over an extensive amount of time. It may have been difficult for the participants to recall characteristics of their early TPIs since they started teaching a long time ago.

Secondly, as seasoned practitioners, each with around two decades of experience, the participants may have had more rigid TPIs from having been in the profession for so long. My participants' TPIs may have been less malleable and more established because of their status as senior teachers. The participants may have had a more robust, unwavering set of TPI elements, which were less affected by contextual changes. Still, the participants had to navigate through the unprecedented context of the pandemic while exploring and enacting their TPIs. This gave rise to the participants' unique reflections and understandings related to their TPIs, which informed the findings of this study. Ultimately, I could still address the research questions using the experiences of this particular group of participants and share the findings that surfaced from their specific perspectives.

Another potential limitation is that the four participants all worked at the same school. This means that the findings only reflect the pandemic experiences of this institution. Still, there are some advantages to this aspect of my study too. Every school set up different online learning platforms and delineated unique expectations for their teachers and students during the pandemic. Hence, the variations in how other schools responded to the pandemic restrictions and transferred their physical schooling experiences into a virtual setting may have affected TPI in different ways. Given these differences and variations, it may have been more difficult for me to compare the participants' narratives and discern certain congruencies in how their experiences through the pandemic may have affected their TPIs.

My own past experiences as an IB teacher and the perspectives I developed from that role could have acted as a limitation in the way I developed my understandings of the participants' narratives. I could have upheld preconceived notions or expectations of the participants' experiences based on the lenses through which I was interpreting their stories. The nature of my methodological approach, the interpretivist research paradigm that grounded my study, and the subjectivist and relativist perspectives that framed my study supported the trustworthiness of my research (see the discussion in section 3.11). Rather than viewing my background as a drawback, I believe it helped me develop a rapport with the participants and comprehend some of their experiences more deeply. Furthermore, I still had some distancing and a separate perspective from the participants, especially related to the pandemic, since I stopped teaching two years prior to the pandemic. Ultimately, through my own reflexivity, I considered my positionality and acknowledged the role that my own background and TPI had in my study while I inhabited the role as a researcher who honoured the unique experiences and perspectives of the participants.

The three interviews with the four participants took place between March and June 2022. The teachers returned to full-time in-person teaching in February, a few weeks before my data collection started. In the months prior, the participants had been teaching in a hybrid model, where some classes were online while others were in-person for a few hours per week. Hence, although the teachers did experience the return to in-person schooling, I conducted my interviews very early in the post-pandemic period. When planning the interviews, I envisioned that the participants would be able to effectively reflect upon the impact of the pandemic on their TPIs. In hindsight, I did not account for the possibility that enough time may not have gone by since the pandemic for teachers to think of the pandemic as an experience in the past. In fact, Daniel did mention that he felt it was 'too early to tell' what the consequences of the pandemic may be for the field of education. Ultimately, the participants agreed that the pandemic was an experience that schools and academic programmes should reflect upon and learn from. However, pinpointing the lessons learned, or those that should have been learned, was difficult for the participants to do at the time of the interviews, given that the ramifications of COVID-19 were still present. It would be interesting to hear their reflections on teaching during the pandemic in a few years.

A retrospective analysis of the pandemic, with more time and distancing from the experiences and events themselves, would mean that the participants could gain a different perspective on any lasting impact it may have had on their TPIs. Conversely, the opposite could also be true since allowing more time to go by from when restrictions were lifted might cause the memory of the pandemic to fade even further. The return of the pressures and priorities imposed by the participants' face-to-face professional surroundings signalled a somewhat desperate desire for the reversal of schooling back to pre-pandemic standards. Hence, although the passing of time and some distancing from an event can sometimes help an individual gain additional perspectives relative to its occurrence, it could also be that, especially in the case of the pandemic, an extended period elapsing could mean the participants would forget even more about it.

Another limitation related to the timing of my interviews was that I asked the participants to discuss their pre-pandemic TPIs after they had already experienced teaching during the pandemic. The pandemic may have affected their perceptions of their past professional identities. Unfortunately, the timeline of my EdD studies and the pandemic did not allow me to collect data on the participants' TPIs before the pandemic happened. Teaching through the pandemic may have left some imprints on the participants, even subconscious ones.

However, it is difficult to uncover or pinpoint aspects of this effect on the participants' perceptions of their pre-pandemic TPIs.

Many of the participants' responses during the third interview included statements related to the fact that they were not sure if they could attribute a particular change to the pandemic. I discussed this with the participants since it would be unrealistic to pinpoint a particular change, in a cause-and-effect manner, solely to the pandemic. The pandemic may have contributed to certain shifts but may not have been the exclusive reason for a particular development in the participants' identities. As one participant highlighted, 'life does not happen in a vacuum,' so it would be unrealistic to expect that the participants could attribute one change or impact solely to the pandemic. Multiple factors and a unique combination of professional and personal circumstances coalesced into the participants' perceptions of their identity. Hence, I believe that the framing of the questions, particularly within interview three, could have been more considerate of the challenges associated with pinpointing the direct impacts of COVID on TPI, not just because of the recent nature of the events but also because of the natural complexity of how changes and evolutions in TPI cannot be attributed to a single factor or event.

7.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Given the limitation surrounding the timeline of my interviews, one suggestion for future research would be to investigate any lasting remnants and effects of the COVID-19 pandemic after a longer time has passed since its occurrence. The distancing from the pandemic could allow the participants more time to identify potential effects, or the lack thereof, of the pandemic on their TPIs and their practice in a particular school setting.

My research cohort was comprised of four international school teachers. A second recommendation for future research stems from the added impact that the international teacher characteristic may have had on my participants' experiences through the pandemic. Paralleling the findings from this study with those from an exploration of teachers' experiences in national school contexts, or of teachers in a local context with different family demographics, could provide an insight into potential differences or similarities between their TPI perceptions. The experiences of international school teachers and their TPI perceptions through the pandemic may have been different compared to those of teachers at

schools that served different student populations and ones in national contexts that catered to different family demographics.

Lastly, since this study has suggested that experiences long before individuals embark on a teaching career path can impact their TPIs, an investigation into the experiences of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) could provide additional insight into the pandemic's potential effects on the TPIs of professionals with different teaching experiences. The TPIs of NQTs may be more malleable or sensitive to changes in their professional contexts, so the pandemic may have had a different effect on teachers with less experience in the field than it did on the four seasoned teachers in my study.

7.6 Implications

7.6.1 Implications for Ongoing Teacher Professional Development

The participants in my study shared that their teacher training experiences did not have the positive formative impacts they would have expected on shaping their TPIs. They found their theoretical certification courses detached from the practical realities of teaching. Since professional identity impacts how teachers view and portray themselves to others, teacher training providers and programmes for ongoing PD should revise existing provisions to give sufficient weight to TPI development in their work with teachers. By encouraging educators to reflect upon and actively cultivate their values, beliefs, and priorities, training and PD programmes can support teachers in navigating the challenges and tensions they may face between their personal TPIs and their professional contexts throughout their teaching journeys.

Ongoing PD opportunities throughout an educator's career should support teachers to partake in 'identity work.' By encouraging teachers to reflect upon themselves, their backgrounds, and their past experiences, PD programmes can cultivate teachers' heightened levels of professional self-awareness and self-understanding. Teachers should be introduced to the power of their narratives and the value of their journeys in informing who they are as professionals and who they strive to become. Furthermore, educational practitioners should be encouraged to continuously reflect upon their TPI evolution throughout their professional journeys to support and inform their practice. Ongoing PD programmes, incorporated as part of teachers' experiences within their workplace and at

any point in their career trajectory, can encourage every practitioner to consider their professional beliefs and values based on their unique past experiences and backgrounds. Throughout their ongoing PD, teachers can be supported to regularly reflect upon their perspectives on the profession, their roles and responsibilities, and the values that are shaping their evolving professional identities. Intentional reflections on their emerging TPIs may help 'identity work' become a more natural, purposeful, and actively cultivated aspect of teachers' professional experiences, which can then inform continued growth within their professional practices. In this way, ongoing teacher PD opportunities can have an increasingly positive impact on shaping professionals who are more conscious of the connections between their values and their practice.

7.6.2 Implications for School Communities

Given the inextricable connection between context and TPI development, schools should become more aware of the values and priorities they communicate and portray to their community members. My research highlighted that educational institutions may promote misplaced educational priorities, which would warrant re-evaluation. The heightened concerns associated with content coverage and assessment performance mask other values that schools should foreground and cultivate more actively. For example, it is paramount for schools to prioritise the development of meaningful community interactions, attend to the social-emotional growth of the younger generation, and focus on learning for the inherent value of education in shaping human beings with particular virtues and morals.

My study also emphasised the importance of community and interactions in shaping TPI. Regardless of the methods or media teachers use, the learning community they develop through their interactions with their students and colleagues is essential in shaping the identities they portray in their practice. Furthermore, my study specifically highlighted the importance of in-person community interactions, which should not be taken for granted. Schools, as contexts in which teachers negotiate and enact their TPIs, play a role in shaping the direction of teachers' continued professional identity development, subsequently influencing their practice. Hence, schools should be encouraged to become more conscious of fostering TPI traits that enhance a teacher's sense of belonging and purpose. The congruence between a teacher's professional identity and the values promoted by the school community can support the teacher's sense of accomplishment, commitment, and investment in the school and the profession, which can have positive ramifications on student learning.

7.7 Conclusion: Overarching Key Findings Leading to New Knowledge Related to TPI

The findings from this study point towards several new understandings related to TPI. First, the participants' reflections on their professional identity development over time highlight the situational nature of this process. As discussed in section 7.2.1 above, although multiple complex factors uniquely contributed to each of the participants' pre-pandemic TPI formation, the data ultimately underlines how TPI develops and evolves through experiences and interactions in particular contexts. Whether these may be connected to an individual's upbringing and experiences while growing up or to formal and informal education-related opportunities, defining elements of each context and interaction leave an imprint on TPI. Hence, the characteristics of each situational context and an individual's engagement within it provide the parameters through which teachers negotiate the evolution of their TPIs. This dynamic negotiation process, whereby teachers align with or avoid certain external influencing factors to varying degrees, shapes the unique trajectory of a teacher's professional identity evolution.

Second, building on the crucial understanding of the situational aspects of TPI, my findings foreground the importance of teachers' interactions with their surrounding community. The pandemic incited a temporary shift from schools established as physical communities into ones that needed to function online. This transition disrupted and limited interactions between school community members, including those between teachers and students and those between teacher colleagues. My participants strove to maintain and continue cultivating authentic relationships with their students since this represented a key element of their TPIs. On the other hand, although the participants acknowledged the value of their interactions with fellow colleagues, maintaining these connections online was less of a priority. The pandemic reminded the participants of the value of human connection, including its ability to:

- mediate struggles and support resilience through challenges
- motivate student learning
- provide direct and indirect feedback that could lead to growth
- encourage continued professional development and TPI exploration.

