

## The changing identity of the student teacher

### Introduction

Chambers Dictionary's (2015, no page number) interpretation of identity is 'the state or quality of being a specified person or thing; who or what a person or thing is'. With this interpretation the word is a noun and refers to identity as an object. In this case identity does not change or recreate itself, and is what Wetherell (2010, p.5) describes as the 'fixed essence that a person possesses'. The humanistic movement of the 1950s questioned the notion of a fixed identity. Erikson (1950, 1968) developed the belief that identity was more fluid than was previously thought. He argued a person could adopt an identity that subsumed the personal with other peoples' views and beliefs. Erikson referred to this 'social identity' as a person's 'ego identity', as it was constructed from the interaction with the social. The ego identity is not fixed over a lifetime as people adapt and change as they go through different stages of life. Erikson constructed a psycho social model with eight stages a person's identity goes through during their lifetime. He also highlighted the importance of conflict in these transitions as a person develops a new identity which he called the 'identity crisis'. A conflict of identity can be seen during the education of new teachers as they contend with the prescribed teacher identity and their own preconceptions of the professional role (Britzman, 1994).

The post-modernist movement of the 1980s saw yet another approach to the construction of identity. Tajfel's (1981, p. 255) work on the social identity was at the forefront of this. He defined social identity as:

That part of the individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership.

This quotation highlights the importance of two influences on identity, the first being the notion of self-concept and personal identity, i.e. 'who we are' combined with the second influence of the social context in which the self-concept is formed. Identity is perceived here as fluid and dependent on the membership of a social group or groups. The notion of a social identity becomes a new source of conflict. Erikson (1968) saw the conflict of identity occurring over time, and at different stages of life, but the post-modernist interpretation of

identity sees the conflict occurring between the social and the self. There is the identity that the individual possesses and the one that society imposes on the individual through the workings of the state.

Wrenn (2012, p.404) describes social identity as a product of the interaction of the personal identity with its surroundings, a coming together of the social and the personal, rather than two distinct identities. Agency has an important role in the reflection of the conflict of identities. This conscious reflection of struggling identities gives the agent the agency or the power to recognise the influences of the social. For Wrenn, however, this conscious reflection is superficial and an illusion of empowerment. The neo-liberal approach sees empowerment as a 'grand illusion' because individuals believe themselves to have agency, but this is at a superficial level as the 'market mystifies human relations' and individuals have a distorted view of reality (Heron, 2008, no page number). Reality is distorted by the demands of capitalism which inhibits the capacity of an individual's agency. Agency is interpreted here in its broader form rather than the masculine definition that limits it to the achievement of an individual's own capitalist ends. Heron defines agency as the capacity to be able to think, act and make decisions independent of the political and cultural forces around them. Within teacher education the student teacher's agency is directly impacted on by the political and cultural forces they encounter.

The post-modernist approach to identity construction has been furthered influenced by performativity. No longer is the question just about 'what is identity?'; there is also the question of 'how it is discursively constructed?' (Wetherell, 2010, p.6). Butler (2006) introduced the notion of performativity and identity formation. She built upon the notion of a socially constructed identity by introducing performativity and the extent to which an individual's identity is discursively constructed. Butler theorised that gender was not a biological state, but a product of discourse and that discourse was a product of the constant and persistent regulation and governmentality. Rose (1998) describes governmentality as the institutional apparatus which regulates human conduct and identity. However the term was first coined by Foucault (1980) and played an important role in his analytical constructs. As Lemke (2002, p.3) points out:

... a decisive role in his [Foucault] analytics of power in several regards: it offers a view on power beyond a perspective that centers either on consensus or on violence; it

links technologies of the self with technologies of domination, the constitution of the subject to the formation of the state; finally, it helps to differentiate between power and domination.

Foucault (1980) interpreted governmentality as the way the state uses its practices to govern and dominate its subjects. He wrote extensively about the domination of the state over its subjects and refers to the relationship as the 'missing link'. For Foucault government is not limited to the modern meaning of government but is interpreted more generally as: 'government as conduct, or, more precisely, as 'the conduct of conduct' and thus as a term which ranges from 'governing the self' to 'governing others' (Lemke, 2002, p.2). This governmentality can be found by analysing the discourse of the individual. Fairclough (2003) uses critical discourse analysis to analyse discourse and the influence of the social by detecting the influence of practices and structures.

