

Final Report to the Society for Educational Studies in relation to the Major Award in Educational Studies

**Title: The Academic Tribe of Teacher Educators:
Student and Staff Constructions of the Identities of
Pre-Service Teacher Educators**

1. Project details and outline

**1.1 Full project details, as approved in the
amended version (October 2008), are
available from the SES.**

1.2 Summary of literature review and related work in the original proposal

The project proposed conducting a literature review in the areas of teacher educators' identities and knowledge bases (with particular reference to research on academic identities, their relationships to the discipline and the institutional settings, and differing patterns of engagement in the teaching / research / scholarship / service nexus). We also intended to develop and apply a theoretical framework to organise the design and implementation of the study and to explore and theorise the inter-relationships between national discourses and practices for ITE, the ways in which these things are variously instantiated and understood in University Departments of Education (UDEs) and the identities and knowledge bases of the teacher educators working within those settings. This review has now been completed and used to inform all articles and conference papers from the project.

1.3 Summary of empirical work

Stage one: the documentary analysis of institutionally specific policies for ITE provision in each UDE to establish the university and departmental contexts and the structures which affect ITE provision.

Stage two: establishment of sample of ITE students at the sample universities for completing an email questionnaire. Development of questionnaire. Administration of questionnaire to student sample groups. Data analysis. Development of interview schedule. Focus group interviews with sub-groups (purposive sampling) of students. Data analysis.

Stage three: establishment of sample of HE-based tutors. Development of questionnaire Administration of questionnaires. Data analysis. Development of interview schedule. Focus group interviews with sub-groups (purposive sampling) of tutors. Data analysis.

Stage four: construction of embedded case studies.

2. The Implementation of the Project

2.1 Activities to date

| Activities | Comments |
|---|-----------|
| Literature review and development of theoretical framework | completed |
| Documentary analysis of institutionally specific policies for ITE provision in each UDE | completed |
| Establishment of sample of ITE students at the case study universities for completing an email questionnaire. | completed |
| Development and administration of questionnaire to student sample | completed |

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|--|---|
| groups. | |
| Data analysis of questionnaire contents | completed |
| Development of interview schedule and administration of focus group interviews with sub-groups of students (purposive sampling). | completed |
| Transcribing of interviews and data analysis of interview transcripts. | completed |
| Establishment of sample of HE-based tutors | completed |
| Development of interview schedule and administration of interviews with tutors (purposive sampling). | completed |
| Transcribing of interviews and data analysis of interview transcripts. | completed |
| Development of tutor questionnaire and administration to sample groups | completed |
| Construction of embedded case studies for the institutions | completed |
| Writing of paper on findings for staff samples | completed and accepted for JET – see Appendix 1 |
| Further dissemination of study | On-going – see 2.3 below |

2.2 Issue arising in the implementation of the project since the Interim Review to the SES

- a) project personnel: the revised research team of Patti Barber, Institute of Education, University of London, Professor Pat Mahony, Roehampton University and Jean Murray, University of East London (PI and named correspondent) was established in 2008 (after the promotion of Professor Peter John meant that the original project team had to be re-constituted). The new team worked effectively together until January

2009 when Professor Mahony also retired. At this stage Dr Gerry Czerniawski from the University of East London, who had undertaken some of the empirical work effectively working as an RA on the project, joined the project team as a full, funded member.

- b) criteria for the selection of nature and number of the institutions were amended to accommodate the difficulties experienced with gaining access to some settings.

2.3 Dissemination

The findings of the project have been widely disseminated at academic and professional conferences, including BERA 2010, AERA 2009 & 2010, ECER 2009 & 2010, ESCalate / HEA / TEAN (2009; 2010) and UCET (2008, 2009).

One paper on the tutors' perspectives has now been successfully reviewed for JET and will be published in February 2011 (see Appendix 1). A second paper on student perspectives is in preparation for review by TaTE (winter 2010). A third paper with a more theoretical orientation will be offered to BJES for review (spring 2011). We also have the option of writing a fourth paper on the embedded case studies later into 2011.

Full acknowledgement of the SES funding has been made at all dissemination events and is recorded in writing in all papers.

2.4 Findings of the project

An article on the findings from part of the project is attached. This article, in a revised form, is due to be published in the Journal of Education for Teachers in spring 2011, as part of a Special Issue on Teacher Educators.

A second article reporting on other parts of the AËTE study is due for completion in spring 2011 and will be added to this report at that point.

Please contact me if any further details on the conduct of the project are required.

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28th September 2010

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Teacher educators' identities and work in England at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty first century

Abstract

This article reports on a recent study of teacher educators in England which aimed to explore teacher educators' constructions of their own identities in the academic communities within two university Schools of Education. Findings show that teacher educators constructed repertoires of identities for themselves, deploying these to achieve credibility and recognition or to reflect personal change, depending on the particular context and 'audience'. Many saw their foundational identity as once-a-school teacher, but entry into the university often triggered changes and the (re)construction of identity around practice as a teacher educator and research engagement. Findings also showed a diversity of identity constructions and resistances around the idea of research engagement and having an identity as an academic. These findings are discussed in relation to the fast changing and contested field of teacher education at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty first century.

