University of Exeter EdD TESOL

(Re)-shaping and (Re)-imagining Teacher Identities: An analysis of 'becomings' of international teachers of English

Submitted by

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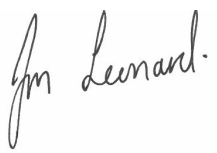
I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that any material that has previously been submitted and approved for the award of degree by this or any other University has been acknowledged

Signature …… 

Abstract

This thesis investigates the shaping of teacher identities linking past and present teaching and development experiences and imagined future selves. It focuses on fourteen 'non-native' teachers of English who had been teaching in schools and universities in their local contexts before furthering their development through postgraduate study in two British universities. These teachers come from a diverse range of teaching backgrounds and thus bring with them experiences from different 'worlds' of English Language Teaching. The study examines the complex processes of 'becoming' teachers bringing together these different perspectives and considering how identities become shaped and re-shaped. It first focuses on past teaching experiences and the actors which have been influential on shaping the identities these teachers brought to their postgraduate study contexts. It then examines postgraduate study experiences and the ways in which some participants responded to particular aspects of their studies, and how these further shaped their identity formation. This includes how particular forms of knowledge became meaningful to participants in relation to their past experiences. Finally, the study looks at how participants imagined their future identities and explores if and how postgraduate study has played a role in these imaginings.

This is a qualitative study which uses an analysis of short story narratives collected through interviews and focus group discussions. The analysis of participants short stories is used to examine the social and material actors which have been influential on shaping participant identities and how these influences may remain significant in postgraduate study and the meanings participants attach to their study experiences. It also shows how, for some participants, particular imagined futures emerged through postgraduate study, and therefore new identity possibilities.

In order to examine the influences of both human and non-human actors on teacher identity formation, I draw on actor-network theory, which provides a sociomaterialist lens through which the interplays of social and material actors can both be considered as potentially influential on teacher identity formation.

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List of Acronyms

ANT	Actor-Network Theory
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CoP	Community of Practice
ELT	English Language Teaching
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages

1.0 Introduction

"*Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique: Good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (Palmer, 2017, p.10)*

Becoming a teacher is a complex process which, as indicated by Palmer (2017), involves not only gaining pedagogical knowledge and developing techniques for teaching, but also teachers' expressions of their personal and professional selves to relate to their students and engage them with their subjects. Teacher identity formation is therefore integral to processes of *becoming* teachers. This study is concerned with the identity formation of international English language teachers who use English as another language. It especially focuses on ways in which their professional identities become shaped over time through their experiences as teachers and postgraduate students.

The field of English Language Teaching (ELT) or Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages (TESOL) encompasses teachers from a diversity of contexts, and according to Holliday (2005) is in fact "many worlds with many types of people, comprising educators from every part of the globe in every type of educational institution" (p.1). *Becoming* a teacher of English is likely to be a very different experience for teachers working in what Garton and Richards (2008, p.xiii) refer to as "the many professional worlds of TESOL", as they negotiate their professional identities within their institutions and societies as well as the international professional bodies that comprise TESOL (Gray & Morton, 2018. p.3). *Becoming* a teacher is therefore a complex ongoing process and gaining a deeper understanding of this requires attention to how teachers negotiate influences in their daily teaching lives. As Fenwick and Edwards (2010) suggest, for any teacher, this *becoming* involves more than personal desire and gaining certification; rather, it is through the countless objects that a teacher "designs, selects, organizes, stores, evaluates, maintains and responds to, as well as the humans with whom she interacts every moment" (p.6). How teachers interact with and respond to others in their professional teaching and development contexts therefore influences their experiences of *becoming* teachers.

Among those teaching English (as a foreign or other language) is a majority of 'non-native'[1] speakers of English (Àrva & Medyges, 2000; Braine, 2010) whose identities may have been partly shaped by their own experiences of learning languages (Donato, 2017), and the linguistic repertoires they have formed (Pennycook, 2018). Becoming a *good* language teacher means different things in different contexts (Barkhuizen & Mendieta, 2020) and as part of this process teachers often reach stages in their development when they realise a desire or need to deepen their knowledge and develop their skills (Richards and Farrell, 2005). Accordingly, some teachers may look to gain further qualifications through formal study, such as MA and doctoral programmes (Barkhuizen, 2021). For 'non-native' teachers, this may involve studying overseas in universities in English speaking countries, such as the UK. Indeed, both MA and doctoral TESOL-related programmes attract a diverse body of international (as well as home) students to UK universities (Copland et al., 2017). Such programmes therefore can become sites of professional development not only through formal study, but through the sharing of experiences of teaching and learning (Nguyen & Dao, 2019). Thus, postgraduate study in the UK may play a role in both development and identity formation as teachers deepen their understanding of theoretical and pedagogical concepts, study in a different academic and social context and learn about alternative perspectives of teaching and learning. Moreover, through postgraduate study, teachers are encouraged to reflect on their histories, develop critical skills to question aspects of teaching which might have been taken for granted and through these processes may also begin to re-imagine their future directions.

1.1 Rationale for the study

My interest in teacher identity in general, and international teachers of English involved in postgraduate study in the UK in particular, evolved initially through my experience as a teacher and teacher educator. My study was further shaped by engagement with existing research literature on language teacher identity formation. Together these points underpin the following rationale for my study.

[1] 'Non-native' is in apostrophes in recognition of the implications of native-speakerism and of such labelling of individuals (see Holliday, 2006; 2015)

1.1.1 Personal Background

To begin, I would like to offer a brief insight into my background working with teachers of English from different contexts. As Usher (1996) argues, researcher backgrounds are influential in guiding research processes:

> "Far from being a distorting influence, [personal] experience is seen as an asset. The important point is that the researcher should develop a *self-reflexive* stance towards their own research: they must be accountable for their own cultural prejudices and disciplinary allegiance, and be alert how these implicate them in the choices made in research practice" (p.133).

Providing this experiential account of how the thesis evolved therefore enables me to show how personal experiences were involved in the identification of the research focus and the way the study was conducted.