### **Defining teacher identity**

The meaning of teacher identity has been difficult to conceptualise because there are many different perspectives (Sachs, 2005, Lizarraga, 2010b, Gee, 2000, Wenger, 1998). Teacher identity involves the role of the teacher and the individual's adoption of the professional teacher identity. Beijaard (1995) believes the professional teacher identity is derived from their expertise in their subject matter, combined with their skills, knowledge and support for their pupils. This is balanced against the demands of the institutional setting, both at a macro and micro level. It is the reconciliation between the personal and professional side of teaching that produces the teaching identity (Pillen, Den Brok & Beijaard, 2013).

The reconciliation between the personal and professional identity is not without difficulties. The student teacher experiences tension between the different demands on themselves. The student has to decide which parts of their personal identity they are willing to set aside in favour of the professional demands. The construction of the student teacher's professional identity is developed during the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) year, but this journey is full of complexities. The student teacher arrives with their values, beliefs and experiences, which may cause serious tension if or as these collide with the professional expectations. Pillen, Beijaard and Den Brok (2013, p.674) classified these tensions into three categories. The first tension is the change in role the student experiences from novice to expert; the second is the conflict between the desired and actual support given to the student;

and the third is the conflict over the conceptions of how the student teaches and the pupils' learn.

The tension between the student's own personal beliefs and knowledge, and the professional identity, is not always a disadvantage. The tension experienced during the student teacher's journey may make them stronger and more reflexive. The reflexivity is needed to enable the student teacher to decide which of their own values and beliefs they can hold onto and which ones do not fit with the prescribed professional identity of the teacher. This journey is needed to establish the student's teaching identity (Coldron & Smith, 1999). The student does not start the course with their teaching identity; it is developed during the PGCE year and beyond.

Fuller (1970) wrote about the three stages of a teacher's development. His research led him to believe the first two stages, his early and middle stages, as occurring during the novice stage of teaching as student teachers concentrate on: themselves, controlling the classroom, professional expectations and their relationship with the pupils (Table 1). Fuller's last phase, which involves serious concerns related to teaching and learning, can only be reached by the experienced teacher. Kagen (1992) appears to support the view that the student teacher is concerned about surviving the PGCE year and classroom control and subject knowledge are some their main concerns.

Table 1: Fuller's model of teacher development

I	Early phase	0	Concerns about self (non-teaching concerns)
II	Middle phase (competence)	1	Concerns about professional expectations and acceptance
		2	Concerns about one's own adequacy: subject matter and class control
		3	Concerns about relationships with students
III	Late phase (professionalism)	4	Concerns about students learning what is taught
		5	Concerns about students learning what they need
		6	Concerns about one's own (teacher's) contributions to student change

(Adapted from Fuller, 1970, p.17)

However, on many PGCE courses reflection on teaching and learning is taught as part of the syllabus and student teachers begin their teaching by following rules and applying theory they have been taught which is their first step of acquiring professional skills. The experience the student accumulates whilst on their teaching practice adds to their expertise and allows them to reflect and solve issues they experience. The teacher's professionalism is a combination of their knowledge, educational studies, practice in the classroom and reflective practice (Okas, van der Schaaf & Krull, 2013).

The teaching identity is, as suggested above, fluid as it not only reflects the teacher's own beliefs and values but their own professional identity and these can develop and change. It can be argued as the demands on the teaching profession changes there will be an impact on the professional's identity therefore leading to a constantly changing teacher identity. The continuous changes in education in the last 40 years has given rise to the question as to whether teaching is/has been de-professionalised. Interpretations of what it means to be a professional is not without controversy. Professions are often defined as 'occupations with a special status as experts and/or moral authorities, often as a result of extensive education, training and licensing' (Adams, p. 329, 2012). To become a member of the profession there is a body of knowledge and training that needs to be learnt and understood. The profession will also have a licensing procedure that restricts entry into the profession which leads to 'social closure'.