Teacher educators, based in Higher Education have long been acknowledged as a broad and heterogeneous occupational group (Ducharme 1993). This is certainly true of teacher educators in England. There are some commonalities in entry requirements and qualifications in that Higher Education-based teacher educators, working on pre-service (or Initial Teacher Education) courses, are nearly always qualified teachers with substantial experience of school teaching. Teacher educators usually enter Higher Education without doctorates or sustained experience of conducting personal research (although they may well have undertaken small-scale practitioner research and scholarship as part of their professional development in schools). Following common contractual processes for the appointment of academic faculty in England, the majority of teacher educators would be required to undertake a short 'probation' time and would then be appointed to permanent posts. The North American tenure system is not in use in England. Some universities have recently moved to the recruitment of 'teaching only' posts in which individuals have no contractual obligation to undertake

research, but the majority of teacher education posts still require faculty to engage in research and scholarship.

The institutions offering teacher education programmes in England range from long established, research-intensive universities, riding high in international research league tables, to newly established teaching-intensive universities. The Schools of Education within these universities vary greatly in the ways in which they instantiate the discourses and practices of the field of teacher education¹, and the teacher educators who work within these departments face varying imperatives for engagement in teaching, research and management activities. Previous research on this occupational group (Maguire 2000; Murray 2002, 2007) has indicated that teacher educators often have heavy workloads, teaching long hours in both the university and partnership schools and undertaking high levels of student nurture and care.

A further commonality in teacher education work across all universities is provided by the statutory requirement for all Higher Education-based pre-service programmes to be taught in partnership between universities and schools. In the last decade, performativity and audit cultures have changed the nature of academic work in universities in England across all disciplines. But in the field of teacher education these changes have been exacerbated by numerous policy initiatives implemented in the school sector, by shifting government requirements for pre-service courses (Training and Development Agency [TDA] 2007) and by stringent inspection regimes. Teacher education in England has been defined as existing in a 'national framework of accountability' (Furlong et al. 2000:15) and a 'culture of compliance' (Menter et al. 2006:50). The cumulative results of these multiple changes have resulted in teacher educators struggling to provide pre-service courses which are 'demanding, relevant, and practical' (Furlong et al 2000:144) as well as research-informed. At the same time, many teacher educators have faced explicit or tacit pressures to meet academic imperatives, including the production of publications for national research audits.

This article reports on part of a recent study of teacher educators in England, titled 'The Academic Tribe of Teacher Educators' (A3TE), which aimed to explore how the identities of teacher educators were constructed and understood by various stakeholders in teacher education. Teacher education in England also takes place through employment-based and school-focused routes which do not involve Higher Education-based educators. The growth of these routes, on which many serving teachers take up extended teacher education roles often as 'hybrid educators' (Zeichner 2010), and the recognition of the teacher education roles of the mentors (participating teachers) who support students' field-based experiences, are two factors which have brought further diversity and fragmentation to the occupational group of

teacher educators. But, whilst acknowledging the importance of this growing diversity, in this study we focused in this study on exploring the identities of Higher Education-based educators, working on ‘traditional’ pre-service routes.

In this article we report on the part of the A3TE study relating to teacher educators’ constructions of their own identities in the academic communities within two University Schools of Education. The specific objectives of this part of the study were to provide an evidence-based account of how these teacher educators viewed their identities, and to analyse what these constructions might indicate about teacher education work and the changing discourses and practices of teacher education in these two Schools of Education. The conceptual framework for this study draws on a formulation of identities as ‘a shifting amalgam of personal biography, culture, social influence and institutional values which may change according to role and circumstance’ (Day et al. 2006:613). The framework also sees teacher educators as *second order practitioners* involved in the processes of (re)production of the discourses of the *first order field* of schooling and, in a partnership system, necessarily working closely with teachers as *first order practitioners* (Murray 2002).

Research Design

This was an interpretive and exploratory study, drawing on established qualitative research methods for embedded case studies (Yin 2002) and conducted along strict ethical guidelines. As an embedded case study, the research design enabled a dual focus on the teacher educators and on the institutional contexts, specifically the Schools of Education, in which they worked. This element of the design is important in that we wished to investigate whether teacher educators in different Schools of Education perceived their identities and knowledge bases in varying ways.

In this paper we report only on the sample from two institutions, both post-1992 or ‘new’ universities. Both have experienced ‘universitisation’ (Menter et al. 2006), defined here as the process by which institutions once classed as ‘public sector institutions’ (polytechnics, diversified Higher Education Institutions and teacher education colleges) have made their way into the university sector in England between the 1960s and the current time. The School of Education within university A provides an extensive and diverse range of education programmes; the host university is a large institution offering courses across many disciplines. The institution was previously a polytechnic and only assumed university status in 1992. The other School of Education, in university B, is smaller and less diverse, set within a small university, which specialises in liberal arts and vocational programmes. Pre-service teacher

education programmes provide the majority of the income in both Schools of Education and both therefore have a heavy investment in teacher education. University B, in its former guises as a teacher training college or a diversified liberal arts institution, has been providing teacher education programmes for over 100 years, but the department at university A has only a relatively short (twenty year) history of such provision. Pre-service programmes at A have therefore been developed across a timescale when teacher education has become increasingly subject to government regulation and to 'compliance' regimes.