Ultimately, my study highlights that, as an essential element of the participants' TPIs, human interaction, regardless of context, should not be taken for granted. Instead, the findings remind teachers and schools, as communities, to nurture and continue encouraging interactions between community members to flourish. The findings underline the importance for teachers to connect with their students, learn about them as human beings, and build relationships. The study also suggests that there is room for further consideration and research into how schools can nurture interactions between teaching colleagues, even in online settings, to further support TPI growth within this landscape. Regardless of the degree of agreement or dissonance between colleagues and their TPIs, interactions with colleagues can push teachers to continue critically exploring their professional identities, consequently promoting ongoing growth and development in their practice. Considering ways in which teaching professionals can interact and engage in collaborative opportunities with colleagues in any context would help schools become communities that foster TPI exploration and continued PD more effectively.

Third, this study's data emphasise the value of practitioners exploring, cultivating, and reflecting upon their TPI because of its links to their sense of professional purpose. The participants' TPI traits helped them remain resilient while facing challenges and adversities, such as those they experienced during the pandemic. The participants:

- were passionate experts in their subjects (see section 6.2.4)
- cared about student-centred learning, even when they found it difficult to establish in a virtual setting (see section 6.3)
- valued fostering meaningful connections with colleagues and students while considering their holistic growth, development, and well-being (see section 6.4)
- remained open-minded to adapting their practices and exploring new technology tools to help them teach more effectively online (see section 6.6)
- were highly committed to their students' learning, while they inherently valued education and in-person teaching as essential to society (see section 6.7).

The pandemic reminded the participants of these priorities and even amplified them. Although the participants' professional environment continuously focused on other priorities, such as student academic performance and assessment-related accountability measures (see section 6.5), the teachers were driven by the abovementioned fundamental values. The professional demands and pressures the teachers faced did not overpower their deeper sense of professional purpose. They still met their responsibilities related to course content coverage and examination preparation while they were fundamentally driven by

other priorities. These TPI elements seemed to mediate the unavoidable pressures and stresses the participants experienced. The participants maintained a passion for the profession, focusing on its societal value. They sustained an unwavering commitment to their students and to continued professional learning, which supported them in remaining open-minded and adaptable to the changes they encountered during the pandemic.

Ultimately, my study accentuates the importance of incorporating a focus on TPI as part of a teacher's ongoing professional learning. Teachers' values and beliefs matter in how they inhabit their professional roles. For example, teachers' beliefs about how technology can or should be incorporated into their teaching can act as hindrances or encouragements towards change. A teacher's philosophy related to fostering student connections will translate into a particular approach to their interactions. Teachers' beliefs associated with communicating and collaborating with colleagues can shape the ways in which they pursue new practices as educational practitioners. Hence, schools should promote the conscious exploration of TPI. By engaging in conversations and reflections related to their TPIs, teachers can continue cultivating their professional identities while connecting their values and beliefs with their practice. In this way, a focus on TPI as part of ongoing professional learning can keep teachers' professional values, beliefs, and priorities at the forefront of their minds as they continue to grow and improve professionally. Furthermore, having teachers reflect on their TPI journeys can strengthen, renew, or even ignite their passion for and commitment to the profession along with their sense of belonging and professional purpose.

Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Approval from the University of Glasgow

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

15 December 2021

Dear Diane Kimberley Ciacoi

College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Project Title: An investigation of the perceived professional identities of International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) teachers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic

Application No: 400210064
The College Research Ethics Committee has reviewed your application and has agreed that there is no objection on ethical grounds to the proposed study. It is happy therefore to approve the project, subject to the following conditions:

- Start date of ethical approval: 15/12/2021
- Project end date: 10/01/2024
- Any outstanding permissions needed from third parties in order to recruit research participants or to access facilities or venues for research purposes must be obtained in writing and submitted to the CoSS Research Ethics Administrator before research commences. Permissions you must provide are shown in the *College Ethics Review Feedback* document that has been sent to you as the Collated Comments Document in the online system.
- The data should be held securely for a period of ten years after the completion of the research project, or for longer if specified by the research funder or sponsor, in accordance with the University's Code of Good Practice in Research: (https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_490311_en.pdf)
- The research should be carried out only on the sites, and/or with the groups and using the methods defined in the application.
    - **Approval has been granted in principal**: no data collection must be undertaken until the current research restrictions as a result of social distancing and self-isolation are lifted. You will be notified once this restriction is no longer in force.
- Any proposed changes in the protocol should be submitted for reassessment as an amendment to the original application. The **Request for Amendments to an Approved Application** form should be used: https://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/staffandpostgraduateresearchstudents/

Yours sincerely,

Dr Muir Houston
College Ethics Officer

Muir Houston, Senior Lecturer
College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer
Social Justice, Place and Lifelong Education Research
University of Glasgow
School of Education, St Andrew's Building, 11 Eldon Street
Glasgow G3 6NH
0044+141-330-4699 Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

Participant Information Sheet

Project Title: An investigation of the perceived professional identities of International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) teachers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Researcher Details:
Diane Kimberley Ciacoi
xxxxxxxx@student.gla.ac.uk
University of Glasgow – School of Education
Doctorate in Education

Invitation:
You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take some time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?
The purpose of this study is to learn about your teacher professional identity (TPI) as an IB DP educator both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. To learn about your TPI, you will be asked to freely share your stories, thoughts, and reflections on topics such as:

- how and why you became a teacher
- what motivates you as a teacher
- how you would describe yourself as an IB DP teacher
- the characteristics of an effective IB DP teacher
- your roles and responsibilities
- your future perspectives on the teaching profession
- your views on education.

Your narratives will help explore the development and potential evolution of your TPI before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the potential influential factors that may have caused changes in your TPI. The study will also encourage you to consider the future and reflect on your profession and TPI moving forward based on the lessons you learned from your teaching experiences during the pandemic.

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen because you are an IB DP teacher who has taught an IB DP course both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw, without any ramifications, at any time without giving any reason. Any data that was collected will be immediately destroyed upon your withdrawal notice and it will not be used for any part of the study.

What will be required of me if I decide to participate?
If you do volunteer for this research study, you will be asked to participate in three narrative interviews, each lasting between 45 and 60 minutes. Each interview will focus on the following themes related to your teacher professional identity: (1) job motivation, (2) self-image, (3) self-esteem, (4) job roles and responsibilities, (5) future perspective, and (6) views on education. During the first interview, you will be asked about your teaching experiences before the COVID-19 pandemic and about elements of your TPI during that time. The second interview will focus on your perceptions of your professional identity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The third interview will ask about your reflections on teaching IB DP before and during the pandemic and any changes you may have experienced related to different elements of your TPI. The three interviews will be conducted and recorded via Zoom sometime between January and June 2022, at dates and times convenient to you.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?
The study will encourage you to explore and reflect upon your identity as a teacher. It will provide you an opportunity to share your stories related to your roles and responsibilities as a teacher, the motivators driving your career, your views about yourself, as well as your values, beliefs, and priorities related to teaching and education. This study may support you, as well as other practitioners, in considering different features that define who you are as a teacher. You will be able to consider how the experiences you have gone through, including the COVID-19 pandemic, may have influenced and shaped your identity, which in turn impacts your teaching practices.

By hearing about your lived experiences and reflections, other practitioners can be encouraged to consider their own identities. Your experiences can extend our understandings of the complex features of TPI, its dynamic nature, and the ways it may develop and evolve based on a range of influencing factors. The surrounding contextual factors associated with the COVID-19 pandemic provide a unique, previously unimaginable backdrop that teachers had to suddenly adapt to in many ways. Your lived experiences through the pandemic may provide some insight into lasting lessons, altered perspectives, and new meanings associated with TPIs that may be incorporated into teachers' professional selves and their practices.

This study may provide you with a time and place that you may not have had otherwise, in which you can reflect on your experiences from both before and during the pandemic. This could support your and others' understandings of teacher identity and hence, elements impacting your current and future teaching perspectives and practices.

What are the risks or potential stressors associated with this study and what is being done to mitigate these risks?
This study involves a total time commitment of maximum 3 hours, which could add to your already stressful and busy lives. Especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, with heightened levels of uncertainties and challenges, adding this commitment could cause additional stress.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The scheduling of the interviews will be flexible to support you in feeling at ease and decrease the stress that may be associated with this time commitment. If unexpected circumstances arise that interfere with an interview, it will be flexibly rescheduled at a more convenient date for you.

Since COVID-19 related restrictions are currently continuing, all the interviews will be conducted via Zoom. This can provide the affordance of scheduling the interview timings more flexibly. You will also be able to choose the environment where you would like to complete the interviews, hopefully making you more comfortable.

There could be some discomfort associated with the remote interview processes having to happen in your personal space. If the video component of the interview brings discomfort, you are welcome to turn off your camera or use the background overlay function through Zoom. The remote interview setting may seem distant and less inviting than a face-to-face setting. However, you will be made to feel as comfortable as possible, and any questions or feedback that could set you at ease will be encouraged and welcomed.

The research question guiding the study should not raise sensitive topics during the interviews. It is not anticipated that the topics or themes discussed will cause distress. However, in the context of the narrative interviews where you will share your personal experiences and reflections, topics may still arise that are more sensitive. Should any distress occur, the interview will be paused, and you will be asked about continuing, changing the subject, or ending the interview. If any distress does arise, you will be offered advice towards possible resources you could access for support.

Will my participation in this study be kept confidential?
The information that is collected during the course of this research will be kept confidential. During the interview transcription process, information that can personally identify you, such as your name, references to places, students, classes taught, and any contextual information that could be linked to your personal identity will be replaced by codes. This process will be done to de-identify the data to the greatest extent possible.

However, please note that confidentiality may not be guaranteed due to the limited size of the participant sample. Additionally, please note that confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines. If information is shared during the interviews that suggests a potential risk of harm to yourself or others, you will be encouraged to report any concerns to an appropriate safeguarding support body and you will be offered advice towards possible resources you could access for support. By reporting the concern, the appropriate measures and procedures will be taken, in line with your school's well-being and safeguarding protocols. Although it is unlikely that the research topic should lead to a discussion surrounding safeguarding or risks of harm, there is no guarantee of this not occurring, so this has been taken into account in the planning for the mitigation of such risks.