For eighteen years I worked as a teacher and teacher trainer overseas through which I experienced TESOL in different cultures and institutions. Of particular significance to this study was the seven years I spent in English-medium universities in Cyprus and Morocco, where I worked as a teacher and trainer alongside a majority of 'non-native' English teachers. Through this I became especially interested in the ways in which their teaching had (apparently) been influenced by experiences of learning English in similar institutional contexts and I became more aware that their experiences and understandings of TESOL were quite different to my own as a British L1 user of English. This caused me to question some of my own assumptions about TESOL and to reflect on my practices. Following this, I returned to the UK and have since been working in a British university teaching on BA and MA TESOL courses. These courses attract a number of international students and, in the case of the MA programme, the students are also teachers of English. My teaching on the MA has again brought me into contact with teachers of diverse backgrounds and stimulated my interest in the ways in which teachers interpret the various forms of knowledge that they encounter through their studies and the links they may make with their previous experiences and future expectations of teaching. In effect, I have wondered and sometimes questioned how their studies in the UK might contribute to their

ongoing identity formation as TESOL professionals, and indeed if their programmes of study could be made more beneficial for them. These experiences, therefore, have played a significant role in directing the nature of this thesis.

1.1.2 The focus of the study

There has been a considerable amount of research on identity formation of teachers of English, some of which has been linked to teachers engaging in postgraduate study (e.g. Barkhuizen, 2016; Wolff & De Costa, 2017; Nguyen & Dao, 2019). Despite this interest, there has (to date) been a limited focus on postgraduate study in UK university contexts and how such study experiences may be interwoven with teacher identity formation. My study, which aims to address this gap in the literature, explores the identity formation of a group of fourteen 'non-native' teachers studying on postgraduate TESOL programmes in the UK.

Some studies have conceptualised identity formation through an ongoing narrative of experiences over time (Barkhuizen, 2016; Tsui, 2007). This is captured by Yazan and Lindahl (2020) who argue that teachers' "present identity negotiation is closely inter- connected with their interpretation of past experiences and imagination of aspired professional life" (p.2). In line with this, my study examines the identities teachers had formed through past teaching and learning experiences and shows how they may have developed particular perspectives of *becoming* an English teacher. The identities they bring to postgraduate study (in the UK) therefore can influence how individuals interact with their studies and the meanings that they construct through engaging with theoretical and pedagogical knowledge. My study considers ways in which past experiences continue to be influential in the present (i.e. engaging in postgraduate study), and how both past and present can become interwoven with imagined future identities.

My study therefore contributes to existing teacher identity research situated in relation to postgraduate study contexts. It resonates in particular with a study by Nguyen & Dao (2019), who investigate teacher responses to MA TESOL studies in Australia with reference to teachers' past experiences and future ideals.

However, my study focuses on teachers studying on both MA *and* doctoral programmes in *the UK*, so offers further insight into the different ways in which teachers respond to postgraduate study in relation to both past and present experiences. It places particular emphasis on factors shaping identities by tracing not only '*who*' but '*what*' has been influential in teachers' past and present experiences, and how they might be inter-linked, and influential in formulating imagined professional-selves. Following Fenwick and Edwards (2010), my study therefore recognises the significance of both social and material influences on teachers and teaching and I draw on actor-network theory (ANT) (Latour, 2005) as a theoretical lens to examine *who* and *what* shapes teacher identity formation over time. From an ANT perspective, social practices (such as teaching) are shaped by relations between humans and nonhumans (e.g. everyday material objects, technologies, texts) (Michael, 2017, p.5). Becoming a teacher is therefore conceptualised as a relational process influenced by interactions with humans and nonhumans in teaching environments (Mulcahy, 2011). As I develop the theoretical basis of my study (chapters 3 & 4), I will explain the concepts of social and material *actors* as an alternative term to factors influencing teacher identity formation. Thus, in the research questions formulated to frame my study, I have used the term (f)actors to indicate this link. The research questions are:

- What (f)actors have played a part in shaping participants' professional identities as English teachers through their past teaching experiences?
- What (f)actors have shaped participants' current professional identities as English teachers engaged in postgraduate study in the UK?
- What kind of identities do participants imagine for their futures?
- In what ways (if any) has postgraduate study been influential in shaping participants' imagined future professional identities?

These questions will help me to contribute to understandings of language teacher identity formation over time, particularly in relation to the roles postgraduate study play in this. Using ANT as a theoretical lens brings an additional perspective to studies of language teacher identity. While ANT has been used in a study of teacher identity (Mulcahy, 2011), it has not (as far as I am aware) been used in studies of teachers of English specifically.

1.2 Organisation of Chapters.

In this section I outline the organisation of the thesis and the purpose of each chapter. To begin, in chapter 2, I describe the higher education context of my study, particularly in terms of the effects of globalisation and internationalisation on British universities and their recruitment of international students. This leads to a focus on postgraduate TESOL courses in particular, and their attraction to international students. As some TESOL students are also bi or multilingual teachers of English (as the participants in this study), I discuss particular challenges and opportunities that may influence them and their identities as practitioners. To conclude the chapter, I introduce the two universities from which I recruited participants for my study to contextualise their postgraduate study experiences.

In chapter three, the literature review, I analyse how language teacher identity has been theorised and conceptualised, and also introduce literature related to the narrative methodological framework and socio-material theoretical frameworks of my study, defining key terms related to these. This establishes how my study will contribute to the field with its emphasis on how both social and material actors may be influential on language teacher identity over time.

In chapter four, I discuss the socio-material theoretical framework of the study and justify my use of actor-network theory (ANT) to trace both social and material influences on identity formation. This part also includes definitions and explanations of ANT concepts I will draw on in my interpretation of findings. Next, in chapter five, I explain my methodology, specifically the narrative approach adopted as the framework for data collection. It also shows how my use of narrative complements the socio-material theoretical framework of the study. This leads to a focus on data analysis and explanation and justification of tools and techniques used in this, and the ethical considerations of my methodology.