The contractual basis for work and for faculty recruitment and retention were very similar in these two Schools of Education, as both adhere to the national terms and conditions for academic work in 'new' universities. All of the teacher educators in this study were therefore required to teach or undertake supervision of students' work in schools (for up to 18 hours a week in term time), to engage in some form of research or scholarship and to undertake academic service. The sample group in University B worked on under-graduate or post-graduate pre-service programmes, with some also undertaking work on in-service provision for serving teachers; those at University A worked only on post-graduate pre-service programmes. On post-graduate pre-service courses in England students spend the majority of their time in schools, with only limited time at the university. On such courses there is only a small amount of time for students to undertake in-depth practitioner or action research, and little space for introducing strong disciplinary-based understandings of teaching (see Furlong et al. 2000 and Furlong & Lawn 2010 for further details of this point).

The research tools were designed to capture individuals' understandings and experiences of their identities and working lives as teacher educators. All teacher educators working on pre-service programmes were asked to complete questionnaires, consisting of a series of closed questions, using Lickert scales, and opportunities for free text comments on or responses to each question. Individual semi-structured interviews with a volunteer sample of twenty teacher educators (six from university B, fourteen from university A), all but two working full-time, were used to explore resulting issues in depth. All the interviews were conducted face-to-face. The eight questions in the interview schedule were semi-structured to ensure that all aspects of the research questions were covered fully. In consideration of the small sample size and the potentially sensitive nature of the data, all participants were given additional assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. For this reason pseudonyms for institutions and individuals have been used here, and, where necessary, minor identifying details have been altered to protect individual identity further.

This article draws mainly on the qualitative data from the interviews, which were fully transcribed. That data was then subjected to an initial content analysis that generated a number of emergent themes through the use of open coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990). These initial codes were refined by repeated analysis and used to define recurring themes. This process resulted in the creation of core categories (Glaser & Strauss 1967) to be included in the findings, an inductive process which enabled unexpected elements of the data to be analysed.

Findings: the identities of teacher educators

Once a school teacher.....

The sample group had spent between one and twenty years working in Higher Education, but, across both universities, all still had a strong sense of their identities as once-school teachers. With the exception of one individual who taught part-time in school and part in the university, this identity was a past one in strictly temporal terms, but in all other senses it was still present as a powerful signifier of identity in their current work and an essential element of their knowledge and values. Corroborating the results of previous research studies (Murray & Male 2005; Harrison & Mc Keon 2008), teacher educators in this project in the early stages of Higher Education work (one to three years) were found to clearly and confidently celebrate their identity as recently-ex-school teachers. But a similar sense of identity remained important even for those who had been in Higher Education for a number of years and / or also had a strong sense of themselves as educators in Higher Education. Continuing to claim this kind of school teacher identity – and the experiential knowledge of teaching which came with it - was often positioned as central to teacher educators' work and clearly seen as the 'badge' or 'currency' which gave credibility with students. As Peter (four years of experience in Higher Education) states 'your currency as a credible teacher-educator, depends upon your ability to have done the role at some stage..... I think it's necessary to have been there, done it, and worn the t-shirt.'

Signalling teaching experience enabled all the teacher educators to convey a sense of shared identities with their students (although ex-school teacher – that is, classroom escapee - and future school teacher may not seem the most clear cut of shared identity claims to an outsider). Signalling once-a-teacher status to co-operating teachers also conveyed messages of credibility through shared identities and a likelihood of common professional understandings based around knowledge of teaching.

This ex-teacher identity was often used in pre-service work, as in the following example in which Lesley talks about going into partnership schools,

When I have been in schools with the teachers, I am a teacher, and that is the first thing I say ‘Yeah, I was head of department’. You’re kind of justifying who you are because you don’t want to think that you’re the sort of person from the university that’s come in from the ivory tower that knows nothing about teaching.

Here, knowledge of teaching and claims to a teacher identity are deployed strategically to establish personal identity and to signal knowledge of teaching as a means of overcoming teacher scepticism or possible hostility to the ‘ivory towers’ stereotype of academic distance and removal from the ‘reality’ and practicalities of school life.

For a number of interviewees, claims to an on-going sense of identity as a school teacher were also constructed in ways which indicated unease with or resistance to the world of the university. Sam, for example, with five years of Higher Education experience, states, ‘I really do still regard myself as a secondary school (*high school*) teacher and it is still quite hard – despite the years I’ve been here – to see myself in the university role.’ Jo (nine years experience of Higher Education) asserts, ‘I still see myself as a (*school*) teacher’. She goes on to juxtapose her positive sense of identity as a teacher with not being a ‘lecturer’ and claims ‘I’m not a lecturer. I think lecturer is almost like a term of abuse. I think, ‘Yes, we work in a university, but I don’t want to be one of you, thank you very much.’’

Where Sam expresses her difficulty in seeing herself in the ‘university role’, Jo expresses a stronger disassociation between her sense of teacher identity and the title of ‘lecturer’ in Higher Education, given to the majority of academics in universities in England.

For some individuals, this teacher identity is clearly bifurcated from – or seen as ‘Other’ to – the existence or development of any sense of academic identity. Mandy’s rejection of any kind of academic identity was stark,

I don’t see myself as being academic at all. At school I always struggled...I preferred the practical side of things, which I think is probably why I like teaching, because it’s such a practical job. The whole thing – ‘academic’ – it’s just not me.