How will the data be stored?
The Zoom audio-video recordings will be stored on the University of Glasgow Client server. These recordings will be deleted once they have been downloaded and encrypted. Once each interview has been fully transcribed, the downloaded recordings will be deleted. The transcripts and any electronic logs with notes and reflections associated with the data will be stored on the University of Glasgow OneDrive and transferred to the Enlighten Research Data Storage. This data will be retained and disposed of in line with the University of Glasgow's protocols after 10 years.

How will the data be used and what will happen to the results of the research study?
The interview data will be transcribed and analysed to identify emerging themes. The research process, including the interview, transcription, and analysis, as well as the themes emerging from the data, will be discussed in the researcher's dissertation for the University of Glasgow's Doctorate in Education degree. At your request, you are welcome to see a copy

of the dissertation. The data will not be used for any other purpose and no other researchers will have access to it.

Who is organising and funding the research?
No organisation is funding this research project.

Who has reviewed the study?
This project has been considered and approved by the College Research Ethics Committee.

Contact for further information:
If you would like more information about the research project, you can contact the researcher, Diane K. Ciacoi, at: xxxxxxxx@student.gla.ac.uk or the supervisor for this research project, Dr Leonardo Franchi, at: Leonardo.Franchi@glasgow.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or would like to pursue any complaint about the conduct of the research, you can contact the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr Muir Houston, at: Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk

Thank you,
Diane K. Ciacoi

…… End of participant information sheet ……

Appendix C: Consent Form

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

Consent Form

Title of Project: An investigation of the perceived professional identities of International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) Programme (DP) teachers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Name of Researcher: Diane Kimberley Ciacoi

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Leonardo Franchi

At the start of an interview, each of the statements below will be read out loud by the researcher.

*As a volunteer participant in the interview, please provide a verbal reply, with a '**yes**' or '**no**' answer, after each statement. This will serve as a verbal record of your consent to participate in this study.*

Please verbally reply with a '*yes*' or '*no*' answer, as appropriate:

Yes ☐ No ☐	I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
Yes ☐ No ☐	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
Yes ☐ No ☐	I consent to being interviewed remotely and audio-recorded via Zoom.
Yes ☐ No ☐	I acknowledge that copies of transcripts will be returned to participants for verification.
Yes ☐ No ☐	I acknowledge that participants will be referred to by pseudonyms.
Yes ☐ No ☐	I acknowledge that there will be no effect on my employment arising from my participation or non-participation in this research.
Yes ☐ No ☐	I understand that all names and other material likely to personally identify individuals will be de-identified.
Yes ☐ No ☐	I understand that the material will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times.

Yes ☐ No ☐ I understand that the material will be destroyed once the project is complete.

Yes ☐ No ☐ I agree to waive my copyright to any data collected as part of this project.

Yes ☐ No ☐ I acknowledge the provision of a Privacy Notice in relation to this research project.

Please verbally reply with '*I agree*' or '*I disagree*', as appropriate:

I agree ☐ I disagree ☐ Do you agree to take part in the above study?

Please verbally state your full name and today's date:

Name of Participant: ……

Date: ……

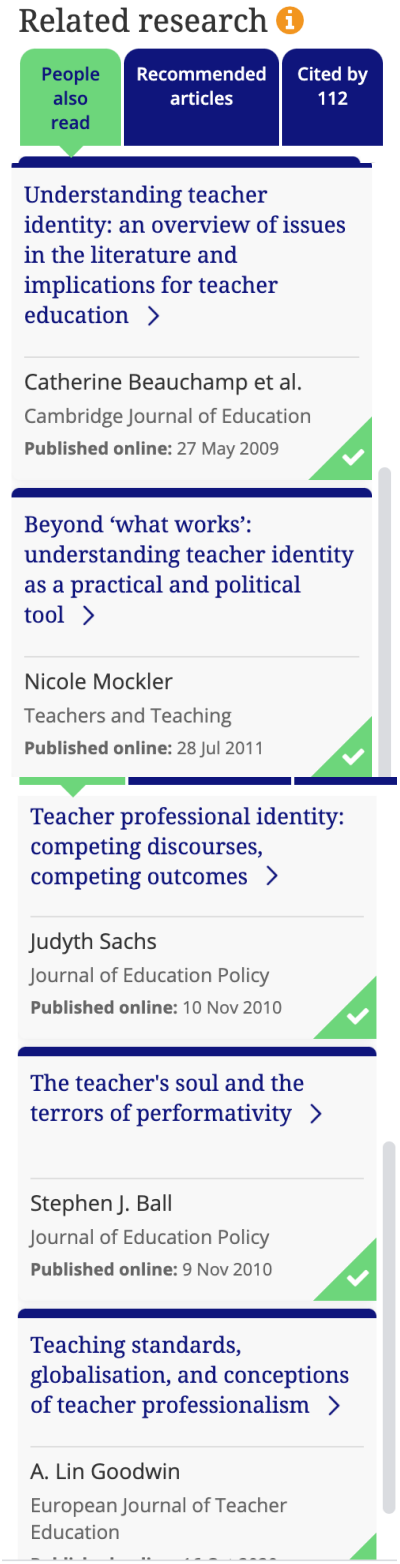
Name of Researcher: Diane Kimberley Ciacoi

Date: ……

…… End of consent form ……

Appendix D: Research Strategy Example

This is an example of the ‘Related Research’ suggestions provided through different online resource repositories.



Appendix E: Literature Review Research Spreadsheet

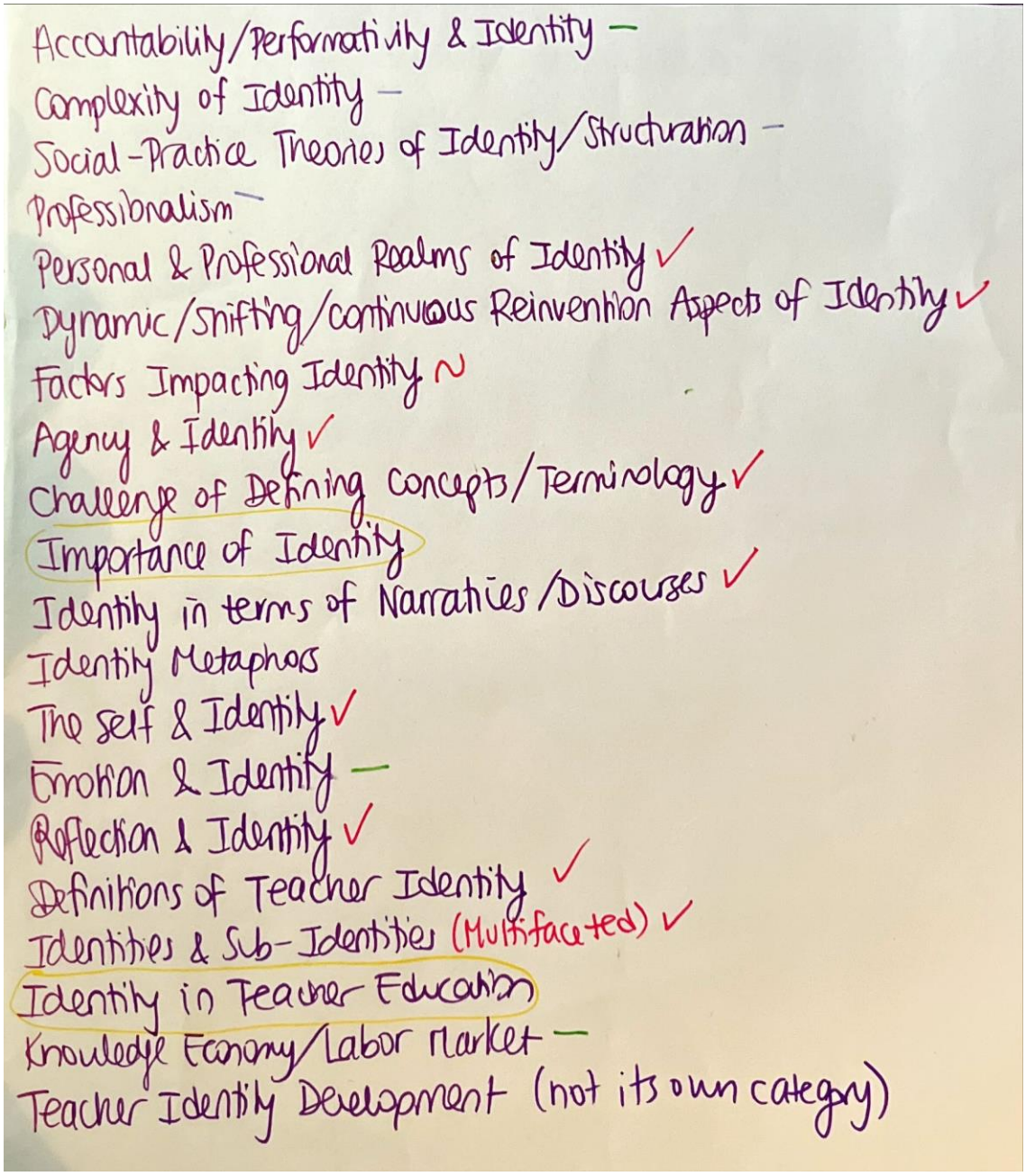
Below are some screenshots of the spreadsheet I created to track the literature, references, in-text citations, and key themes or topics that surfaced from my review of literature.