Teacher education through a university programme, such as the PGCE, does display the characteristics of a profession. To be able to apply for a PGCE the student must have a degree in a closely related subject, there is a body of knowledge that is taught during the PGCE year to assist with professional development which is applied in the classroom. The university tutor recommends, at the end of the year, teacher qualified status, therefore agreeing the student teacher is of a certain standard. By applying Adams' (2012) definition of a profession to the PGCE course there is a strong argument that teaching is a profession, however this is not true of all routes into teaching. The recent government decision to allow non-qualified teachers to become teachers does de-professionalise teaching. In Academies and Free Schools Qualified Teaching Status (QTS) is no longer required therefore eroding 'social closure' of the profession (DfE, 2012b). Also by allowing the 'training' of teachers through the school route of Schools Direct, the government is indicating that there is 'no body of knowledge' required to become a teacher another requirement for a profession.

There is much evidence to suggest the training of teachers solely in schools misses out on the pedagogical knowledge needed to assist with reflective practice. Not only are we seeing some of the routes into teaching becoming de-professionalised but there is also an erosion of the teacher's autonomy, one of the prominent characteristics of 'being a professional'. It is important teachers make decisions based on their own practical knowledge and beliefs. A teacher's reflective practice gives them the knowledge to decide on the best teaching and learning approach for their pupils. As Hoyle and John (p.92, 1995) state:

A positive form of autonomy represents a teacher's freedom to construct a personal pedagogy which entails a balance between personality, training, experience and the requirements of the specific educational context.

There is a question as to what extent teachers do have autonomy and to what extent decisions are made for them. More and more in teaching there has been increasing control leading to 'regulated autonomy' (Dale, 1982). Regulated autonomy is autonomy but within limited boundaries. In the last 30 years there has been greater central government control over schools and teacher education. The Department of Education (DfE) and the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) have a myriad of requirements ranging from what to teach to how to teach it. These requirements limit the teacher's autonomy and thus their professional practice. The de-professionalisation of

teaching may lead to a less reflective teacher as there are fewer requirements to critically reflect using a body of knowledge. The decrease in autonomy of the student teacher may also impact on their teaching identity.

### **The struggles of identity**

‘Teacher’ is more than just a word; it is a role that is socially constructed and contextualised to have meaning. According to Bondi (2009), to create harmony in that role the student teacher is expected to balance the relationship between the ‘nature identity’ and the ‘teacher identity’. As stated above there are many definitions of identity, but it is generally agreed that identity is not fixed but a fluid phenomenon and that it is socially constructed. Gee (2000) identified four perceptions of the student teacher’s identity: ‘nature/native identity’ (N-identity) which is the product of the student’s natural state, such as race or gender; ‘institutional identity’ (I-identity) which is the institutional recognised identity, for example how a school believes a teacher should behave and act; ‘discourse identity’ (D-identity) results from discourse about oneself to other people; and ‘affinity identity’ (A-identity) which is determined by one’s practices and the student teacher’s behaviour. The student teacher’s identity changes depending on the social context and, therefore, needs to be understood within that context. Identity is interpreted as both the product and process of the social world; it is fluid and is socially constructed.

Student teachers come to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) with a pre-conceived idea of teaching. The student has an understanding of the school system through their own schooling. Some will know teachers and may already been employed in schools. Even when starting the course the student teacher will have a teacher identity but it will change and develop during their teaching career (Sachs, 2005). This identity will not stop changing once they are qualified; their identity will continue to develop as they interact with their social environments. Sexton (2008, p.75) suggests: ‘teacher identity is treated as the relationship between one’s inherent traits and those that emerge through micro and macro situations.’ There is an array of factors that are drawn upon that re-form the student teacher’s identity, and these factors often lead to a conflict of identity. Student teachers can experience a conflict and struggle of identity, but may not realise what it is. If student teachers are led to believe there is only one role of a teacher, this may cause conflict with their own preconceptions and beliefs.

Britzman's (1994) provides a case study of Jamie, a struggling PGCE student, to illustrate and examine the dualism of identity. Jamie dropped out of school twice but, after her degree, decided to go into teaching and have an impact on pupils who were disengaged in the classroom like she had been. After a month on the PGCE course she wanted to leave. Jamie was concerned about the regulations and demands of the curriculum and 'alarmed' by how the pupils demanded such 'traditional activity'. Britzman argued that Jamie survived the course by splitting her personality into two. She had personal beliefs of what a teacher should be but conformed to what society believed being a teacher meant.