In chapter six, I report on my findings and my interpretation of these (in view of my research questions), in relation to the literature and also from an ANT perspective to discuss how points emerging in the findings may be interpreted through a sociomaterial lens. In the final chapter, I conclude by highlighting my

contributions to research on teacher identity, and considerations for teacher development through postgraduate study. I also indicate the limitations of the study and suggest potential directions for future research.

2.0 Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

This study focuses on international teachers of English who are also postgraduate students studying in two British universities on TESOL-related master's and doctoral programmes. In this chapter, I describe the institutional context in which these students study, and, as shown in this thesis, in which their identities may become (re)-shaped and (re)-imagined. I first discuss the concepts of globalisation and internationalisation and the significant influences these have had on higher education, with particular reference to the UK. I then examine the main factors attracting international students who apply to study in the UK, particularly those engaging in postgraduate study. This leads to an overview of MA TESOL provision, including the factors influencing the choices of international teachers applying to enroll on these, and the significance of postgraduate study and doctoral research in teacher development, specifically of teachers using English as another language. I discuss how, as bi/multilingual practitioners, these teachers can draw on linguistic resources which are sometimes under-valued in TESOL contexts, and also bring diverse experiences of teaching and learning to their studies. Indeed, while studying on postgraduate courses, they are both teachers and students therefore I refer to them in places as *international teacher-students* for clarity. Finally, I provide details of the two universities from which I recruited participants to provide background of the postgraduate study environments, which, as indicated in this thesis, may play a role in the webs of actors that shape teacher identity development.

2.2 Globalisation and Internationalisation in Higher Education contexts

Universities have always been characterised as places in which knowledge was sought, developed and shared (Maringe, 2009). They have also been considered as 'global institutions' to some extent, through the international mix of students they attract and employment of professors from different countries to share expertise (Altbach, 2004, p.4). In essence, universities have been shaped by international influences since their foundation, but these effects have been intensified with trends of globalisation, particularly since the 1990s when

advances in computer and internet technologies enhanced communication and knowledge sharing internationally (Choudaha, 2017). The effects of globalisation have thus influenced the environments universities operate in, and across, and have extended the reach of their teaching and research activities internationally (Altbach, 2004). While the terms globalisation and internationalisation are linked, they have distinct meanings and are also widely used in relation to different sectors and contexts. It is therefore helpful to first examine how they are defined in higher education, with regard to university environments which form the context of this study.

Globalisation encompasses the "broad economic, technological and scientific trends" (Altbach, 2004, p.5) which generate inevitable impact on society and industry. This includes higher education as an industry linked to local and wider societies, and as Altbach (2004) points out, globalisation affects universities directly, but in particular ways. Globalisation is a complex phenomenon, shaped by scientific and technological developments which have enhanced communication and encouraged mobility across international borders. Altbach, Reisburg and Rumbley (2009) offer a definition which captures this complexity of globalisation, and also indicates the inevitability of its impacts on contemporary academia. They consider globalisation to be:

> "the reality shaped by an increasingly integrated world economy, new information and communications technology, the emergence of an international knowledge network, the role of the English language, and other forces beyond the control of academic institutions (...)" (p.7).

The economic, political and societal global trends generated through globalisation have demanded greater international involvement among businesses in different sectors (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Consequently, globalisation has created requirements for higher-level skills and knowledge across various sectors to facilitate involvement in international work environments. Significantly, these trends have increased investment in knowledge industries, including higher education, and have also impacted on the teaching and research provision universities offer (Altbach & Knight, 2007). For instance, Choudaha (2017) shows that in the 1990s demand was shaped by information and communication technologies and therefore technology, engineering and science-related degrees were popular, soon followed by other

business-related subjects (e.g. finance and economics). Integral to increases in international trade, business and research collaboration was the use of English which gained prominence as the global language of international communication and publication, so the demand for courses being taught in English also increased (Hu, 2009; Van der Watt, 2013). In order to gain access to these courses (in English-medium universities overseas and in English-speaking countries), students needed to have an appropriate level of proficiency in English which generated increased calls for English language courses and qualified teachers to provide instruction (Richards, 2017), for instance, on foundation, pre-sessional as well as in-sessional programmes. Moreover, in response to the growing interest in English-medium instruction, British universities (as in other English-speaking countries) also began to deliver certain courses on overseas campuses through international partnerships and franchises (Li & Roberts, 2012) extending their reach into diverse international student markets to create multiple international networks. Students could therefore benefit from a "multi-site" experience as some have been able to spend part of their degree studies in the UK (Robson, 2011, p.620).

These international endeavors of universities have facilitated growth in student mobility especially from a wider range of non-EU countries, and a recent report shows that high percentages of students come from Asian countries, especially China, India, Hong Kong and Malaysia (Universities UK International, 2020). Notably, patterns of student mobility in different countries correspond with local as well as global political, economic and societal trends. For instance, in China globalisation has created more lucrative work opportunities, and for some these shifts have raised the income of middle-class families and enabled them to support family members to study overseas (Choudaha, 2017, p. 828). Fundamentally, globalisation has shaped higher education and the markets in which universities promote their services and activities by forming wider transnational links. It has been especially influential through the establishing of English as the language of international (and academic) communication, the wider provision of courses on overseas campuses (and by e-learning) and greater international student mobility as well as its influence on the dissemination and production of research internationally (Choudaha, 2017).

While universities have always been international in character, Maringe (2009) notes that the term *internationalisation* became integral to discourses of higher education in the 1970s through initiatives to encourage staff and students to gain work and study experience abroad. As the aforementioned trends of globalisation became more significant in changing how universities function, the term *internationalisation* has since evolved to refer more specifically to the policies and initiatives institutions put into place to respond to these trends and their effects (Altbach, 2002). Expanding on this, Knight (2015) defines *internationalisation* as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (p.2). This implies greater transnational knowledge sharing, and increased awareness of cultural similarities and differences, promoted through the initiative institutions take.