Themes:	Subthemes:	Citations:	Status:	Notes:
Accountability/Performativity and Identity		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Meyer & Rowan, 2006)	R	
		(Collins, 2012)	X	dissertation
		(Cuban, 2013)	X	book focused on US reform
		(Harris, 2011)	X	book; not needed
		(Hargreaves, 2000)		
		(Ball, 2013)	~	Ball (2003) instead
		(Day, 2007)		
		(Valli & Chambliss, 2007)		
		(Sloan, 2006)		
		(Britzman, 1991)		
Complexity of Identity/Multifacted Elements		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R	
		(Antonek et al., 1997)		
		(Dillabough, 1999)		Try finding/reading
		(Cooper & Olson, 1996)		Try finding/reading
Social-Practice Theories of Identity/Structuration		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Giddens, 1993)		
		(Giddens & Pierson, 1998)		
		(Valli & Chambliss, 2007)		
Professionalism		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Hargreaves, 2000)		
		(Mockler, 2011)		
		(Stone-Johnson, 2014)		
Personal and Professional Realms of Identity		(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)	R	
		(Freese, 2006)		
		(Beijaard et al., 2000)		
		(Lipka & Brinthaupt, 1999)		
		(Day et al., 2006)		
		(Rodger & Scott, 2008)		
		(Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2005)		
		(Alsup, 2006)		
		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Mockler, 2011)		
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R	
		(Coldron & Smith, 1999)		
		(Samuel & Stephens, 2000)		
		(Goodson & Cole, 1994)		
		(Reynolds, 1996)		
		(Cooper & Olson, 1996)		
		(Sugrue, 1997)		
		(Roberts, 2000)		
		(Dillabough, 1999)		
		(Volkman & Anderson, 1998)		
		(Bullough et al., 1992)		
		(Brooke, 1994)		
		(Bosse & Torner, 2015)	R	
		(Alsup, 2006)		
	Other dichotomies	(Assen et al., 2018)	R	
	Assimilation-Accomodation	(Bosma & Kunnen, 2001)		
Dynamic/Shifting/Continuous Reinvention Aspects of	dentity	(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)	R	
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R	
		(Gee, 2001)		
		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2006)		
		(Thomas & Beauchamp, 2007)		
		(Korthagen, 2004)		Extremely important!
		from Korthagen, reference to (Bullough & Baughman,	1997)	
		(Mitchell & Weber, 1999)		
		(Sachs, 2005)		
		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Mockler, 2011)		Important to read
		(Beijaard et al., 2000)		
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R	
		(Connelly & Clandinin, 1999)		
		(Assen et al., 2018)	R	
		(Arvaja, 2016)		
Factors Impacting Identity	Accountability	(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)	R	
	Policies	(Chevrier et al., 2007)	x	In French
		(Flores & Day, 2006)		
		(Rodgers & Scott, 2008)		
		(Sachs, 2005)		
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)		
		(Olsen, 2008)		
		(Sfard & Prusak, 2005)		
		(Wenger, 1998)		
		(Smagorinsky et al., 2004)		
		(Barty, 2004)	?	No reference
		(Pennington, 2002)	?	No reference
		(Varghese et al., 2005)	?	No reference
		(Coldron & Smith, 1999)		
		(Britzman, 2003)		
		(Danielewicz, 2001)		
		(Buchanan, 2015)	R	
		(Day & Gu, 2007)		
		(Mockler, 2011)		
		(Day, 2007)		
		(Day, Elliot, & Kington, 2005)		
		(Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain, 1998)		
		(Alsup, 2005)		
		(Beijaard et al., 2000)		
		(Britzman, 1991)		
		(Olsen, 2008a)		
		(Olsen, 2008b)		
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R	
	Biographies and beliefs	(Knowles, 1992)		
		(Sugrue, 1997)		
		(Kelchtermans, 1994)		
		(Bullough, 1997)		
		(Antonek et al., 1997)		

		(Samuel & Stephens, 2000)	
		(Beijaard et al., 2000)	
		(Bosse & Torner, 2015)	R
	Boundary crossing between subjec	(Hobbs, 2012)	
Agency and Identity		(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)	R
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	
		(Day et al., 2006)	
		(Parkison, 2008)	
		(Holland et al., 1998)	
		(Sfard & Prusak, 2005)	
		(Buchanan, 2015)	R
		(Ahearn, 2001)	
		(Huberman, 1989)	
		(Gitlin & Margonis, 1995)	
		(Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2011)	
		(Britzman, 1991)	
		(Bushnell, 2003)	
		(Pease-Alvarez, Samway, & Cifka-Herrera, 2010)	
		(Sloan, 2006)	
Challenge of Defining Concepts/Terminology		(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)	R
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R
Importance of Identity		(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)	R
		(Freese, 2006)	
		(Hoban, 2007)	
		(Korthagen et al., 2001)	
		(Olsen, 2008)	
		(Riopel, 2006)	x
		(Sachs, 2005)	
		(MacLure, 1993)	
		(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2006)	
		(Thomas & Beauchamp, 2007)	
		(Britzman, 2003)	
		(Hammerness et al., 2005)	
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R
		(Gaziel, 1995)	
		(Moore & Hofman, 1988)	
		(DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997)	
		(Beijaard et al., 2000)	
		(Nixon, 1996)	
		(Mitchell, 1997)	
		(Bosse & Torner, 2015)	R
		(Boaler, 2002)	
		(Grootenboer & Zevenbergen, 2008)	
Identity in terms of Narratives/Discourses		(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)	R
		(Connelly & Clandinin, 1999)	
		(Sfard & Prusak, 2005)	
		(Alsup, 2005)	
		(Soreide, 2006)	
		(Watson, 2006)	x
		(Beynon, 1997)	
		(Cohen, 2008)	
		(Buchanan, 2015)	
		(Foucault, 1970	
		(Gee, 2000)	
		(Fairclough, 2001)	
		(Mockler, 2004)	
		(Ball, 2013)	
		(Britzman, 1991)	
		(Beijaard et al., 2004)	R
		(Dillabough, 1999)	
		(Kerby, 1991)	
		(Connelly & Clandinin, 1999)	
		(Elbaz-Luwisch, 2002)	
		(Craig, 1998)	
		(Clandinin & Connelly, 1996)	
		(Connelly & Clandinin, 1990)	
		(Brooke, 1994)	
		(Clandinin, 2003)	
		(Bullough, 1997)	
		(Phelan, 2000)	
		(Bakhtin, 1981)	
		(Gee, 2001)	
		(Giddens, 1991)	
		(Burns & Bell, 2011)	R
		(Holstein & Gubrium, 2000)	
		(Webster & Mertova, 2007)	
		(Elbaz-Luwisch, 2002)	
		(Watson, 2006)	
		(Soreide, 2006)	
		(Bloome, 2003)	
		(Lieblich et al, 1998)	
		(Bosse & Torner, 2015)	R
		(Alsup, 2006)	
		(Sfard & Prusak, 2005)	
		(Assen et al., 2018)	R
		(Pillen et al., 2013)	
		(LaPointe, 2010)	
		(Meijers & Lengelle, 2012)	
		(Arvaja, 2016)	
		(Polkinghorne, 1988)	
		(Bruner, 1990)	
	Dialogue	(Meirink et al., 2009)	
		(Vangrieken et al., 2015)	
		(Vangrieken et al., 2017)	
	Dialogical Self Theory	(Hermans & Gieser, 2012)	
	Dialogical Self Theory	(Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010)	
		(Sachs, 2005)	

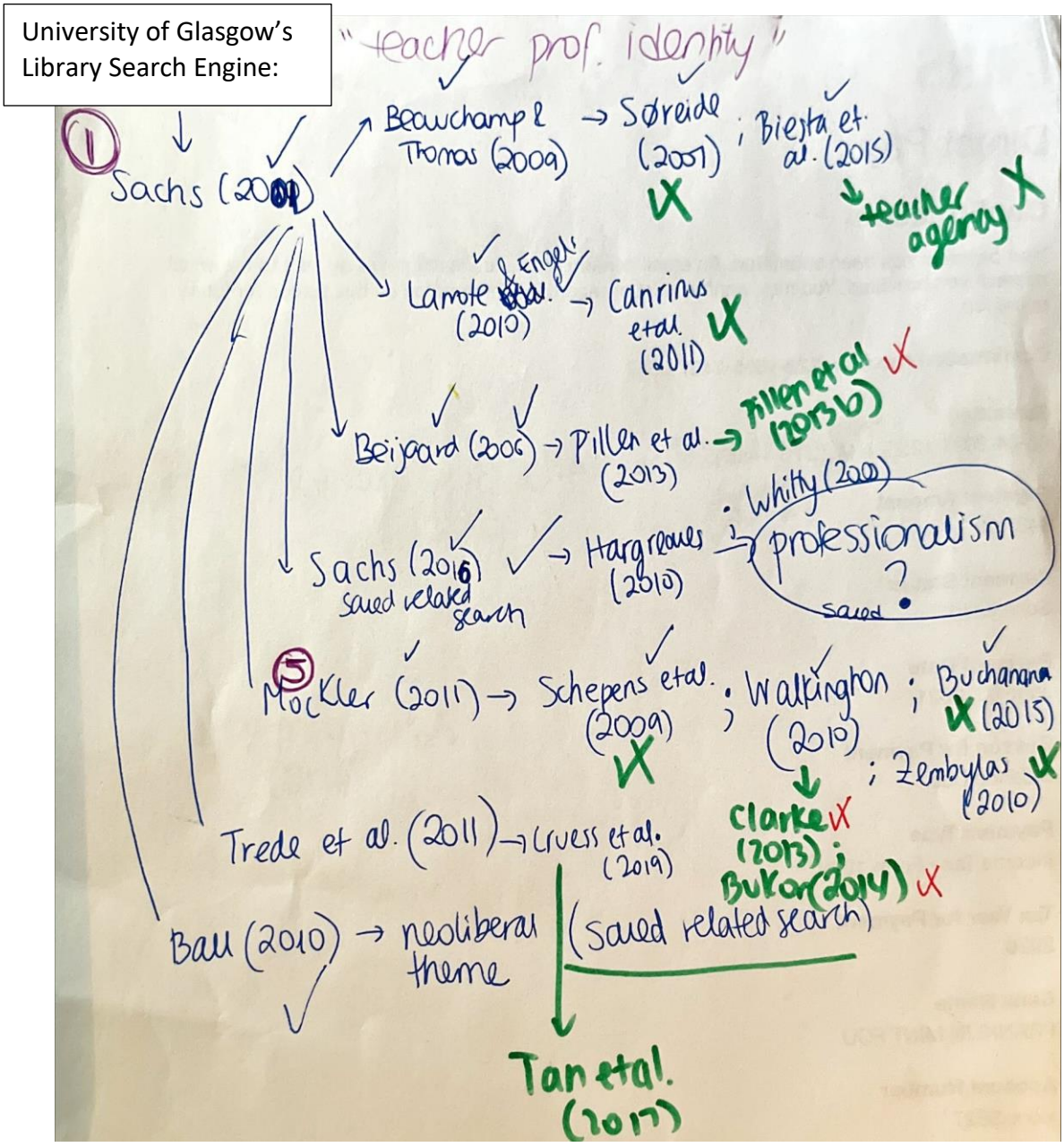
Appendix F: Literature Review Topics and Themes List

While I was accessing different materials and sources related to teacher professional identity, I noted key topics and themes that seemed to surface in the abstracts from my literature review research.