I have finally decided when I enter the school building in the morning I am not a teacher. I am a human being who's assuming a role that has been designated 'teacher'. And I carry out some of the functions of that teacher. But when things go against my grain, (and) I don't want to do it, I don't believe in it, or I just don't know, then I can admit that. And that way I can save my own peace of mind and I can deal with the situations that arise. (Britzman, 1994, p.66)

Lauriala (2005) theorised that student teachers have one conception of self, but with different dimensions, which are: 'the actual self', 'the ought self' and the 'ideal self'. The 'actual self' is the one that prevails, 'the ought self' is the one recognised externally, and the ideal self is the self that is achievable with targets. In the case of Jamie, there is a conflict between the 'actual self' and the 'ought self' (Britzman, 1994).

The concept of the socially constructed identity was further developed by Wenger (1998) with his notion of 'communities of practice'. Wenger (1998, 2010) proposed a social theory of learning that embraced not only the individual's identity but the importance of the community in which the learning take place. Student teachers are learning in two different environments: schools and the university, and even within those environments there are different learning communities. The student teacher is learning constantly, not only in formal university sessions but also in the formal meetings at school, staffrooms and social meetings with their own peers, their classroom and even in the pub. In all of these communities the student will try and 'fit in'. There is a powerful process of professional socialisation at work shaping, constructing and re-constructing identity as a negotiated experience. Wenger (1998, p. 149), explores these different identities further and believes there to be five:



1. Identity as a negotiated experience – identity is defined by who we are, by the way we participate and by the way others reify ourselves. It is how a person behaves when working with others and alone.
2. Identity as community membership – identity is how we define ourselves by what is familiar or unfamiliar.
3. Identity as a learning trajectory – identity constitutes where a person has been and where they are going. Identity is a trajectory, as the experience of a person shapes who they are and how they behave.
4. Identity as nexus of multi-membership – a person is defined by how they meld the different memberships, of different communities, into one identity.
5. Identity as a relation between the local and the global – we define ourselves by negotiating local ways of belonging to something larger.

Wenger does not see identity as an object but a ‘constant becoming’:

The work of identity is always going on. Identity is not some primordial core of personality that already exists. Nor is it something we acquire at some point in the same way that, at a certain age, we grow a set of permanent teeth... our identity is something we constantly renegotiate during the course of our lives. (Wenger, 1998, p.154)

A student teacher becomes a member of many different communities of learning, including: the whole PGCE cohort, PGCE subject cohort, whole school/college, the subject mentor, departmental teachers, classroom, and the staffroom. There are many communities of learning that the student teacher must become a member of to be successful.

One of the largest studies of teacher identities was the VITAE project, a four year study of teachers sponsored by the DfES and led by Professor Christopher Day (Day et al, 2006). The study was an investigation of 300 teachers covering 100 schools, across seven LEAs. The aim of the project was to investigate the effectiveness of teachers and was seen as:

... the most comprehensive and extensive study of teachers’ work and lives, and is the first to explore associations between these factors and teacher effectiveness. (Day et al , 2006, p.2)

The breakdown of the school sample in the VITAE project was 50% primary and 50% secondary school teachers. The sample consisted of teachers who taught years 2, 6 and Maths and English. Semi-structured interviews were the main research method used. The interviews were focussed on the effectiveness of teachers, but identity was one of the variables (Day et al, 2006).

The VITAE project found that teachers' 'effectiveness' and 'outcomes' were based on two main factors, referred to as the 'moderating' and 'mediating' factors. Moderating factors are factors from the wider context that affect teachers' professional and private identities. The mediating factors are the pupils, school policies, school management, colleagues, the socio-economic context and continuing professional development (Day et al, 2006, p.1).