She celebrates her identity claim as ‘recently ex-school teacher’ and, like a number of the other interviewees, sets up a bifurcation between teaching as a practical endeavour with

which she feels comfortable and ‘the academic’ world, which she associates with the recognition of academic success and research engagement. Mandy was in her first year of Higher Education work, a time of transition in which identity shifts and challenges have been identified as common (Murray & Male 2005). Both Mandy and another participant spoke of their discomfort when attending university graduation ceremonies. The significance of the ceremony to generate insecurity by providing a visual barometer of colleagues’ academic qualifications was highlighted by Patrick, a former head teacher in a large school, reflecting on the challenges to his identity on entry to the university:

Being top of the tree I was suddenly bottom of the tree and that was hard. Being in charge of quite a large school to being an ‘also ran’ really..... At the graduations, seeing people with the floppy hats and all that business – I found that quite intimidating because my qualifications are quite meagre. I felt very ‘little’ in terms of my academic status. You know – other people with MA’s and PhDs. I think that was the thing that really hurt – that academic sort of inferiority.

This kind of account relates a sense of challenge to existing (and long held) personal identity in schooling and signals that entry into teacher education triggers a complex and shifting set of identity construction and re-construction. But other teacher educators saw themselves as aspirant academics or researchers (in this study engagement in research was often used as a signifier of academic work and identity, an issue which is discussed later in this article).

I see myself as a teacher educator now

Our findings indicate that pre-service was clearly understood by all individuals as centred on working with students to produce a new generation of ‘good teachers’. There was thus a strong emphasis on the teacher educators’ work in the social (re)production of teaching (Atkinson and Delamont 1985). Academic work is commonly defined (Halsey 1992; Fulton 1996) as having three elements – teaching, research and service to the university- but for all these individuals teaching intending teachers was the most important element of their work, bringing them considerable professional fulfilment. The importance placed on pre-service teaching was clearly linked to the educators’ professed missions to produce ‘good teachers’ from their programmes and their senses of themselves as ‘gate keepers’ to the profession.

For many of the more experienced interviewees (two plus years of Higher Education experience) in both universities, constructions of their identities as teachers of teachers (usually articulated as being a ‘teacher educator’, not a ‘teacher trainer’) and their knowledge

about teaching on pre-service programmes (defined here as their 'second order practice' as a teacher educator) formed a further part of their professional credibility. Attributes mentioned included having good teaching skills, knowledge of the development patterns of beginning teachers, the skills of providing support and challenge to students as their professional knowledge developed across the pre-service programme, programme design skills to ensure that pre-service provision was well planned and effectively implemented across schools and university, and providing support for mentors and other school-based tutors (what Guile and Lucas 1999:212 have referred to as a 'pedagogy of guidance' in partnership work).

Many of these attributes were seen as part of the distinctive knowledge base of teacher educators, but their origins were often explicitly or implicitly linked to previous work and identity as a school teacher. Pedagogical skills, in particular, were traced back to school teaching, with a number of interviewees making references to what might be broadly described as 'pedagogical modelling' (John 1996), referring to ways in which they tried to model good practice in schools in their pre-service teaching, so that their students can see what 'good teaching looks like'. Other teacher educators saw themselves as undertaking a more extended form of modelling, beyond pedagogy, in which they tried to model for their students what they saw as the extended professional attributes of the 'good teacher'. Adopting an 'ethics of care' (Noddings 1992) was part of this extended modelling, as discussed below. Modelling reflective practice for and with students was another example of these attempts to be 'the good teacher educator' in ways which mirrored constructions of good practice in school teaching. These student-centred teaching methods often sought to provide frameworks for thinking about the contested knowledge and professional dilemmas to be found in both schooling and teacher education, but whilst these pedagogies were seen as professionally appropriate, they were also acknowledged to be time intensive.

For some interviewees the mirror effect between schooling and Higher Education work was so strong that it resulted in a blurring between their senses of identity as an ex-school teacher and as a teacher educator in Higher Education. For example, the term 'mentor' in common use in pre-service in England to signify one of the roles of co-operating teachers in partnership schools, was also used by some teacher educators to describe their own identities. Sam, discussing her personal confusion, about her identity when she was working in school stated,

I have to say that when I'm in schools and there's the bit where you have to sign 'subject mentor/tutor etc' I start to think 'oh, which am I?' then often where it said

‘subject mentor’ I’ll sign that and then wonder whether I was supposed to or not. So there is a ‘Who am I? What am I?’

All the interviewees constructed pre-service programmes as a demanding experience for student teachers, one in which many struggled to survive in school, and were in need of guidance and support to achieve success. There were many references to teacher educators’ roles in developing, challenging, supporting or facilitating their students’ learning. Many of the teacher educators in this group also saw themselves as having extended and diffuse pastoral roles. References to ‘empathy’, ‘support’, ‘care’ and ‘nurture’ for students were common in the data. One participant said that she often provided a ‘shoulder to cry on if need be’. Another accepted that one of his students ‘sees me as the one she can come and vent to’.

This ‘ethics of care’ (Noddings 1992) was explicitly linked to school teaching by some interviewees, as in this account where care for student teachers as a teacher educator becomes elided with the perceived good practice of school teachers in nurturing their pupils.