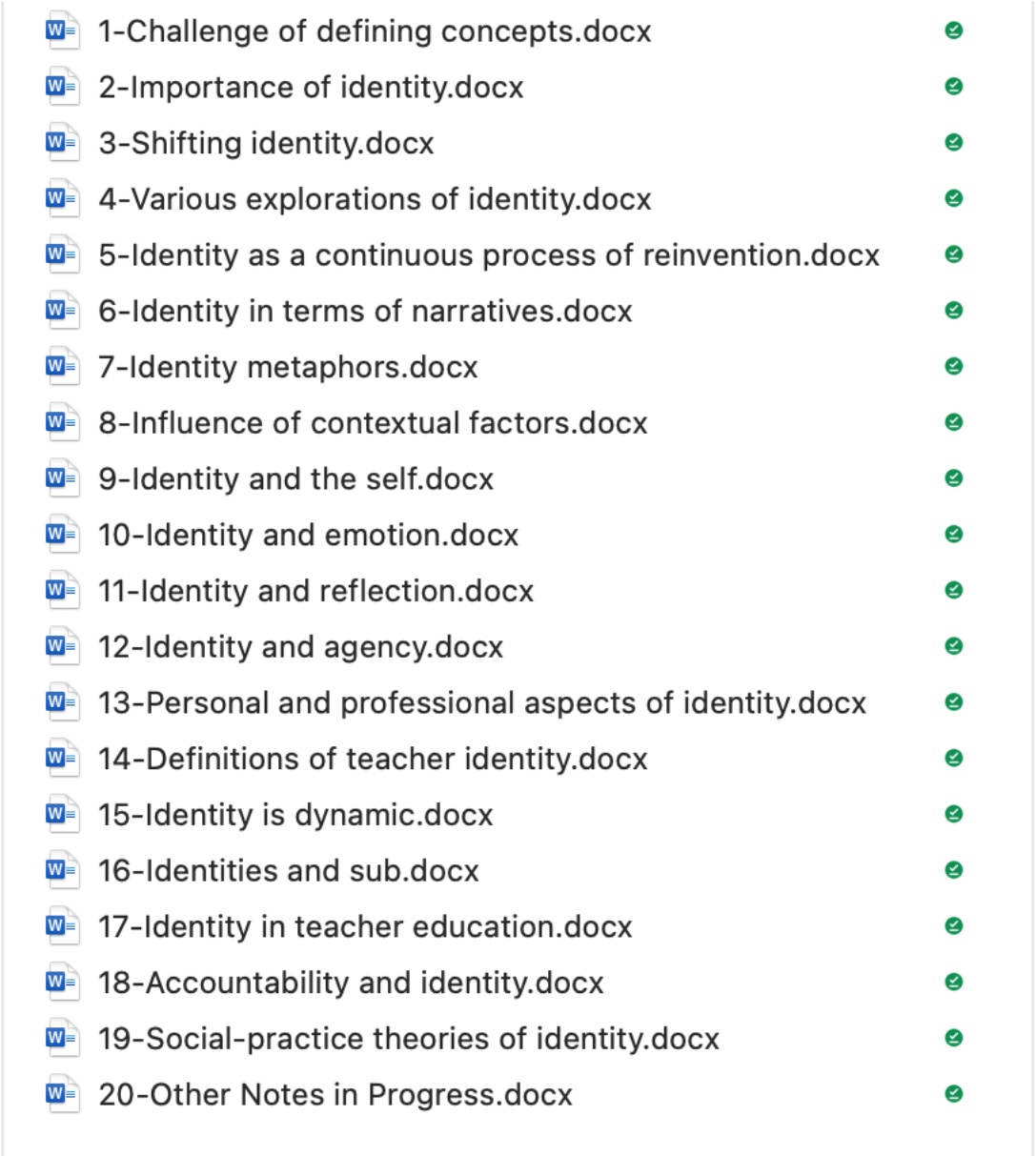
Appendix G: Research Web Example

I created visual representations of my research pathway to map out the literature research trail I followed. This helped me maintain a more systematic approach to tracing literature that I wanted to access and reference.



Appendix H: Notes Documents from Literature Review Themes

These are the separate documents I created with my notes on different subheadings, topics, and themes I identified from TPI literature.



Appendix I: The International Baccalaureate Organization's Mission Statement

'The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right' (International Baccalaureate, 2022:n.p.).

Reference:

International Baccalaureate. (2022, August 23). *Our Mission*. International Baccalaureate. Retrieved November 20, 2022 from https://www.ibo.org/about-the-ib/mission/

Appendix J: Example of the Guidance Provided in the IB DP Chemistry Guide

Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Recommended teaching hours	
	SL	HL
Core	**95**	
1. Stoichiometric relationships	13.5	
2. Atomic structure	6	
3. Periodicity	6	
4. Chemical bonding and structure	13.5	
5. Energetics/thermochemistry	9	

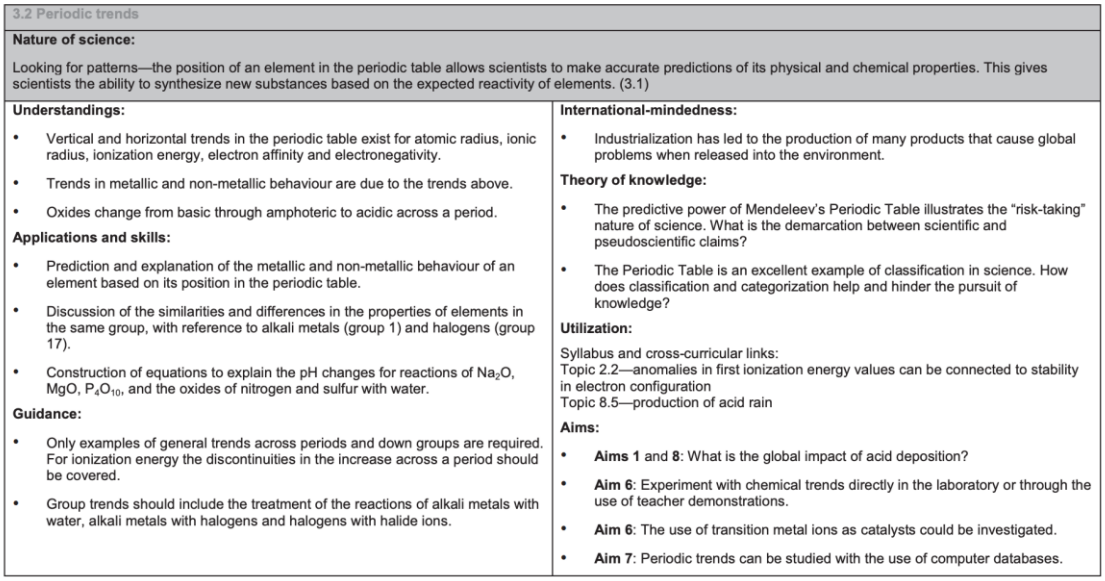
Figure A: A screenshot of a portion of the IB DP syllabus content, with suggested recommended teaching hours (International Baccalaureate, 2014:20).

Syllabus content

	Recommended teaching hours
Core	**95 hours**
Topic 1: Stoichiometric relationships	**13.5**
1.1 Introduction to the particulate nature of matter and chemical change	
1.2 The mole concept	
1.3 Reacting masses and volumes	
Topic 2: Atomic structure	**6**
2.1 The nuclear atom	
2.2 Electron configuration	
Topic 3: Periodicity	**6**
3.1 Periodic table	
3.2 Periodic trends	

Figure B: A further breakdown of the syllabus into subtopics (International Baccalaureate, 2014:27).

Essential idea: Elements show trends in their physical and chemical properties across periods and down groups.



3.2 Periodic trends

Nature of science:

Looking for patterns—the position of an element in the periodic table allows scientists to make accurate predictions of its physical and chemical properties. This gives scientists the ability to synthesize new substances based on the expected reactivity of elements. (3.1)

Understandings:

- Vertical and horizontal trends in the periodic table exist for atomic radius, ionic radius, ionization energy, electron affinity and electronegativity.
- Trends in metallic and non-metallic behaviour are due to the trends above.
- Oxides change from basic through amphoteric to acidic across a period.

Applications and skills:

- Prediction and explanation of the metallic and non-metallic behaviour of an element based on its position in the periodic table.
- Discussion of the similarities and differences in the properties of elements in the same group, with reference to alkali metals (group 1) and halogens (group 17).
- Construction of equations to explain the pH changes for reactions of Na_2O, MgO, P_4O_{10}, and the oxides of nitrogen and sulfur with water.

Guidance:

- Only examples of general trends across periods and down groups are required. For ionization energy the discontinuities in the increase across a period should be covered.
- Group trends should include the treatment of the reactions of alkali metals with water, alkali metals with halogens and halogens with halide ions.

International-mindedness:

- Industrialization has led to the production of many products that cause global problems when released into the environment.

Theory of knowledge:

- The predictive power of Mendeleev's Periodic Table illustrates the "risk-taking" nature of science. What is the demarcation between scientific and pseudoscientific claims?
- The Periodic Table is an excellent example of classification in science. How does classification and categorization help and hinder the pursuit of knowledge?

Utilization:

Syllabus and cross-curricular links:
Topic 2.2—anomalies in first ionization energy values can be connected to stability in electron configuration
Topic 8.5—production of acid rain

Aims:

- **Aims 1** and **8**: What is the global impact of acid deposition?
- **Aim 6**: Experiment with chemical trends directly in the laboratory or through the use of teacher demonstrations.
- **Aim 6**: The use of transition metal ions as catalysts could be investigated.
- **Aim 7**: Periodic trends can be studied with the use of computer databases.

Figure C: An example subtopic guidance sheet with the understandings, applications, skills, and suggested laboratory experiments that teachers could incorporate in their lessons (International Baccalaureate, 2014:43).

Reference:

International Baccalaureate. (2014). *Diploma Programme Chemistry Guide*. International Baccalaureate. Retrieved March 22, 2022 from https://holyheart.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/IB-Chemistry-Guide-2016.pdf

Appendix K: Interview Schedule – Indicative Themes and Interview Questions

Interview 1 – Teacher professional identity before the COVID-19 pandemic

Opening prompt:
Please think of your teaching experiences before the COVID-19 pandemic. Please think of:

- your life before training to become a teacher
- your teacher training experiences
- your first teaching job
- the teaching jobs you had before your current job
- your teaching experiences as an IB DP teacher before the COVID-19 pandemic started.

Guiding question 1: (job motivation)

- Please share your story of how you became a teacher and your teaching experiences before the COVID-19 pandemic. *Please be as detailed as possible.*

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- What influenced you into becoming a teacher?
- Did you always want to become a teacher?
    - If yes – why?
    - If no – what made you change to a teaching career?
- Why are you a teacher?
- Can you please share your story of how you specifically became an IB DP teacher?
- What influenced you into becoming an IB DP teacher?
- Why are you an IB DP teacher?
- What motivated you to continue teaching before the COVID-19 pandemic?