The rationale for building what are often referred to as *internationalisation strategies* can be broadly categorised as economic, political, social and academic (De Wit, 2002, p. 83). These rationales are inter-linked and the dominance of one over another may shift in different situations (De Wit, 2002). Therefore, as internationalisation is a response to globalisation, the balance and influence of these strategies vary among contexts and institutions and the particular ways in which globalisation affects them (De Wit, 2011). In Britain, universities typically form strategies defining their *internationalisation objectives* (Ayoubi & Masoud, 2007), which are interwoven with their branding and marketing activities. As identified by Maringe and Gibbs (2008), such strategies are especially aimed at attracting international students to boost revenue (from fees), enhancing student experience through cross-border initiatives, exporting services (e.g. to overseas campuses) and raising international status and recognition of HE institutions. Therefore, rationales for internationalisation are largely motivated by increasing revenue and raising institutional profiles overseas.

However, although internationalisation strategies can expand recruitment into wider markets, these need also to be reflected in teaching and learning on campus and the integration of international students into campus life (Turner & Robson, 2008). Turner and Robson (2008) distinguish between *symbolic* and *transformative* internationalisation, arguing that simply having international students (and staff) on a campus that remains national in its strategies may fulfil

income generation targets, but fails to bring wider benefits, thus is *symbolic*. Conversely, *transformative* internationalisation refers to an international orientation becoming integrated into "routine ways of thinking and doing, in policy and management, staff and student recruitment, curriculum and content" (Turner & Robson, 2008, p.26). This indicates that to be sustainable, internationalisation needs to be embedded into practices by integrating an international (and thus intercultural) dimension into teaching, research and service provision of institutions (Knight, 1999).

Internationalisation is therefore a process of not only forming international networks, but of ensuring that these can be sustained. Universities in the UK, direct considerable resources into international student recruitment, and international partnerships (Williams & Mindano, 2015), and although this may be consistent with internationalisation processes of universities in other countries, these moves have been especially propelled by changes in government policy on fees and funding and the need to become increasingly business-oriented in a competitive higher-education market (Ali-Choudhury, Bennett & Savani , 2009).

It seems that through the internationalisation of HE institutions international students become conceptualised in different ways. On the one hand, they may be expected to assimilate into a more nationally informed institution, as they are viewed as a commodity ensuring income streams; on the other hand, they could be viewed as scholars who actively enrich and shape academic practices in a given HE institution. With this in mind, I now turn to the situation of international students in the UK, in order to describe the contexts encountered by the participants in my study.

2.3 International students in the UK

The political drive to increase the numbers of international students in Britain was especially influenced by the Conservative government's *Education Reform Act* in 1988, and then the New Labour government's subsequent *Further and Higher Education Act* in 1992, both of which marketised higher education and promoted campaigns to increase international student numbers on British campuses (Ayoubi & Massoud, 2007). In addition, the introduction of tuition fees in 1998 and

the considerable increase in these in 2012 (in England and Wales), also shaped the commercialization of university education (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009); in effect, and as shown earlier, students became paying consumers and this intensified competition and generated more aggressive marketing among institutions. Moreover, as government funding was eroded, international student recruitment and establishing links with overseas institutions have become important avenues in generating income (Olssen & Peters, 2005; Paula & Fragouli, 2018). International student fees vary for EU and non-EU students[2], but international students are broadly defined as "students who have crossed a national or territorial border for the purpose of education and are now enrolled outside their country of origin" (Unesco Institute of Statistics, 2009). Students from non-EU countries pay considerably higher fees, and, as Copland et al. (2017) indicate, they are an "important source of income" for British universities (p.2). The international student market is certainly lucrative; international students (EU & non-EU) brought around £7 billion annually in tuition fees to UK institutions in 2018-2019 (Britton, Drayton, & Van der Erve, 2020). The inflow of international students studying in British universities between 2009-2019 grew by around 20% with 76% of these coming from outside of the EU (Walsh, 2020). A considerable proportion of these (around 32%) came from China (Walsh, 2020).

British universities, including the two institutions involved in this study, expend considerable resources on building relations with overseas institutions and agencies to attract students onto their courses. Indeed, studies have shown that British universities are the second most popular choice for international students overall after the US (Lillyman & Bennett, 2014; Universities UK International, 2020). Postgraduate study in the UK is popular with those who wish to advance knowledge and skills in relation to their work demands or personal ambitions, and recent figures indicate that International students comprise around 37.1% of all postgraduates in the UK (Universities UK International, 2020).

Some of these students enrol onto MA TESOL courses, which have gradually increased in number (Hasrati & Tavakoli, 2015; Copland et al., 2017). According to Howatt (1984, cited in Hasrati & Tavakoli, 2015, p.550), MA ELT programmes

[2] Recent changes due to Brexit indicate that EU students will have to pay higher fees from autumn 2021 see: https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/eu-students

were introduced in the UK in the 1960s to provide further professional development routes for teachers and cater for those who wanted to work in an academic environment through teaching and/or research activity (Hasrati & Tavakoli, 2015). Since then, the number of courses has increased, (taking also alternative titles such as MA TESOL, MEd TESOL and MA TEFL) and Copland et al., (2017) indicate that there are 141 Masters programmes related to TESOL being offered by UK universities. This provision includes a mix of part/ full time, online/ blended learning as well as face-to-face delivery, and is continually changing as universities respond to market demands. This is exemplified by Hasrati and Tavakoli (2015) whose findings indicate how some MA TESOL programmes are shaped by recruitment targets as well as the changing profile of the cohorts they attract (e.g. proportion of novice vs experienced teachers). The figures for international students studying on doctoral programmes is less cited in literature. A recent report (Universities UK international, 2020) indicates that in 2017-2018 out of the international students studying in the UK approximately 10.4% were studying on research degrees, but there are no specific figures (to date) for TESOL-related doctoral students. However, this overview indicates the popularity of UK study for international students at the time of writing. It is unclear how this will develop in a future influenced both by Brexit and the COVID19 pandemic.

I now discuss literature related to factors influencing international student choices, again paying particular attention to the postgraduate courses related to TESOL. This is of importance to my study, as teacher narratives of self that have been formed before embarking on overseas study are likely to influence the decisions they make and expectations they have of their experience in the UK.