Caring or ...I don’t want to really use the word ‘love’ because I don’t mean it in that way ... but, of the students ... that you actually care about the students and that they do well and that they’re having the best experience that they can possibly have. I mean, it’s the same, I think, for any teacher as well. Because, I always considered that to be a good teacher I wanted to be the type of teacher that I want my children to have.

Here, again, teaching in teacher education and teaching in schools are elided in terms of personal identity. A number of the sample group, particularly those from the secondary education section of university A, stated that they prioritised what they termed the ‘pastoral’ part of the job. For those teacher educators an ethics of care resulted in practices which were (re)produced in self-identifications and attempts to model the attributes of both the ‘caring teacher educator’ and the ‘caring school teacher’ by undertaking diffuse teaching and pastoral roles (Murray 2006).

‘Is that research with a capital ‘R’ or a small ‘r’?’

Again across both universities, there was consensus found in the interviews that research as scholarship (or ‘research with a small ‘r’ as one participant called it), was part of the overall work of teacher educators. ‘Research’ in this formulation had close kinship with what Boyer (1990) has defined as the ‘scholarship of teaching’, (here defined as reading about the subject

[schooling] to support pedagogy and personal practice and to achieve enhanced knowledge). As one interviewee stated, scholarship 'gave you a depth of knowledge that you might not otherwise have.'

A different formulation of scholarship, found in a number of interviews, linked the term to reflective practice, seeing it as essentially about 'self reflection and looking at yourself and wanting to make your practice better'. Scholarship and reflection on practice could be both positioned as ways of improving practice, and as part of the teacher educator's work, as in the following statement:

I think teacher educators should be researchers. It's a bit like saying to our trainees 'you've got to be reflective in your practice'. We need to be taking that a step further and researching what we are doing.

Where the word 'research' was understood in one or both of these ways, all but one of the interviewees felt comfortable with constructing research as scholarship as part of the work of teacher educators.

The second way of understanding 'research' activity was as the generation of new forms of knowledge about education (Boyer 1990) or 'Research with a capital R', as one interviewee termed it. As we have indicated earlier, when research was constructed in this way it often became an important signifier of the academic world, with constructions of personal identity as a researcher and / or as an academic becoming elided. In a small number of cases interviewees confidently claimed identities as academics for themselves and underlined what they saw as the central place of research in teacher education work, as the following quotes indicate:

I think if we are teacher educators in a university, we have to subscribe to being academics. If we are going to do that then we have to engage in research.

I don't think you can be a 'teacher educator' without being a researcher.

A number of interviewees talked about the 'benefits of research' and one participant in particular noted how research engagement had given her 'tremendous insight into the value of research, actually, and how it can improve situations in school'. Another spoke of how it 'can improve our own understanding, our own learning' to the benefit of student teachers and schools. Personal engagement in research was something to which many aspired, but saw

their involvement in research as circumscribed either by their inexperience as researchers or, more commonly, by the lack of time and opportunity in their daily work. The ‘practicalities’ of pre-service work meant that for some ‘the day job is so crammed’ that ‘lack of time’ and ‘unequal expectations’ on the part of the university were seen by most participants as factors restricting the possibilities for research engagement. In this quotation, Liam at the University of B expresses a certain cynicism (also found in other interviews from both research sites) about his university’s attitude to research engagement for those in teacher education,

To some degree I think it’s lip service really. That it’s something that you just have to do Whereas I basically have to fit it around school visits, lectures and everything else, and just finding time. I mean, I know I’ve got my PhD to do, but that’s fitting it in my own time

Some interviewees clearly saw themselves as aspirant researchers and talked about their emerging identities as researchers. The following respondent, for example, talks about how, over time, his perceptions of his professional identity were changing and how slowly he is embracing the value of research:

The researcher (*sic*) is one of those areas where, in a way, that’s become a bolt-on extension of what I do. And, probably over the last two years, I’ve tried to absorb that into my hierarchy of ideas of what I want to be and what I identify myself as. That’s the new bit – the ‘new kid on the block’. I still don’t see myself as a researcher properly but I do actually peg that in that position because that’s what I’d like to be.

In this statement and others like it there is a clear sense of a gradual re-working of identity to encompass the idea of assuming a new identity as a researcher, although research often tended to be constructed as at best an ‘add-on’ to work in teacher education, rather than as an integral part of it.

But for a minority of interviewees there was a clear dissociation between research and the work of teacher education: research here was seen as ‘not why we went into teacher training’. Other interviewees rejected any claims to an identity as a researcher, as in Adah’s stark statement, ‘I would never call myself a researcher. I would feel quite nervous’ or Janet who said, ‘I’d be daunted to claim to be a researcher’.

In both Schools of Education changing institutional expectations meant that research engagement was now more explicitly ‘encouraged’ or, from some perspectives, ‘required’ of

teacher educators. For some, this caused concern, so, for example, Linda's account conveys a sense of frustration about how expectations for research engagement have changed since she first embarked on the job many years ago:

Research wasn't part of what we did; we were there – we trained teachers. Research was done by other people..... There was no expectation whatsoever that you might do any research yourself.

Others, like Sion at University Y, welcomed the fact that 'the university is much keener on researching' and encouraging teacher educators 'to do some research', not least because it resulted in him having 'more time to research' and research becoming 'a sort of rising feature of my role'.