The VITAE data found that it was not until a teacher had been teaching from four to seven years, that they had formed strong identities:

Seventy-eight per cent of teachers in this phase had taken on additional responsibilities, which further strengthened their emerging identities. (Day et al, 2006, p.3)

The study suggested that the teaching identity was the professional identity. The findings from the study concluded that there were three parts to a teacher's identity: 'professional', 'personal' and 'situational'. The teacher had a personal identity outside the classroom, an identity whilst teaching and an identity that is dependent on the situation. According to the study's results, only 67% of the teachers had a positive identity and felt they could make a difference, whilst 33% had a negative identity and believed they did not make a difference to their pupils' learning. Although the report acknowledges there is more than one identity, in the findings only single identity is referred to (Day et al, 2006, p.271). Unfortunately, it is not known how the semi-structured interviews led to these results, but it seems that the authors are making a direct link between positive identities and teachers' efficacy.

Day (2006) has written extensively on teacher identities by utilising the VITAE project findings. He commented that studies into teacher identities were limited by their lack of longitudinal data and that 'none seek to address possible relationships between identities and teacher effectiveness' (Day, Gordon & Sammons, 2006, p.611). He then goes on to argue that the lack of longitudinal research is addressed in the VITAE project; however, due to the

large size of the sample, the interviews were short and provided limited narrative. The results were reduced to statistics rather than narrative extracts, which does not illuminate the reader about the teacher's different identities and how they transform.

The VITAE study concluded that a better understanding of the mediating and moderating factors would increase teacher effectiveness in schools (Day, 2006). There should be an encouragement to manage these factors, as this leads to a more effective teacher. From the findings it can be deduced that if teachers can manage their identities they will be more effective. The recognition by teachers of their different identities is important to a teacher's self-esteem, but there is no suggestion as to how these identities should be managed - only just that it should happen.

Research also demonstrates there may not only be tension between the different components of the student teacher's identity but also between the student teacher's perceived teaching identity and the teaching identity that develops during the PGCE year (Flores, 2006, Stîngu, 2012, Korthagen, 2005). Stîngu advocates that teacher education programmes should help students reflect on these tensions and believes it is important for initial teacher programme leaders to analyse the social context of the placement school. This would enable the provision of as broad a range of experience as possible for the student teacher.

The student teacher's identity is dynamic and fluid. Both Wenger (2010) and Bourdieu (1977) suggest identity alters depending on the environment the individual finds themselves in. The student teacher enters a placement school with preconceptions of teaching and learning, and these beliefs change as they interact with the social context. Akkerman and Meijer (2011, p.315) maintain, the student teacher's identity changes but it is unknown as to 'what is shifting and what determines the direction of the shift.' According to Dang (2013), this is an area that is under-researched, but opines that it is the teaching environment that causes the change in identity, as the identity is constructed and reconstructed through interpretations and re-interpretations of the student teacher's beliefs.

Within teacher education identity conflict is under-researched, but it has been researched widely in business and psychology (Dang, 2013). Conroy (2013) presents a model of 'work-related identity loss and recovery' that conceptualises identity transitions in the workplace (Figure 1).