Guiding question 2: (self-image)

- How would you describe yourself as an IB DP teacher before the COVID-19 pandemic? *Please be as detailed as possible.*

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- What would you say were your main traits as an IB DP teacher before the pandemic?
- What did you consider to be your strengths as an IB DP teacher before the pandemic?
- What did you consider to be your areas for improvement as an IB DP teacher before the pandemic?

Guiding question 3: (self-esteem)

- What made you an effective IB DP teacher before the COVID-19 pandemic? *Please be as detailed as possible.*

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- How would you describe an effective IB DP teacher in the context before the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Did you feel effective as an IB DP teacher before the COVID-19 pandemic? Why or why not?
- Did you feel that others (students, colleagues, the school leadership team) considered you an effective IB DP teacher before the COVID-19 pandemic? Why or why not?

- In what ways do you think others (students, your colleagues, the school leadership team) saw you as an effective IB DP teacher before the COVID-19 pandemic?

Guiding question 4: (task perception)

- How would you describe your roles and responsibilities as an IB DP teacher before the COVID-19 pandemic?

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- How would you describe your job before the pandemic?
- What did you find easy about your job before the pandemic?
- What did you find challenging about your job before the pandemic?
- What did you find meaningful about your job before the pandemic?

Guiding question 5: (future perspective)

- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, how did you envision your future professional experiences and trajectory?

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- How long did you see yourself in the teaching profession?
    - Why did you see yourself remaining in the profession for this amount of time?
- How did you see your profession in the future?
- How did you see yourself professionally in 5 years? In 10 years?

Guiding question 6: (views on education)

- How would you describe your views on education before the COVID-19 pandemic?

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- How would you describe your education values and beliefs before the pandemic?
- How would you describe your priorities as an IB DP teacher before the pandemic?
- How did you feel about your profession as an IB DP teacher before the pandemic?

Following any of the questions above, participants will be prompted to: 'Please share any experiences, memories, and reflections.'

Clarification questions based on the participants' statements:

- Can you please explain what you meant by…?
- Can you please provide an example to illustrate what you meant by…?

Interview 2 – Teacher professional identity during the COVID-19 pandemic

Opening prompt:
Please think of your IB DP teaching experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please think of:

- the beginning of online learning
- the lingering COVID-19 pandemic
- the changes that occurred throughout the pandemic
- the synchronous/a-synchronous aspects of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic
- your current teaching reality

*Note: references to the time 'during the COVID-19 pandemic' encompass the period throughout the pandemic and currently, as the pandemic continues.

Guiding question 1: (job motivation)

- Can you please share your story of the different ways in which you have taught and your teaching experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic? *Please be as detailed as possible.*

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- What has kept you motivated to continue teaching during the pandemic?
- Did you ever consider changing careers based on your experiences of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic? Why or why not?
- What has it been like teaching IB DP during the pandemic?

Guiding question 2: (self-image)

- How would you describe yourself as an IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic? *Please be as detailed as possible.*

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- What would you say have been your main traits as an IB DP teacher during the pandemic?
- What do you consider to be your strengths as an IB DP teacher during the pandemic?
- What do you consider to be your areas for improvement as an IB DP teacher during the pandemic?

Guiding question 3: (self-esteem)

- What has made you an effective IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic? *Please be as detailed as possible.*

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:

- How would you describe an effective IB DP teacher in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Have you felt effective as an IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic? Why or why not?
- Did you feel that others (students, colleagues, the school leadership team) have considered you an effective IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic? Why or why not?
- In what ways do you think others (students, your colleagues, the school leadership team) saw you as an effective IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Guiding question 4: (task perception)

- How would you describe your roles and responsibilities as an IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:
- How would you describe your job during the pandemic?
- What have you found find easy about your job during the pandemic?
- What have you found challenging about your job during the pandemic?
- What have you found meaningful about your job during the pandemic?

Guiding question 5: (future perspective)
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, how have you envisioned your future professional experiences and trajectory?

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:
- How long do you see yourself in the teaching profession?
    - Why do you see yourself remaining in the profession for this amount of time?
- How do you see your profession in the future?
- How do you see yourself professionally in 5 years? In 10 years?

Guiding question 6: (views on education)
- How would you describe your views on education during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Potential additional follow-up questions and themes:
- How would you describe your education values and beliefs during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How would you describe your priorities as an IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How have you felt about your profession as an IB DP teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Following any of the questions above, participants will be prompted to: 'Please share any experiences, memories, and reflections.'

Clarification questions based on the participants' statements:
- Can you please explain what you meant by…?
- Can you please provide an example to illustrate what you meant by…?

Interview 3 – Teacher reflections on teaching IB DP before and during the COVID-19 pandemic

Opening prompt:
Please try to concurrently think of your IB DP teaching experiences before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please think of:

- how your teaching experiences changed
- the factors that affected your teaching experiences
- how your perceptions of yourself as an IB DP teacher may have changed
- how your views of the IB DP teaching profession may have changed
- how your views of education may have changed

Guiding question 1: (job motivation)

- How, if at all, have your motivations to be an IB DP teacher changed?

Guiding question 2: (self-image)

- How, if at all, have your views of yourself, as an IB DP teacher, changed?

Guiding question 3: (self-esteem)

- How, if at all, have your self-esteem and your perceptions of being an effective IB DP teacher changed?

Guiding question 4: (task perception)

- How, if at all, have your roles and responsibilities as an IB DP teacher changed?

Guiding question 5: (future perspective)

- How, if at all, have your future views regarding your profession as an IB DP teacher changed?

Guiding question 6: (views on education)

- How, if at all, have your views of education changed?

Following any of the questions above, participants will be asked: 'What do you think may have caused these changes?'

General closing question:

- What has the COVID-19 pandemic taught you about yourself, your profession as an IB DP teacher, and education in general?

Clarification questions based on the participants' statements:

- Can you please explain what you meant by…?
- Can you please provide an example to illustrate what you meant by…?

Appendix L: Timeline of Interviews

Interview #	Mr. Oliver Harper	Mr. Michael Kenny	Mr. Daniel Pine	Mrs. Helen Turner
1	March 18th	March 17th	April 25th	March 29th
2	March 25th	April 27th	April 29th	April 28th
3	May 2nd	June 1st	May 22nd	June 6th

(Note: All in the year 2022)

Appendix M: Emails Sharing the Recruitment Process and Expectations

Follow-Up on Doctorate Dissertation Study Participation

DC Diane Ciacoi (PGR)
To: [redacted]
Thu 2/10/2022 1:35 PM

Dissertation Consent Form.... 60 KB | Dissertation Participant Info... 67 KB | Dissertation Privacy Notice.... 39 KB

3 attachments (165 KB) Save all to OneDrive - University of Glasgow Download all

Dear [redacted]
I hope you have been doing well since we were last in touch!

I am sorry it has taken so long for me to follow up with you on my dissertation study, but the Ethical Approval process was greatly delayed at the University.

Thankfully, I have received the approval to begin my data collection. Would you still be interested in participating in my study?

As a reminder, my study requires a total of 3 interviews each a maximum of 1 hour long. These will be scheduled flexibly, between the end of February and the end of the school year, in a way that fits each participant's schedule.

I am attaching 3 documents that provide more details about the study: 1.) the participant information sheet; 2.) the privacy notice; 3.) the consent form. You are welcome to ask me any questions based on this documentation.

Depending on the final confirmation that I receive from the teachers who expressed their initial interest, I may have to randomly select the participants for the interviews. I will write back to you as soon as the participant list is finalized to set up the first interview.

I sincerely thank you for all of your help and support with my dissertation study.

I look forward to hearing from you!
Best wishes and take care,
Diane

Thank you so much for your interest in my doctorate study!

DC Diane Ciacoi (PGR)
To: [redacted]
Mon 3/28/2022 3:01 PM

Dear [redacted]
I sincerely hope you have been doing well!

I am writing to follow up with you regarding my dissertation study. I am sincerely thankful for your willingness and eagerness to participate in my study. It really means so much to me that you would give up so much of your time to help me with this. I am grateful that I received enough interest from teachers and ultimately had to randomly select a smaller number of participants to interview. Otherwise, the study would be unmanageable in the timeframe that I am given to complete the dissertation.

I hope you are not upset that the random selection happened to not include you. I honestly would have loved to interview you too. I hope that I will get to visit [redacted] in the near future, as the pandemic hopefully subsides, and that we will be able to meet again face-to-face to catch up in person.

Thank you again for your support and I sincerely wish you absolutely all the best before we meet again!

With deepest gratitude,
Diane

Appendix N: Record of the Participants' Feedback Provided on the Transcripts

Participant:	Interview:	Date Transcript was Sent:	Feedback:
Daniel Pine	1	April 27th	None.
	2	May 20th	None.
	3	June 9th	None.
Helen Turner	1	April 13th	Screenshot #1 Mentioned that, by reading the transcript, she noticed her frequent use of the term 'sort of.'
	2	May 19th	None.
	3	June 9th	None.
Michael Kenny	1	April 8th	Screenshot #2 Feedback that the transcript looked fine. Asked whether 'Michael Kenny' was a pseudonym used for the purpose of anonymity.
	2	May 20th	None.
	3	June 9th	None.
Oliver Harper	1	March 25th	Screenshot #3 Surprised by the accuracy of the transcript.
	2	April 14th	Screenshot #4 Stated that he thoroughly read the transcript and approved.
	3	June 9th	None.

Screenshot #1: Helen about Interview 1 Transcript

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2022 11:42 AM
To: Diane Ciacoi (PGR) < @student.gla.ac.uk>
Subject: Re: Interview 1 Transcript & Scheduling Interview 2

Hi Diane,

Thank you for your email and this transcript. Now I am more aware that I use the term 'sort of' excessively :)
I am available to meet with you next week during the following times:

Tuesday 26th. at 14:00
Wednesday 27th. at 11:00
Thursday 28th. at 11:00
Friday 29th. at 11:00

Screenshot #2: Michael about Interview 1 Transcript

On Apr 11, 2022, at 2:31 PM, [redacted] > wrote:

Hi Diane

The transcript looks fine. Is the name Michael Kenny used for the purpose of anonymity?

This week is pretty busy and I am away on holiday next week. Sometime in the week starting April 25th? Not sure what your timeline is.