Discussion

We would acknowledge that the methodology of this study has a number of limitations including: the small and self-selecting sample group, uneven in its distribution across the two universities; the limitations of the questionnaire and the interview schedule as research tools, in part because neither allowed space for the extensive re-contextualisation of practice as a teacher educator; and the positioning of the interviewers who were themselves teacher educators and researchers interviewing their peers. But with these caveats established, we would argue that the study contributes to a greater elaboration of knowledge about how these teacher educators construct their identities and facilitates some exploration of what these constructions might indicate about work and the changing discourses and practices of teacher education in these two Schools of Education.

Across both universities teacher educators' work emerges from this study as involving a number of different, sometimes conflicting, roles. Similarly, in both universities the sample groups construct repertoires of identities for themselves, deploying these various identities to achieve credibility and recognition or to reflect personal change, depending on the particular context and 'audience'. From the limited findings of this study then, the differences between these Schools of Education seemed to have little effect on how these teacher educators perceived their identities and knowledge bases.

Many of the teacher educators in this study still saw one of their identities as that of 'once-a-school teacher'. This identity, whilst particularly dominant for those who had newly entered

Higher Education, also continued to be foundational, even after many years of university-based work. This consensus about continuing to espouse a teacher identity, whilst working in Higher Education, echoes some earlier research on teacher educators (see, inter alia, Ducharme 1993; Maguire 1994; Murray & Male, 2005). But here the sense of teacher identity seems to have more on-going significance for the individual, seems to last longer into the Higher Education career and is more extensive across the data set than in some of those previous studies.

This identity - and the experiential knowledge and skills which can be claimed to accompany it - also provided the foundation or 'blueprint' for practice as a teacher educator for many of these individuals. In this study entry into the university is often seen as triggering a complex and shifting process of the (re)construction of identity around practice as a teacher educator rather than as a teacher) and academic engagement in terms of personal research and / or scholarship. At the heart of this process, we suggest, are changing relationships between often long held personal identities and individual agency, and shifting professional status. These changes are enacted in the shifting contexts of the Schools of Education and their organisational hierarchies.

These findings might be interpreted, as in some of the literature on teacher educators (Ducharme & Agne 1989; Lanier & Little 1986), as evidence of limited adjustment to the norms of the Higher Education sector. Certainly such past analyses have been defined as creating a 'deficit model' (Murray 2002:77) for these teacher educators in which they are positioned as at best only 'semi-academics'. But a closer analysis of the contexts in which these teacher educators work and the nature of the work they are asked to undertake in a pre-service system where 'partnership' between schools and universities has been a statutory requirement for nearly twenty years indicates an alternative interpretation.

At both the case study universities our data indicates that the teacher educators were required to have the professional credibility within the school sector and their pre-service programmes to be involved in the day to day intensity of the processes of pre-service as professional (re)production, operating within a highly regulated and bureaucratic system. Reflecting previous research findings, discussed earlier in this article, most of the teacher educators taught for long hours; worked in both the university and partnership schools; engaged in the complex pedagogical and organisational tasks associated with partnership work; and participated in extensive quality assurance monitoring exercises.

In the process of implementing the relevant and practical programmes, taught in formal partnerships with schools, which government legislation demands of universities in England, partnership has become a hegemonic discourse, and it and many of its associated practices, go uncontested as part of the common sense of pre-service work. But, as Popkewitz (1987: ix) indicates, hegemonic discourses often serve to ‘dull one’s sensitivities to the complexities that underlie the practices of teacher education ... (by) a filtering out of historical, social and political assumptions’. Partnership between universities and schools is certainly a complex idea, in part because, as Furlong et al., (2005:19) state, at its heart is ‘the complexity and contestability of professional knowledge’.

As our findings show, current models of partnership make pre-service programmes challenging to organise because they mean accommodating within Higher Education work many of the professional imperatives of field of schooling, including the epistemologies, practices, pedagogies and increased forms of regulation found there (Furlong et al. 2005) Partnership often also involves the organisational challenges of teacher educators working, alongside school teachers, in order to further students’ experiential learning in and from the classroom. Such partnerships within pre-service courses need to be high quality and place high demands on all involved in them. Partnership also has ethical dimensions, including the generation and maintenance of professional trust between all partners. This professional trust can be time consuming to build since it needs to be underpinned by the establishment of shared knowledge, values and practices (Dhillon 2006).

In the contexts of the pre-service partnerships in which the interviewees in this study work then, we would suggest that continuing to construct and deploy an identity as once-a-teacher, even long into a career in Higher Education, has an element of common sense to it. We would also suggest that, in this specific national context, our findings indicate the on-going resonances of the importance placed on ‘recent and relevant’ experiential knowledge of school teaching as a recruitment criterion for teacher educators in England. Although the requirement to have *recent* experience of school teaching is no longer a statutory recruitment criterion in the way that it was in the mid to late 1980s, as we have indicated above, most teacher educators working in pre-service are qualified teachers. These findings provide an indication of how profoundly, the ‘discourse of relevance’ (Maguire & Weiner 1994) has permeated identity, professional knowledge and work in teacher education for our sample group.