## Work-related identity loss and recovery

Liminal interval

Identity equilibrium

Entity equilibrium

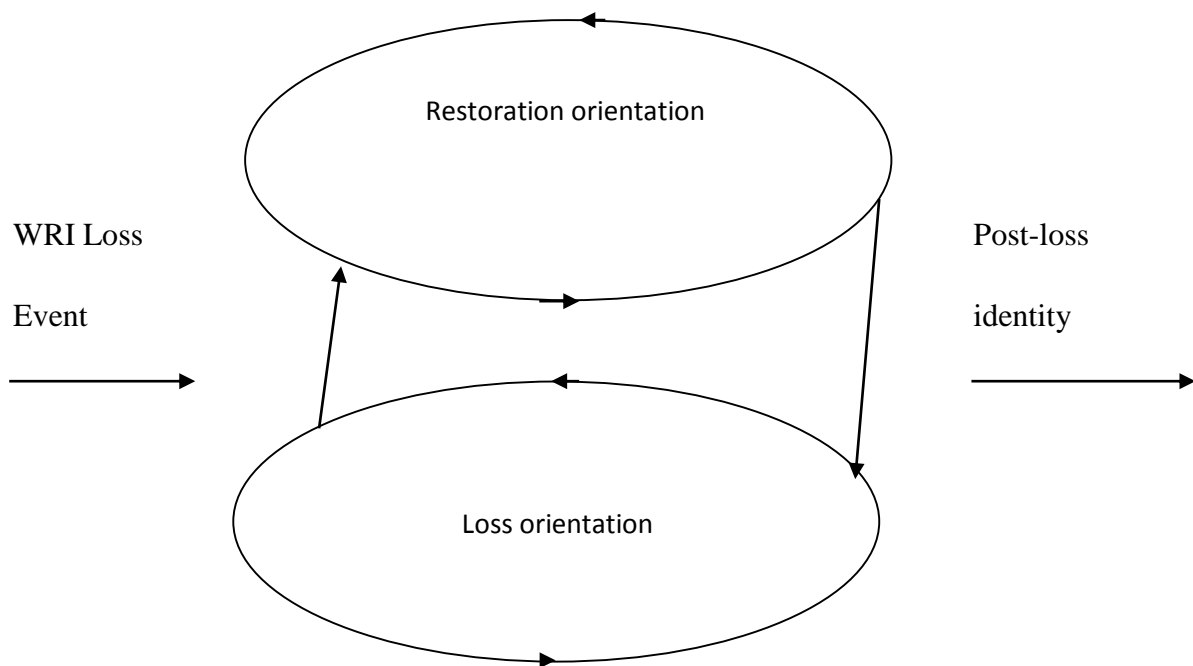


Figure 1: A model of WRI loss and recovery (Adapted from: Conroy, 2013, p. 70)

Conroy asserts that when an individual joins an organisation there will be disruption to their work-related identity (WRI), which has been defined as: ‘...aspects of identity and self-definition that are tied to participation in the activities of work... or membership in work-related groups, organisations, occupations or professions’ (Dutton, Roberts & Bednar, 2010, p.266). WRI is the sense of self that is related to the person’s work or organisational membership. Conroy (2013) states that a person’s work life involves identity loss. As an individual negotiates their self through the workplace they experience disruptions to their WRI as they surrender their current self and enter the liminal period.

This loss is represented by the loss of a value or an aspect of a professional identity. An extreme example would be an individual who experiences a workplace injury and has to rethink their work identity. It may be they no longer can do the specific job they did before or they have to find a different vocation. A less extreme example might be you change teams or you have a disagreement over strategies within the organisation. The WRI loss interrupts the existing identity and the individual enters the 'liminal interval'. The liminal period is a transition between the old and new self. During the liminal period the identity lacks a connection with the social domain and features aspects of instability (Conroy, 2013, p.67).

Conroy (2013) identifies two conflicts that occur during the liminal interval; the first is 'loss orientation', which is the process of establishing 'who I was', and the second is 'restoration orientation', which is establishing 'who I am now'. During this time emotions play a large role in how quickly a person moves on to their 'post-loss identity'. The more agitated the individual's emotions are to the WRI loss, the longer the liminal period will be. Agitated emotions can manifest themselves in the form of anger or guilt and, as Brockner and Higgins (2001) argue, anger will lead the individual to avoid the situation that caused the dis-equilibrium of the WRI in the first place. The length of time an individual spends in the liminal period will have an effect on the individual as they wrestle with their new identity.

Before the individual moves into the 'post-loss identity' period they will look for affirmation of their narrative on the WRI loss event. According to Swann (2009), an individual whose WRI is going through transition will look for an external validation of their narrative. If no validation occurs, the narrative will be revised until it is. The narrative is the story the individual presents about the self that he/she has constructed on the WRI loss event. Eventually the narrative will be accepted by the social group and the individual will move on. This will be a recurring process throughout an individual's work experience (Conroy, 2013).

Applied to this research WRI loss can be seen as the student teacher revises their preconceptions of teaching and reconstructs their teacher identity. The student teacher will encounter various events that may destabilise their teaching identity. There will be tensions between their personal teaching identity and the professional identity that are 'played out' during the liminal period. During this time the student tries to reconcile what is expected of them by different educational establishments with their own values and beliefs. These

tensions will occur throughout the PGCE year and even after the student teacher is qualified, as the professional demands from educational establishments change with government policy.