2.4 Factors influencing decisions to study in the UK

The reputation of UK institutions and quality of the courses they offer are integral to the perceived 'prestige' of a UK university degree. These reputations are circulated internationally through branding and marketing activities (Maringe, 2009), as well as through ranking on league tables (Eccles, 2010; Broecke, 2015). Reputation also extends to the wider recognition of degrees from Western universities and their potential appeal to future employers (Maringe, 2009). Copland et al. (2017) found that institutional reputation was a key factor

influencing decisions by international students, and that potential students considered the reputation of specific courses as well as academic staff when making their decisions.

Studying in an English-speaking country has the added attraction of enhancing English language skills which are pertinent with regards to study and employment opportunities. Therefore, effective English language skills are considered as a kind of 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) for many international students. Cultural capital refers to the cultural knowledge, ways of thinking and credentials that characterise social classes (Bourdieu & Passseron, 1977). Accordingly, language use, such as English, is a symbolic asset which holds currency according to the social field it is used in. As Malik and Mohammed (2014) show, studying in an English-speaking context provides a form of cultural capital as it indicates an ability to communicate and use English with some proficiency. This in turn may provide students with wider employment opportunities in a global market (Malik & Mohamed, 2014). Accordingly, for many, study in the UK is seen as an opportunity to enhance linguistic skills and knowledge; for instance, a study by West, Dimitropoulos, Hind & Wilkes (2000) of EU students studying in the UK showed that developing English language proficiency was an important factor guiding their choices. Such advancement of linguistic skills and knowledge is especially relevant to teachers of English, like those participating in my study. Indeed, Copland et al. (2017) found that the expectation of developing linguistic proficiency was a factor guiding decisions to study on MA ELT programmes partly because proficiency can lead to improved job prospects.

The literature also indicates that students are attracted by the multi-cultural environments associated with UK campuses which provide possibilities for inter-cultural exchanges with students and staff from different countries (Schweisfurth & Gu, 2009). International teacher-students can benefit by sharing teaching and learning experiences from contexts influenced differently by globalisation and internationalisation, which may raise awareness of variation in how English is used (and taught) internationally (Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Selvi, 2013). However, such sharing depends on the extent to which they are invited to contribute to discussions and be influenced by an individual's confidence in participating, a point which might be of significance to my participants.

International teacher-students are also exposed to ways of thinking about teaching and learning that they are not familiar with, and, in some cases, this may cause them to question their teacher identity. Postgraduate TESOL courses attract both pre-service and experienced teachers (Copland et al., 2017), and while alternative perspectives of teaching and learning may be responded to positively, teachers sometimes lack guidance when trying to reconcile their teaching environments with the new knowledge they are exposed to (Li & De Costa, 2018). As argued extensively by Johnson (2006), teaching and learning are socially situated, and teacher beliefs and practices are shaped by the norms and values influential in specific contexts. Thus, if postgraduate courses are to benefit teachers from diverse backgrounds, there needs to be accommodation of difference in terms of their learning and teaching experiences, and insight into influences shaping teacher identities. As Garton and Richards (2008, p. xviii) indicate, teachers perceive and interact with knowledge differently at various stages of their development. Accordingly, the participants in my study include both novice and experienced teachers who are likely to draw meaning from different perspectives.

Similarly, Canagarajah (2016) discusses how concepts of teacher development have changed from being implemented "in terms of professional lore or grammar knowledge, and the technical aptitude of implementing prescribed methods" to a more "social orientation" of knowledges about language and teaching (p.17). This indicates an important shift in focus towards the situated nature of teaching, to social and cultural influences on beliefs and identities, and the role of reflexivity in practice (Canagarajah, 2016). In order to further the benefits of postgraduate provision to teachers, such as those in my study, it is vital to gain insight into how they perceive and interact with the knowledge encountered through their studies and translate this back to their own understanding and experience of becoming an English teacher. Thus, it is helpful to consider individual relationships with English especially as bi/multilingual practitioners who also learned English. The strategies developed and knowledge gained as learners can filter into teaching practices and become integrated into teacher identities (Pavlenko, 2003). Therefore, the next section will address some of the challenges and opportunities of bi/multilingual teachers of English.

2.5 International teachers as bi/multilingual practitioners

The significant numbers of international students joining TESOL programmes bring unique experiences of teaching and learning English most probably using their bi/mutlilingual skills in classroom situations. However, there are different perceptions of being bi/multilingual, and in addition, the term plurilingualism has become more frequently used in literature. According to the Council of Europe (2007), plurilingualism is "the repertoire of varieties of language that many individuals use" (p.8), therefore even having a basic knowledge of a language is viewed as a linguistic resource which can be drawn on in communication. However, the terms multilingual and plurilingual are sometimes used in similar ways in literature. Conteh and Meier (2014) explain that any distinction depends on the tradition in which the literature was produced; while there is a distinction made in French literature for instance between multilingualism as "the existence of several languages in a given society", and plurilingualism as "the use of several languages by an individual" (p.4) any such distinction is less marked in English language research (Conteh & Meier, 2014). What seems clear is the linguistic resources of teachers are integral to their identity formations by being interwoven with the ways in which they interact with others and portray themselves in particular contexts (Norton, 2014). In this section I therefore discuss bi/multi/plurilingual resources with regard to teachers of English and their professional environments and explain my decision to refer to the teachers involved in my study as multilingual.

Teachers of English (and language teachers in general) take their language learning experiences into their classrooms and use their individual linguistic resources in various ways to support learner needs (Conteh, Copland & Creese, 2014). In a study of ESL teachers in Australia, Ellis (2013) illustrates different categories of becoming plurilingual, for instance through changing circumstances, or learning languages through education or choice. In addition, she argues that even teachers who were initially categorised as monolingual rather than plurilingual language users, in fact had some language learning experiences which, helped them understand and empathise with the problems some learners faced with English. In other words, teachers can use their negative (as well as positive) experiences of trying to learn other languages, to look for

innovative ways to support their learners. Any knowledge of other languages is therefore a potentially valuable resource that teachers can apply in classroom practices, even though this has been sometimes undervalued or ignored in monolingual systems of education (Conteh et al., 2014, p.162).