For the teacher educators working in these contexts, it also makes sense to draw on pedagogical skills gained in the first order field of schooling in developing their second order

practice as teacher educators. Second order pedagogy emerges from this study, however, as originating in, but distinct from, the skills of school teaching, and as aiming to model, mirror or rehearse with students something of the contested knowledge, professional dilemmas and pedagogical practices to be found in the first order field of schooling. This provision of high quality pedagogies is professionally appropriate, but takes its toll on teacher educators' time, as does the provision of pastoral support for students.

The identities of many of our sample group then might be defined as school-focused in that they were rooted in their past identities. Such identities had strong congruence with the demands of working in partnership with schools to deliver the pre-service programmes required by government legislation. But both universities also aspired to enhance their academic status; enhanced participation and success in national research auditsⁱⁱ became a signifier of such attempts. With these aspirations came requirements for more faculty to be research active in ways which met the criteria of those national research audits. As the research cultures within both universities grew, the teacher educators in this study were therefore facing expectations that they would engage in systematic scholarship and / or to become active researchers. As stated earlier, all of the sample group entered Higher Education without doctorates or sustained experience of conducting personal research, and as none had acquired a doctoral qualification by the time of the interviews, this requirement to engage in research caused considerable tensions for some.

Our findings about identities as 'researcher', the constructions of what constitutes 'research' and the ways in which practice and knowledge bases are seen as research-informed are then framed by the current national and institutional contexts for educational research. These are contexts in which discourses and practices of research performativity, as played out in national audits, increasingly define - across all disciplines - what constitutes 'research', 'research activity' and acceptable 'research outputs' within universities. These current discourses of research performativity co-exist uneasily in a discipline such as education with long traditions of practitioner engagement in small-scale and often informal action research, often seen as a vehicle for professional improvement or renewal. Analysis of the history of teacher education in England shows that there are also long – and unresolved - contestations about the relationships between pre-service work and research engagement (Day 1995; Sikes 2006). Underlying these contestations are a series of bifurcations which have resonated through the history of the field, including academic / professional, theoretical / practical (experiential) knowledge, intellectual / pastoral.

In this context then it is perhaps not surprising to find, within our sample group, a diversity of identity constructions and resistances around the idea of research engagement and becoming or being an academic. Many of these teacher educators seem caught in the enduring bifurcations of academic / professional and theoretical / practical in teacher education, as played out in the structures of their Schools of Education and the consequent ways in which the relationships between research, scholarship and teaching are understood and enacted individually and institutionally.

Back in 1995 Christopher Day wrote about teacher educators that,

They are neither fish nor fowl, neither ‘academics’ nor ‘practitioners’. They are caught between the rock of government policy which has raised the value of ‘practical experience’ above all else ... and the hard place of scholarship in which they are judged by their colleagues elsewhere in the world of academia (Day, 1995:359)

Writing in 2010, we would suggest that the teacher educators in this small scale study are required, ideally, to be *both* ‘academics’, engaged in research as the production of new knowledge, *and* ‘practitioners’, able to deploy their practical knowledge across many aspects of their work in pre-service. The latter requirement is now a non-negotiable part of pre-service work; the former is still the subject of debate and contestation within the field, not least about the ways in which the institutional structures of pre-service work can operate to limit individual opportunities for research engagement. But there are also indications in this study of the ways in which personal senses of agency and motivation can operate to (re)construct identities in ways which accommodate becoming and being an active researcher and an ‘academic’ with a strong sense of practitioner identity.

Conclusions

Looking ahead to speculate about teacher educators and the future of their ‘academic lives’ over the next decade is difficult to do, not least because Higher Education-based pre-service in England faces an uncertain future at the time of writing. The House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee (HCCSF) report recommended an expansion of the proportion of pre-service places allocated to employment-based routes to 30% over the medium term (HCCSF, 2010: 4). Because of the consequent cut in the numbers of student places in Higher Education, the implementation of this recommendation alone would have posed threats to the long-term viability of some Schools of Education. But a new government

took power in May 2010, bringing with it indications that a far more extensive move away from Higher Education-based provision might become policy. In a recent speech Michael Gove, the new Education Minister, for example, promised to ‘reform teacher training to shift trainee teachers out of college (*sic*) and into the classroom’ and to ‘shift resources so that more heads can train teachers in their own schools’ (Gove, 2010:6). Also contained in the speech are some simplistic views of teaching and teacher education,

Teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman. Watching others, and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop, is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom (Gove, 2010:6).

This, and similar government pronouncements, are worrying, not least because they minimise the complexity of teacher education work, underplay the importance of the contestability of professional knowledge, dismiss research-informed practice, and deny the place of learning in Higher Education contexts, alongside learning in schools. Such a major policy shift towards employment-based routes, fundamentally based on nineteenth century models of apprenticeship learning, could trigger a radical re-organisation of pre-service and its institutional bases on a scale not experienced in England since the 1970s when the training college system was all but dismantled (Hencke, 1978). Such a move would leave Higher Education-based teacher educators in an even more marginalised position, with distinct question marks to be posed about whether or not there would be any ‘academic lives’ for these educators to live. Any sense of teacher educators as a distinctive occupational sub-group of second order practitioners within Higher Education, with particular skills and knowledge bases, informed by scholarship, if not by research, could well be threatened.