[redacted]

On Fri, Apr 8, 2022 at 12:44 PM Diane Ciacoi (PGR) < @student.gla.ac.uk> wrote:

> Dear [redacted]
> Please find attached the interview 1 transcript for your review. Thank you again for your flexibility and sincere apologies for the delay!
>
> You are welcome to verify the accuracy of the transcription and provide any feedback regarding changes you would like me to make. You can take your time with this, as my data analysis will mostly likely solely begin at the end of June. Please note, the only changes I have made between the audio recording of our interview and the transcript involve the uses of pseudonyms for the purpose of de-identifying the data.
>
> With this being done, would it please be possible to schedule the second interview with you? We can complete it whenever it is most convenient for you!
>
> Thank you so much!
> Best wishes,
> Diane

Screenshot #3: Oliver about Interview 1 Transcript

On Mar 25, 2022, at 9:13 AM, [redacted] wrote:

wow! That's some accurate transcript - must have taken you forever. Will watch my language in the second interview! :)
It's all good as far as I'm concerned. I carefully and thoroughly read it in about 7 seconds as well as a control F to find out if you kept in the swearing...:)

[redacted]

On Fri, Mar 25, 2022 at 3:23 AM Diane Ciacoi (PGR) < @student.gla.ac.uk> wrote:

> Dear [redacted]
> Please find attached the interview 1 transcript for your review.
>
> You are welcome to verify the accuracy of the transcription and provide any feedback regarding changes you would like me to make. You are welcome to take your time with this, as my data analysis will mostly likely solely begin at the end of June. Please note, the only changes I have made between the audio recording of our interview and the transcript involve the uses of pseudonyms for the purpose of de-identifying the data.
>
> Thank you!
> I look forward to speaking with you soon for our second interview!
> Best wishes,
> Diane

Screenshot #4: Oliver about Interview 2 Transcript

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2022 12:52 PM
To: Diane Ciacoi (PGR) < @student.gla.ac.uk>
Subject: Re: Interview 2 Transcript & Scheduling Interview 3

Hi Diane,
No worries and no apologies necessary!
I think after spring break would be better for me.
Actually, what about Monday, April 25. We don't have school that day and so the whole day is free for me. If not, happy to find another day/time.
I have thoroughly read the transcript and approve.
Cheers,

[redacted]

Appendix O: Examples of Annotated Interview Extracts

Key:

- Blue highlighting: keywords, potential themes, or essential ideas I highlighted during the familiarisation phase of my thematic analysis.
- Black writing: keywords or phrases I assigned as part of micro-level codes during the second phase of my thematic analysis.
- Color-coded writing (red, green, light blue, dark blue): the smaller micro-level codes grouped into broader themes during the third phase of my thematic analysis; these are connected to the final themes and analysis sections as shown below.

Transcribed Interview Extract:	Notes:
Diane: Yes, thank you. So then, if it's okay, I'll put in the second kind of guiding question, which is: how would you describe yourself as an IB DP teacher in the context before the COVID-19 pandemic? So, throughout your experience teaching DP, how would you describe yourself?	
Oliver: Yea, so, I think, I'd like to think I've grown as a teacher. Certainly, when I started as an IB DP teacher. I don't know if it's necessarily an IB DP teacher or just teaching in general, but I'll try to make it a little more DP-focused. I think, especially when I first started, and I don't think this has changed, I think I was very proud of the fact that I could deliver clear explanations to the students. And I think students appreciated that.	clear explanations →subject area expertise
I'm very exam driven. They have to do this exam at the end of DP, so I make sure my teaching is towards that exam. There's not a lot of fluff. There's not a lot of extravagant stuff or extra stuff because, as you know the DP, for HL is 240 hours and SL is less but we never seem to have that much time so to me, I don't have a lot of time to be doing a lot of other stuff. And so, I think especially at the beginning, that's what drove me, and I think many students appreciated that.	exam-driven teaching to the exam time pressures } professional demands & pressures
Now, the way I've gotten better. And I would say, this has really changed from when I first came to UIS to now, say. And I think the biggest thing that I've changed is, I show the students that I care about them a lot better. And it's not that I didn't, I want to be clear, it's not that I didn't care about students before. But I think I'm better at showing it. I'm better at asking questions about them, what's going on in their lives and so on, and that, if I can make that connection, I find that makes them more wanting to work more. I think, generally, if you can make the connection, the students want to do better. I	care — nurturing teacher-student connections asking personal questions connection motivation to learn connection → doing better/effort

started to learn that if you make connections with students, they'll appreciate you more. It wasn't just about explaining the physics really well. So, it took me till then, to figure out that was important. Something in teacher education, you know, that might have been useful. Maybe it's obvious to everybody else but me, but it took me, I'm a slow learner. It took me a long time. Anyway, so kind of that's maybe the 10-year mark of my teaching or something like that, 10 to 12. I learned that it's, if you can make a connection with students. I would specifically go watch the personal projects and try to talk to each one of them, because I was selfishly trying to get them into my physics class and make a connection with them. So, like I learned that.

And then what I've gotten much better at and now I teach math. And when I got into teaching high school math about four or five years ago, because, oh sorry, at my school just backtrack. I taught Physics for about 10 or 11, or I can't remember, 7, 8, 9, 10 years. And my scores were really good. The kids wanted to take my class. I was good at it. It was clear from both my surveys from the students, from the IB scores which were, the physics scores were better than any of the other scores, I had more kids in physics, I was very proud of it. But honestly, I was like, "I don't know what else I can do with this program. I've done as much as I can." And so, there was a job opening in middle school, so I taught middle school science for several years. I was like, "wow, I'm clearly not a good middle school science teacher." I mean, I was okay, I got better, I'm just not a middle school teacher. A job opened up for math, and my wife and I, we don't want to leave UIS, we like it here.

So, most teachers, you know, they get bored with something, they move to another school. We didn't want to leave. Our children are here. They like it. And so, then I moved to high school math. And I was thinking, "you know, I want to recreate the math," like

connection → appreciation

↑

nurturing teacher-student connections

↓

speaking to students about interests

↓

connection

academic achievement
assessment outcomes/accountability
→ professional demands & pressures

moving schools for novelty
family enjoyed the school

recreate teaching the subject

what I was doing in physics, and in physics it's really easy to make stuff hands on, right, like everything you, like, no matter what you're teaching at some point you can do a little demonstration. Or you can have the kids drop a ball or, you know, whatever. And the kids are moving and it's, as a teacher, one of the things I've learned is I don't want kids sitting because, like, man oh man, can you imagine? If they sit for an hour and 15 minutes in my class, and then an hour and 15 minutes in the next class, and an hour and 15… like, they're sitting for five hours. I can't sit for five hours.

So, I was like, "what can I do?" So, what I started doing like, my first year of teaching high school, I got them to put whiteboards all around my room. And literally, I walked in the first day I was like, I had a warm up question on the board. I said, "get up, get up, get up, get up, go answer the question on the board, go up, get up, get up, get up, get up, get up, get up." And they're like, "what?" I was like, "no, I don't want you sitting, brain research says you can't sit for more than 10 minutes or 15 minutes, you know." And so, I had them at the board and it was great because I could walk around and I could see where somebody was stuck right away and go talk to them and since there was enough ambient noise, it's not like I was saying, "hey, this person got it wrong." I'd just be like, "you know, hey, oh you made a mistake here and fix that", and then, "okay, I see you guys got this, sit down, sit down, sit down, sit down." Okay? And so, I said, "this is the goal of what we're trying to do today. I'd like you to try this question. Get up to the board, get up, get up, get up, try this." And that's how I run my math classes. So, there's not a lot of me just teaching, and they sit there for a long time. They're up at the board, they're trying the questions. I'm helping them and then I'll have them sit at their notebook and try a question. But instead of me showing them how to do stuff, I'm constantly getting them to try it.

hands-on
demonstrations
actie learning
applied learning
} student-centred teaching philosophies

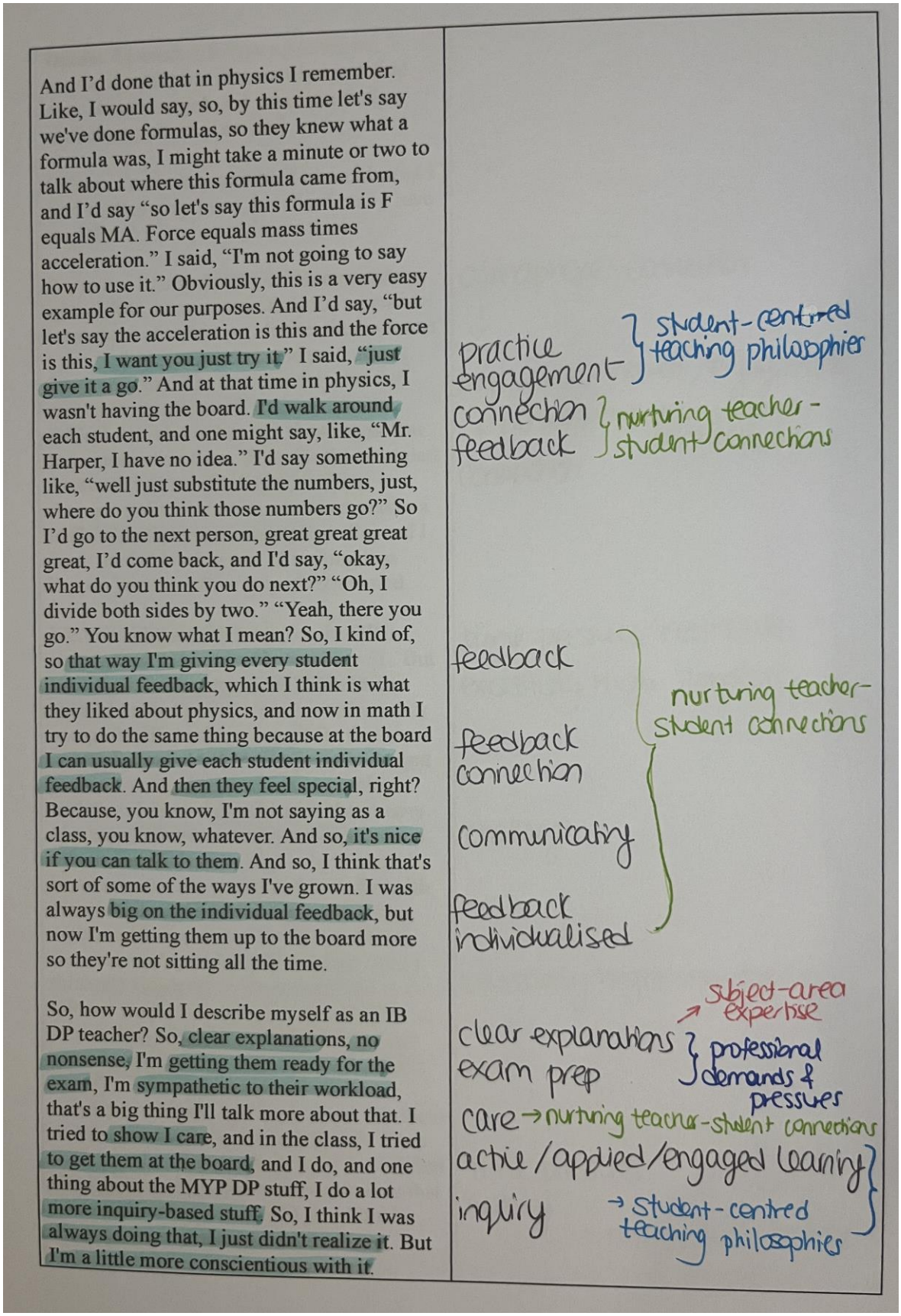
actie learning
applied problem-solving
→ student-centred teaching philosophies