Multilingualism, or the ability to use multiple languages and language varieties, has become more prominent in literature on language learning and teaching, possibly in view of what has been termed the 'multilingual turn' in fields linked to applied linguistics, including SLA, TESOL and bilingual education (May, 2013; Conteh & Meier, 2014). Integral to the concept of multilingualism is the plurality of language used in social interaction and the diverse situations in which English is used alongside other languages as a form of "multilingual social practice" (Marr & English, 2019, p.28). Users of English therefore draw on their linguistic resources according to the demands of particular interactions, inter-mingling resources as needed (Marr & English, 2019).

Central to discussions of multilingualism, is the concept of linguistic repertoire (Pennycook, 2018) which recognises the plurality of language used in social interaction. Gumperz (1964) refers to linguistic repertoire as "all accepted ways of communicating messages" (p.138) within a particular community, and accordingly it includes features such as dialect, register, styles, codes and routines of language. Hence, linguistic repertoire refers to the ways in which language resources are used in particular contexts of social interaction (May, 2013, p.4). However, with globalisation, increased people mobility has created multilingual societies, so individuals are constantly re-negotiating their communication strategies according to the contexts they move among and the various actors encountered in these (Busch, 2015). Pennycook (2018) therefore argues that repertoire needs to be understood in terms of "spatial distribution, social practices and material embodiment" (e.g. how artefacts, technologies, clothing influence communication) rather than individual linguistic competences (p.47). Work by Pennycook & Otsuji (2014), for instance, demonstrates how repertoire works in multilingual contexts such as restaurants and markets where workers and customers interact drawing on a range of linguistic and cultural resources. Such multilingual scenarios are likely to be similar to how both

teachers and learners (like my participants) will need to be able to adapt their linguistic resources when using English in their work and study.

While Pennycook (2018) argues that linguistic repertoires of English language teachers should be considered an asset, Pavlenko (2003) argues that this is not always the case. Instead, their potential multilingual expertise has been diminished by discourses promoting a "monolithic and imperialistic" perception of English (Marr & English, 2019, p.28) which limits the use of the L1, and/or other languages in classrooms and promotes the use of English-only approaches (Holliday, 2015). As noted by Pavlenko (2003) these discourses have caused some 'non-native' teachers to feel guilty, as though they are betraying 'English-only' policies of their institutions when using the L1 in class, even though these policies may be impractical. Accordingly, the teachers in my study may have preconceptions of appropriate use of L1 woven into their identities.

Rather than considering international teachers as 'non-native' speakers, Meier (2017) suggests they should be viewed as "multi-lingual social practitioners", a concept which values linguistic and cultural diversity and promotes inclusivity in TESOL as a professional field. Considerations of the complexity of teacher's linguistic resources, as the ones discussed in this section, lead me to use the term 'multilingual' above bi/plurilingual with regard to English teachers, as this more adequately describes teachers who can use two or more languages, varieties or dialects in their linguistic repertoire and therefore draw on these resources in work and international study environments. To conclude this section, I now introduce the two universities that participants were recruited from for this study, to provide contextual background of these particular sites of postgraduate study.

2.6 The University contexts of the study

The participants in this study were recruited from two British universities located in different parts of England, referred to here as University A and B for anonymity. The recruitment process is explained in chapter 5, while the following background information was taken from the universities' respective websites[3].

[3] The university websites are not referenced for anonymity

University A was originally an institution of knowledge, founded in the 1800s. It changed into a college in the 1950s before becoming a polytechnic. It was granted university status in 1992 and has grown considerably since then to accommodate the current student body of over 30,000 full and part-time students. With its city location and large student numbers, university A makes significant contribution to the local economy. The university also has around 5000 foreign students enrolled on its courses overseas, some of whom will spend time studying in the UK as part of their degree. Of the total student body, approximately 10% are international students originating from around 100 countries (EU and non-EU). According to its internationalisation operational plan, the university is committed to continually expanding the international student body, with the aim of providing opportunities for all students to acquire a global outlook. International recruitment is presented as a strong priority towards creating a multi-cultural and multilingual academic environment.

University A has postgraduate provision for both MA TESOL (at the time of data collection, this was an MA TESOL and Applied Linguistics course), and TESOL related PhD studies. The MA TESOL and Applied Linguistic course normally recruits a proportion of international students, and in 2017-2018 (the data collection period), there were six international students and five home students enrolled. To be eligible for the course, students must have had at least twelve months of teaching experience, so there is no formal teaching practicum. The participants I recruited were a mix of novice teachers (having one or two years of experience, Farrell, 2015, p.3) and teachers with considerable experience.

University B was also founded as an educational institution in the 1800s, later becoming a university college. It gained full university status in 1955 and in 2012 joined the Russell Group of research-led universities. University B has 2 city campuses and a satellite campus which contribute considerably to the local economy. It has over 22,000 students from 130 countries, and according to its website, around 15% of these are international students (but excluding EU students). The university's Global Strategy indicates its investment in developing a global outlook in its teaching and research activities. As well as an MEd (TESOL) course, the university offers doctoral studies in the form of PhD and EdD (TESOL). The MEd (TESOL) caters for students of all levels of teaching

experience, with a pathway available for those with no or little experience. Participants for my study were recruited from this programme, but I stipulated that they should have had some prior teaching experience since I was interested in the identity narratives of teachers with practical teaching backgrounds. As indicated in chapter 6, the final group of participants included teachers with varied amounts of professional experience.

The two universities, as a post-92 and Russell-group institution, had evolved quite differently but both present themselves as providers of international study experiences and claim to place considerable investment in their overseas recruitment. The teacher participants in my study were from seven different countries, and although a larger number were from China and Saudi Arabia, there were also participants from Myanmar, Ecuador, Indonesia, Greece, Vietnam, Algeria and Oman. The participants therefore came from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds and brought varied perspectives of teaching and learning, as well as varied linguistic repertoires to their respective postgraduate programmes. Therefore, in the literature review (chapter 3) I discuss how teacher identities might become (re)-formed through study and research on postgraduate TESOL programmes in the UK.