If teacher education does take place predominantly through employment-based routes in the future, then the development of far more ‘hybrid educators’, based in schools and primarily involved in teaching pupils but with part-time roles in pre-service, could be confidently predicted. As we have indicated, such roles already exist in the current partnership system and on employment-based routes, but, apart from a raft of studies on ‘mentors’, we have little in depth knowledge about those who undertake such roles. Expansion of this type of work might bring about a full recognition of these roles – and an accompanying acknowledgement that all serving teachers and all schools have responsibility for developing and teaching the next ‘generation’ of teachers (on the same model as the medical profession already takes responsibility for teaching doctors in training). Such changes have the potential to provide a new breath of life for the teaching profession, but only if the complexity of teacher education

and the centrality of research-informed practice in professional knowledge continues to be recognised.

As the HCCSF report (2010: 5) does recognise, there is ‘a need to raise the status of school teachers who are involved in delivering initial teacher training in schools’. The same report recommends the introduction of a ‘clinical practitioner’ grade for such teachers, and states that they should be attached to a university. We would support these recommendations, particularly if radical policy shift does happen. But we would also add that, in order to preserve a research base for teacher education work, all school-based teacher educators should be encouraged to undertake scholarship or active research around their roles, preferably through engagement in formal study at a university.

On a more optimistic note, assuming that the extensive move away from Higher Education provision does not occur, what might the future hold for teacher educators in universities and their future academic lives? And how might such educators be supported, particularly in terms of developing new knowledge and research-informed practices for working with student teachers? In the next ten years teacher educators in universities will certainly be facing the increasingly differentiated demands of a diversifying sector particularly around involvement in teaching, research and the growth of new income generation activities (consultancies, knowledge exchange etc). Depending on the university in which they work, they may be facing one of the following scenarios: an increasing divide between teaching and research (including perhaps proliferation of the dual labour markets within universities in which some teacher educators teach, whilst others conduct the research); or increasing imperatives to become research-active (in terms which meet the requirements of national research audits) within a short timeframe after entering Higher Education and whilst juggling a large workload on pre-service courses. A further scenario is that teacher educators who cannot – or do not wish to – meet such audit requirements find themselves no longer employable, despite high levels of commitment to and expertise in pre-service work. None of these scenarios offer much hope for the individual teacher educators of the future to live out rounded ‘academic lives’ in which teaching, research and service can make integral contributions to the quality of personal practice, to teacher education provision and to the overall quality of schooling.

The long term challenge for the field is, in our view, to re-think the form(s) and significance of research in teacher education, creating a new language for teacher educators about how we research and teach in Higher Education settings (Loughran 2006; Rowlands 2000). Re-thinking the place of research in induction and on-going professional learning provision for

teacher educators is clearly part of that re-conceptualisation. In relation to this agenda, we would like to pose the following questions: What kind of research and / or scholarship is it appropriate and useful for teacher educators to conduct? What are the experiences of a teacher educator in the process of becoming or being involved in research? For new teacher educators, what kind of work patterns and induction provision would be supportive? How can research involvement be balanced with demands for teacher educators to have on-going credibility with - and commitment to - their students? Do the dual demands of being both a teacher educator, wrapped in 'the cloak of busy practicality' (Day 1995:365) and an active researcher reinforce the sense of teacher education as the 'impossible job' (Maguire 1994)? In other words is it possible in the current contexts for teacher education for teacher educators to be in Taylor's (1984) terms 'Janus-faced', addressing the needs of the fields of both school and Higher Education through research-informed practice?

We would identify two practical, small-scale starting points for supporting the development of teacher educators' academic lives in the future. Firstly, we would suggest the provision of systematic induction provision to ensure that those entering teacher education acquire awareness of the occupational group they are joining and the available research on its knowledge, skills and identities, knowledge of how the pre-service programmes on which they teach relate to the wider university and to policy contexts, and support in developing scholarship and / or research activities which have congruence with their work and with the values and senses of personal mission which underpin it. Secondly, for those teacher educators already in post, we would suggest that the place of research and scholarship in personal practice is articulated, as part of explicit discussions about the contestations of professional work and knowledge. Taking into account the point made above about congruence between work, values and research activity, we also need to find suitable pathways to promote individual research engagement which do not necessarily involve the long and solitary conventional route of enrolment in a doctorate. In these small ways we would suggest that teacher educators in the next decade might be able to begin to create integrated academic / professional identities with which they can live. But, we would caution that, without the re-framing of the place of research in teacher education, suggested above, such starting points stand in danger of being well meaning but token support mechanisms.

Acknowledgements: This study was funded by a Major Award from the Society for Educational Studies (SES). Our grateful thanks go to the Society for the support it provided with all stages of the study, including the dissemination of the findings.

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ⁱ Pre-1992 or 'old' universities in the UK Higher Education sector were established by charter prior to 1992 and tend to be more research-intensive. 'New' universities were established by statute in or after 1992. Many were previously polytechnics or diversified liberal arts colleges, with traditions of concentrating on professional and vocational courses. The category 'new university' includes a broad spectrum of institutions, including some of the newest universities in the UK which gained university status only after 2000.

ⁱⁱ The Research Assessment Exercises, now replaced by the Research Excellence Framework, are national exercises in which individual and institutional research profiles are audited quinquennially.