### **The contextual factors influencing the teacher's identity**

Student teachers enter many social fields when they start their teaching practice, from their own PGCE course cohort to the placement school's staff room. The amount of influence an agent has within a social field is influenced by the amount of capital they possess. She/he will maintain the rules of the field that benefit their own position and power. Bourdieu interprets the 'field' as a 'space of conflict or competition' (cited in Winkle-Wagner, 2010, p.8). According to Flemmen (2013), the 'fields' are the various social and institutional arenas in which people express and reproduce their cultural competence and knowledge. There are no general rules within a field. Each field has its own rules that determine the conditions of entry and exclusion. Hence, one's social capital may be very useful in one field but meaningless in another. The agents who belong to the field decide on the 'membership' requirements to join the field. The strategies used by the dominant group/person to maintain power are known as 'symbolic strategies'. This reproduction of the dominant agent is what Bourdieu (1984) refers to as symbolic capital. For example on a macro scale the National College of Teaching and Learning (NCTL) decides on the standards needed to qualify for Qualified Teaching Status (QTS). They also make decisions on teacher education funding. At a micro level there may be many written and unwritten rules within a school environment. An individual may need to be a qualified teacher to belong to the school's staffroom. The rules of all different social fields within a school will shape the ethos of the school (Wood, 2013).

The importance of these social fields on identity was developed by Wenger's (1998, 2010) studies of 'communities of practice'. He perceives identity as 'ongoing' because of the membership of and participation in different communities. He refers to identity as a trajectory, rather than being static. A person's trajectory carves a landscape through different social groups or communities of practice:

In using the term trajectory I do not want to imply a fixed course or a fixed destination. To me, the term trajectory suggests not a path that can be foreseen or chartered but a continuous motion – one that has a momentum of its own in addition to a field of influences. It has a coherence through time that connects the past, the present, and the future. (Wenger, 1998, p.154)

According to Wenger (1998, 2010), the temporary nature of our identities is dependent on the social contexts that shape our trajectories. Our identities are defined by the interaction of these trajectories and the way they merge. This theory can be applied to the student teacher whose identities are constantly being moulded and remoulded, depending on the social communities they belong to.

Teachers are the ‘products and producers of their own environments and of their own social systems’ (Lizarraga, 2010, p.294). It is important the student teacher has access to the different communities, as this is where learning occurs. Education is about ‘opening up’ an identity and spreading the trajectories wide. This ‘opening up’ of an identity will occur by belonging to many communities of practice. The more communities the student teacher belongs to, the more ideas that are reflected on.

When the student teacher starts at their placement school they join a very complex environment. The realm of education has changed rapidly in the last thirty years and schools have become more accountable at every level of management (Mansell, 2007). ITE has become one of the political battlegrounds in education. Until the 1980s, teacher education remained relatively unregulated by the government. Universities and colleges decided on how to train teachers and what constituted the content of the ITE courses. During the 1980s, teacher education started to change dramatically when the Conservative Government established closer central control. Since the foundation of the Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) in 1984, the content of teacher education has been specified.

In 2000, the Labour government established the General Teaching Council of England (GTCE). The GTCE oversaw and regulated teachers’ professional conduct and competence, but was abolished by the Conservative/Liberal Democratic coalition and replaced by the Teaching Agency. In 2013, the Teaching Agency merged with the National College for School Leadership to form the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). The NCTL specifies the teaching standards needed to reach Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and controls the funding for student teachers. The NCTL (2014) is only one of the many external organisations that impact on the student teacher’s education.

Ofsted has ensured the increased accountability for results, and standards of teaching, at all levels. Ofsted was created in 1992; prior to this time Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) had a responsibility for school inspections, but it had a less formal role. Baxter (2013, p. 706) refers to HMI's role as being likened to the 'role of a critical friend'. Ofsted has a much stricter inspection regime, which has brought with it greater accountability (Hatcher, 2005, Alexander, 2004, Thrupp, 2003).

Ofsted is an external stakeholder which presence has led to an increase in the external accountability by the headteacher and governing body. This accountability has also increased the internal accountability between the different levels of hierarchy within the school. Ofsted has the power to deem a school 'cause for concern' which would trigger 'special measures' and could ultimately lead to the replacement of the governing body and management of a school (DfE, 2006).