In this chapter, I have provided a description of the international university contexts in which the study is situated and discussed some of the factors that can be influential on international student decisions to study in the UK, with particular regard to TESOL study. These factors may be of an economic, social, political and institutional nature, and there is indication that they may influence the ways in which international (as well as other) English teachers' identity narratives develop and become shaped. I have also highlighted the diversity of these international teacher-students and the implications this has for the study environments in which they may find themselves. This chapter provides contextual background and complements the following literature review which offers a review of literature that addresses teacher identity perspectives in relation to international teachers of English and the factors influencing identity formation and (re)-formation.

3.0 Review of Literature

3.1 Introduction:

Through their professional practices, teachers are continually interacting with the people, technologies and materials in their teaching environments, and it is through these interactions that they perform particular identities (Barkhuizen, 2017). Understanding who and what influences them and how, helps teachers make sense of who they are and of what they do. Thus, explorations of identity are especially valuable with regard to teacher development (Xu, 2017). This chapter focuses on perspectives of teacher identity salient to this study and establishes what is known about the influences shaping identities, with particular attention to international teachers of English engaging in postgraduate study. Within the chapter, I refer to influences on teacher identity as *factors* or *actors*. These terms are initially used interchangeably, depending on the literature reviewed. I then define *actor* as my preferred term, in line with the sociomaterialist theoretical framework of the thesis.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first section (3.2), I draw on literature to examine concepts of identity and teacher identity in particular. I show how teacher identity has become widely conceptualised as dynamic, multi-faceted and complex, shaped and re-shaped through teaching experiences and professional development, imagination and emotion, as well as forms of political, ideological and institutional power. As this study examines identity development in relation to time, attention is paid to influences from teachers' past experiences on identity formation and the ways in which teachers draw on these in their practices and in how they position themselves professionally. As well as considering influences from teachers' pasts, identities are also "imagined in future worlds" (Barkhuizen, 2016, p.659), and therefore I include an exploration of how imagination has been applied as a tool to formulate imagined future-selves.

In the second section (3.3), I look at how teacher narratives offer insights into identity formation, and therefore how they provide a useful tool for identity studies. This introduces my use of narrative in this study. I then show that while the influences of social actors on teacher identity construction have been investigated, there has been less focus on those of material actors (e.g.

technologies, classroom resources, policy texts and discourses). I thus explain how my study contributes towards filling this gap and provide my rationale for adopting actor-network theory (ANT) as a theoretical approach to frame my study. I then explain working definitions of the terms *actor*, *network* and *actor-network* for the remainder of the chapter. In the third section (3.4), I discuss literature which illustrates how different actors influence identity formation of international English teachers engaged in postgraduate study, the focus of this research. This shows that much of this research has been conducted in contexts other than the UK, and therefore indicates that there is a gap in literature focusing on international teacher identity formation in relation to postgraduate TESOL programmes in UK universities. I conclude the chapter by emphasising that material as well as social actors demand attention with regard to teacher identity studies, given their potential role in narratives of teachers and in (re)-shaping teacher identities.

3.2 Conceptualisation of teacher identity

In this section, I first review literature related to identity more generally, then teacher identity in particular. I look at the ways in which concepts of identity have been defined and understood over time and by different schools of thought. While the focus is mainly on language teacher identity in ELT contexts, I also draw on teacher identity research from the wider field of education which has indeed informed and directed studies in relation to ELT (Gray & Morton, 2018; Varghese, Moth, Park, Reeves & Trent, 2016).

3.2.1 The alterity of identity

Identity is a notoriously problematic concept to define (Brubacker & Cooper, 2000). It is ambiguous through its widespread and popular use to group individuals according to broad categories such as race, gender or political affiliation, on the one hand and its multi-disciplinary, post-structuralist and critical understandings in academic research (Brubacker & Cooper, 2000) on the other. Indeed, Gray and Morton (2018, p.14) argue that identity has become a "superordinate term" used in all activities in which people are categorised, become positioned and position themselves and others in particular ways.

However, despite critique by scholars such as Brubacker and Cooper (2000), who have tried to find alternatives, identity has continued to be used as an analytic lens in research, including a range of studies focusing on teacher identity specifically, but with a deepening awareness of its complexity (Gray & Morton, 2018, p.18). As indicated by Barkhuizen (2017), academic interest in language teacher identity has grown notably over the past decade with studies drawing on a range of theoretical perspectives. While these have produced particular interpretations of teacher identity, they collectively emphasise the importance of understanding how and why teachers form certain personas and adhere to particular practices (Barkhuizen, 2017). In order to develop such understanding, it seems necessary to examine the actors influential in teaching and development contexts and consider what and who shapes how teachers respond to the opportunities and challenges they encounter. Accordingly, as indicated in the research questions, my study focuses on the interplays of actors influential in teacher narratives and examines how these narratives unfold with regard to experiences of postgraduate study, as a particular site of development for international teacher-students.

Becoming a language teacher (or any kind of teacher) involves considerable identity work, which, as Yazan and Lindahl (2020) argue, is integral to teachers' continual development as well as their practices in the teaching communities they are part of. Identities are therefore continually performed and influenced by the interactions of teachers in their classrooms, institutions, research and development activities (Gray & Morton, 2018, p.3) as well as social engagement with local communities and wider society (Block & Gray, 2016). As such, Sachs (2005) suggests that identity provides "a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society" (p.15). Such a framework involves the myriad of actors that are inter-linked with teaching and development and which interact with teachers in particular ways. These actors may become more or less significant depending on the contexts, the teachers involved and their responses to events at particular times (Pennington & Richards, 2017). Such variability contributes to the problem of defining identity because, as Barkhuizen (2017, p.3) suggests, through the different ways in which identities may be examined, definitions are always likely to be "exclusionary" and "counterproductive" in some way. In response to this

conundrum, Barkhuizen (2017) proposes a "composite conceptualization" of identity which accommodates the various lenses through which identity can be viewed:

> "Language teacher identities (LTIs) are cognitive, social, emotional, ideological and historical- they are both inside the teacher and outside in the social, material and technological world. LTIs are being and doing, feeling and imagining and storying. They are struggle and harmony; they are contested and resisted, by self and others, and they are also accepted, acknowledged and valued by self and others. They are core and peripheral, personal and professional, they are dynamic, multiple and hybrid, and they are fore-grounded and backgrounded. And LTIs change short term and over time- discursively in social interaction with teacher educators, learners, teachers, administrators and the wider community, and in material interaction with spaces, places and objects in classrooms, institutions, and online" (p.4).