communicating one-on-one
→ nurturing teacher-student connections

actie learning rather than passive
→ student-centred teaching philosophies

And I'd done that in physics I remember. Like, I would say, so, by this time let's say we've done formulas, so they knew what a formula was, I might take a minute or two to talk about where this formula came from, and I'd say "so let's say this formula is F equals MA. Force equals mass times acceleration." I said, "I'm not going to say how to use it." Obviously, this is a very easy example for our purposes. And I'd say, "but let's say the acceleration is this and the force is this, I want you just try it." I said, "just give it a go." And at that time in physics, I wasn't having the board. I'd walk around each student, and one might say, like, "Mr. Harper, I have no idea." I'd say something like, "well just substitute the numbers, just, where do you think those numbers go?" So I'd go to the next person, great great great great, I'd come back, and I'd say, "okay, what do you think you do next?" "Oh, I divide both sides by two." "Yeah, there you go." You know what I mean? So, I kind of, so that way I'm giving every student individual feedback, which I think is what they liked about physics, and now in math I try to do the same thing because at the board I can usually give each student individual feedback. And then they feel special, right? Because, you know, I'm not saying as a class, you know, whatever. And so, it's nice if you can talk to them. And so, I think that's sort of some of the ways I've grown. I was always big on the individual feedback, but now I'm getting them up to the board more so they're not sitting all the time.

So, how would I describe myself as an IB DP teacher? So, clear explanations, no nonsense, I'm getting them ready for the exam, I'm sympathetic to their workload, that's a big thing I'll talk more about that. I tried to show I care, and in the class, I tried to get them at the board, and I do, and one thing about the MYP DP stuff, I do a lot more inquiry-based stuff. So, I think I was always doing that, I just didn't realize it. But I'm a little more conscientious with it.



Diane: As another follow up question, maybe if you could discuss what you find easy about your job and what you find challenging about your job?

Oliver: Yeah, okay so what I like and what I find challenging. I just, because I really love the DP, I do. I'm just trying to think.

I'm just… I guess I just like the atmosphere of the class, because the students, no matter what the motivation is, whether they want to learn or they just need a good mark to get into university. The fact that they, for the most part, they're motivated to learn the subject. I think the fact that they've got that little motivation there. Plus, for the most part I make the connections with students, so they generally like me as a teacher, makes a really nice classroom atmosphere. So, and I think the DP is a big part of making that happen because of the way it's structured.

Well, the biggest challenge for the DP is simply time. Now I'm only teaching SL. But I still find the content of the DP to be too much. I know that in some universities they accept the HL course as credit for first year university and can therefore jump to second year university. I think there's a problem with that. I think the problem is that means to me the DP course is way too high a level. I think that students in high school should have more time to go out and have fun with their friends on Saturday night and Friday night, and hang out and be kids, and have fun, and not be working all the time. And I think the standards to me are too high in the DP and simply because they shouldn't be, to me, they shouldn't be so high that they can actually make that equivalent to a first-year course. There's a reason those are first university courses. And so, I would like them to cut a bunch of content, even in SL. Keep the hours the same, because even in SL I find them rushing through, and there are kids that I know could get it if I could go a little bit slower.

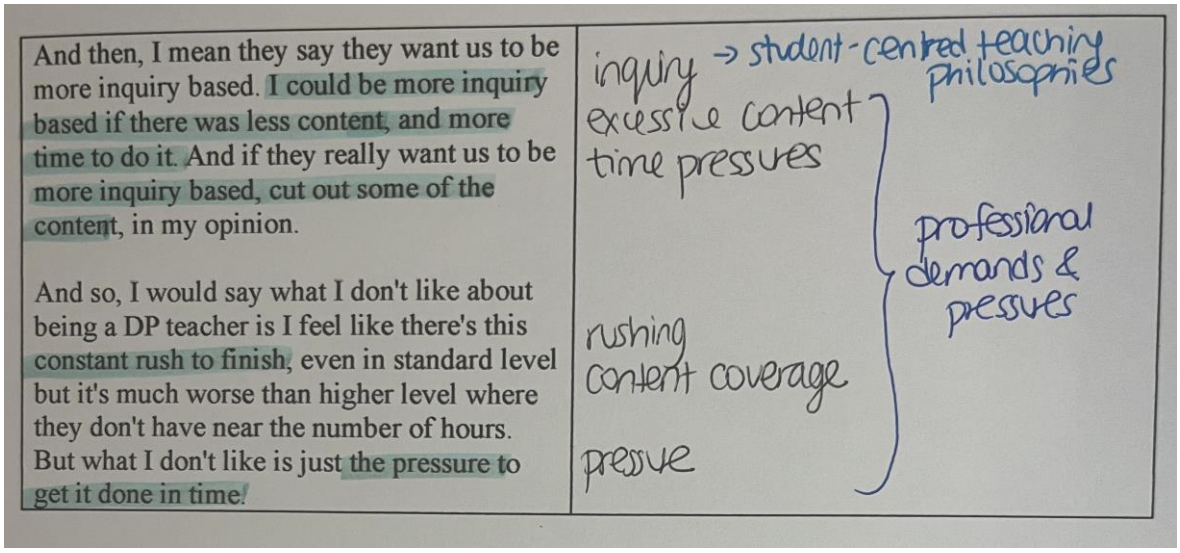
atmosphere - connection
↓
motivation/interest/engagement
↑ nurturing teacher-student connections
connection

time pressures/restraints
excessively high standards

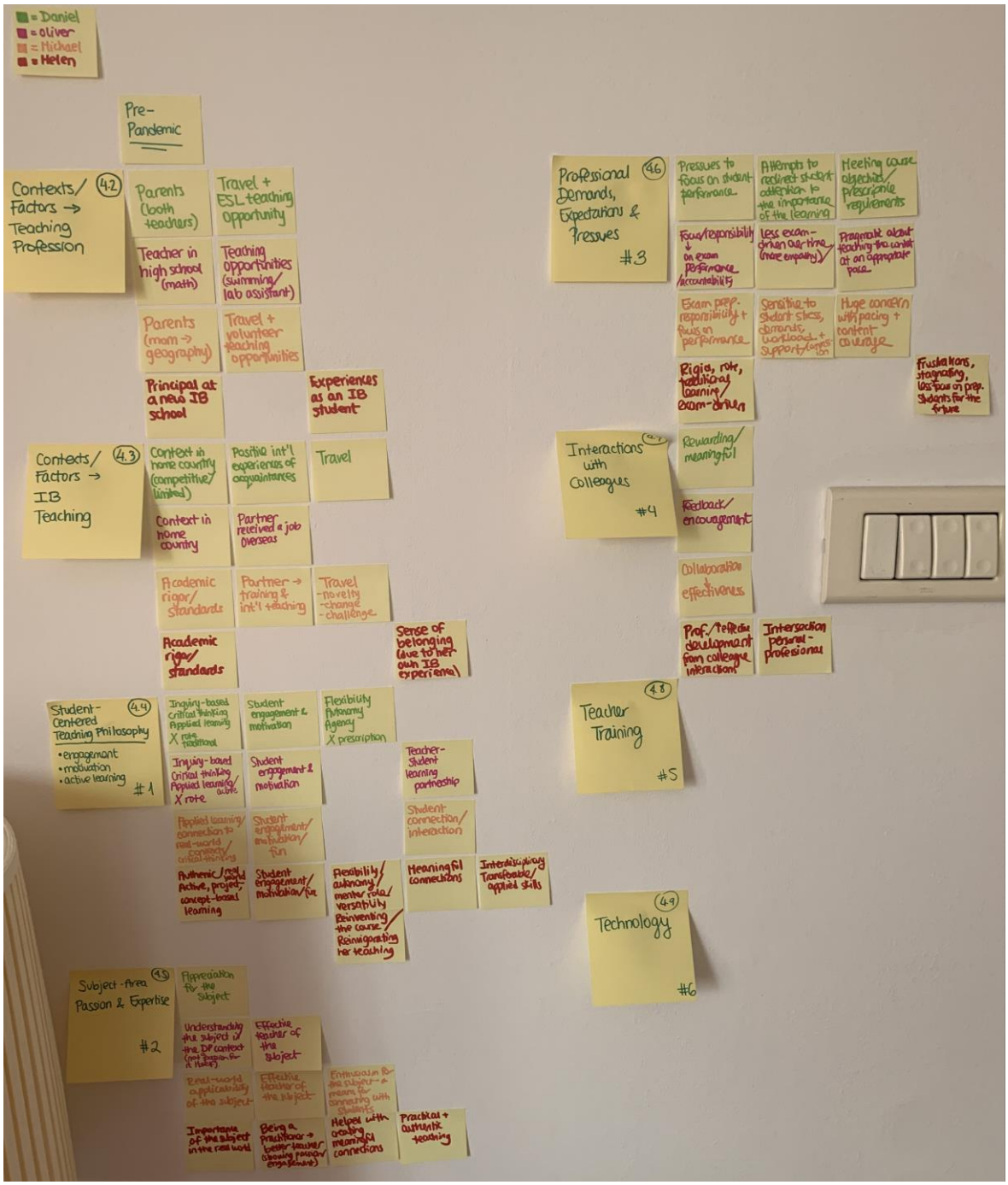
challenge

excessively high standards

time pressures
rushing
→ professional demands & pressures


And then, I mean they say they want us to be more inquiry based. I could be more inquiry based if there was less content, and more time to do it. And if they really want us to be more inquiry based, cut out some of the content, in my opinion.
And so, I would say what I don't like about being a DP teacher is I feel like there's this constant rush to finish, even in standard level but it's much worse than higher level where they don't have near the number of hours. But what I don't like is just the pressure to get it done in time.
inquiry → student-centred teaching philosophies
excessive content
time pressures
rushing
content coverage
pressue
professional demands & pressures

Appendix P: Example of Thematic Mind-Mapping



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