The myriad of stakeholders of a school influence the social fields within the school setting. A number of the stakeholders will affect student teachers indirectly, such as greater accountability to school governors, but the majority of the stakeholders will directly affect the student teacher, such as Ofsted's grading of lessons. The accountability to these different stakeholders will have an impact on the various social fields the student teacher belongs to. The rules of a social field may be controlled by these external bodies, such as Ofsted and the NCTL.

These different stakeholders may have a different view on how a teacher should behave and act. These views will impact on what Lauriala (2005) refers to as 'the ought self' - the identity derived from a position recognised by an external authority or society. In the case of the teacher, there are numerous authorities that have their own views on what a teacher is.

In education teachers are continually driven to meet targets. Many new teachers are aware of this performativity and conformativity (Mansell, 2007). Teachers themselves are judged by these criteria: 'Performance management is the process for assessing the overall performance of a teacher or headteacher' (TDA, 2010a). It is the new education culture. Results and targets are driving education and this is reflected by our teachers and their training.



The focus here is primarily on performance itself as a system of measures and indicators (signs) and sets of relationships, rather than on functions for the social systems and the economy. (Ball, 2004, p.145)

The realm of teaching and education has now embraced this performance culture to such an extent it now seems like normality:

...if language in which teaching is spoken about is predominantly improvement, value added, cost effective efficiency and effectiveness, measurement of achievement, learning outcomes, flexible delivery, markets and the like, then it should not be too surprising if this lexicon gradually begins to have the appearance of being credible natural, logical and a common sense way of talking about what is important to teaching. (Ball, 2004, p.247)

Performance culture dominates education: its structure, its culture and its discourse. It is dominated to an extent that there is less room for the teacher's identity and questioning of the ideology of education (Britzman, 1994).

## **Conclusion**

The journey to professionalism happens in a very complicated environment with interactions and numerous power struggles. Both schools and universities have a complicated accountability structure with various stakeholders. These stakeholders, whether internal, such as senior management or external, such as Ofsted have their own targets. The student teacher has two hierarchical structures to fit within making it a highly complicated cultural context.

The student teacher will have many identities. The first is their 'natural identity' which includes their gender and race. This part of their identity does not normally change. A second identity is their teaching identity which is moulded through the year as the teacher reflects the institutions they belong to and this social environment is a complicated one. At times the student teacher's identity will go through a period of disequilibrium. During this time the student teacher will feel a loss of the teaching identity they had, or thought they would become until there is an acceptance of the new identity and equilibrium will then resume (Conroy, 2013).

Each student teacher is set individual targets but the teacher's identity is only considered to a limited extent. Students, at university, are reduced to categories: mature students, overseas and minority (Clegg, 2008). The identity of the teacher conjures up many statements but many of these statements of identity are based on stereotypes that are associated with the role of the teacher rather than the 'who' or 'what' the person is themselves (Britzman, 1994). Teachers are often identified by the role they play, or are perceived to play, rather than their actual identities. The:

...role speaks to public function, whereas identity voices subjective investments and commitments. Role, or what one is supposed to do, and investments, what one believes and thinks, are often at odds. The two are in dialogic relation and it is this tension that makes for the 'lived experiences' and the social practices of teachers. (Britzman, 1994, p.59)

'Teacher' is more than just a word it is an identity and for many teachers there may be a struggle between what the 'teacher' represents to the community and what it represents to them. This struggle will manifest itself with most teachers having more than one identity (Wenger, 1998). For student teachers and new teachers this struggle may cause a conflict of identity and there needs to be assistance in the realisation that a conflict exists. If teachers are led to believe there is only one identity of a teacher than this will start to suffocate their true identity.

Dreyfus et al (1983) believes that every day we make choices and decisions. Teachers may find an erosion of their autonomy, but with student teachers they may be less questioning of themselves and the educational system because of the need to conform. New teachers are joining a profession that they want to fit into. Bourdieu talks about adopting a language that makes us feel that we belong to a group. The schools and cultures, the student teacher joins, have very strong practices and ideas and it may be difficult for a new teacher to maintain their sense of self in such environments.

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