By highlighting the cognitive, social, emotional, ideological and historical factors influencing identity, his composite conceptualization relates to various theoretical perspectives drawn on in identity studies, and accommodates studies focusing on different aspects of identity. This leads to a general concurrence of understanding teacher identity as socially situated, multiple and dynamic in nature, which contrasts with concepts of *being* a teacher, as something stable and unchanging, a contrast I develop in the next section.

3.2.2 From stable to complex identities

Studies of language teacher identity have built on teacher identity research in mainstream teacher education and furthered these with specific attention to language teaching in different contexts (Varghese et al., 2016). This research has influenced how teachers are seen less as technicians applying particular methods to ensure effective learning, but as significant actors in the constitution of classroom practices and creation of learning environments (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005, p.22). This shift to recognising teacher agency in shaping learning environments has directed much identity research towards gaining deeper insight into how teachers engage with their practices and the factors influencing these. Therefore, this section examines concepts of identity as something stable and unchanging or conversely as fluid and dynamic to

ascertain the main theoretical directions language teacher identity research has taken.

The perspective of identity as something stable is illustrated by Salgado and Hermans (2005) who discuss identity as a "unitary self", or being the same person throughout one's life, which they associate with the Western notion of "person as a single and independent universe" (p. 4). From this perspective, identity is based on continuity and stability (Salgado & Hermans, 2005). Continuity and stability may be determined by the social categories that individuals are ascribed to (e.g. social class, education, religion) which demand compliance with particular social and cultural behaviours (Block, 2007). Identity is therefore considered as a state of *being* which, as Zembylas (2003) argues renders identity as stable and consistent with institutional norms, rituals and values. Accordingly, these dimensions become internalised and aligned with a fixed sense of how a teacher should be and act, as an accomplished practitioner (Mulcahy, 2011). *Being* a teacher thus involves being assigned a role as a teacher, a desired state to be attained (Britzman, 1994). Because such expectations of how to be and act are established through societies and institutions (Gee, 2000) this implies that identities are also formed through interactions between self and society (Hall, 1992). While aspects of society may seem unchanging, social trends, influences of globalisation and political shifts are always present as undercurrents of change which to some extent problematizes the notion of stable identities.

Nevertheless, for some time teacher-training revolved around pedagogical theories and prescribed sets of skills to turn knowledge into classroom practice which was broadly seen as an accepted teacher-training approach (Varghese et al., 2005). Under-pinning this approach was the belief that if teachers are shown the right tools and methods, their teaching will produce learning (Britzman, 2003). Teachers are therefore expected to develop through a defined curriculum of representational knowledge and skills (Mulcahy, 2011), and it has been argued that some teacher training programmes still promote a unitary image of a model teacher (Britzman, 2003; Mulcahy, 2011).

Indeed, some TESOL courses have shown preference towards teaching models which aim to produce particular teacher identities. For instance, Morgan (2016) uses the term "domestication of dissent" to refer to the controlled curricular topics

typical of some TESOL courses, in which core subject knowledge considered essential for *good* teachers, is prioritised leaving little space for choice or discussion. He draws on Widdowson's (1980) term "linguistics applied" to show how linguistic theory is assumed to be relevant without considering context, and as such puts what Morgan refers to as an "ideological straight-jacket" on curriculum and pedagogy (p.713). This seems to be designed to produce a certain kind of teacher and hence an expected identity.

Alternative views, however, consider learning to teach as an ongoing process through which a teacher's identity is "open to continual redefinition" (Mayer,1999, p.3) through initial training, novice teaching years and beyond. Hence, Mayer (1999) distinguishes between learning the skills and knowledge to perform an expected teacher identity, as *being* a teacher, and developing a sense of oneself as a teacher as *becoming* a teacher (p.5). *Becoming* a teacher is more complex than simply adopting methods, approaches and techniques taught on training courses (Morgan, 2016). Teachers bring their individual personality, their values, creativity and ideals which shape their classroom interactions. Identities are therefore performed through multiple rather than singular selves which enable people to adapt to particular social interactions (Gee, 2000). Hence, Gee defines identity as:

> "The kind of person one is recognized as 'being' at a given time and space can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and, of course can be ambiguous or unstable" (p.99).

From this, Gee (2000) argues that people have multiple identities connected "not to their 'internal states' but to their performances in society" (p.99), indicating that identities form through engagement with different social situations. They become shaped and re-shaped through their interactions with others in their social and professional environment (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Teachers perform different aspects of their identity according to those they interact with (e.g. students, parents, colleagues) and the situation they are in (e.g. classroom, teacher's room). Being a *good* teacher therefore may be understood differently in diverse contexts and how teachers align themselves with the beliefs and values

of their institutions and colleagues (Barkhuizen & Mendieta, 2020). As Britzman (1994) argues, *becoming* a teacher involves socially negotiating identity options, consenting to some, but resisting others.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) argue that there are both personal and professional dimensions of identity, comprising different dimensions of *self*. Personal dimensions of the self are linked to past histories and experiences of teaching and learning as well as self-perception in current social and teaching environments. Conversely, professional dimensions of the self are formed through pedagogical and subject knowledge, how these are performed, and how teachers engage with their teaching. Beauchamp and Thomas' (2009) distinction implies that personal aspects of the self are more internal, linked to past experiences and emotion while professional aspects of the self are performed and visible to others. This conceptualisation links to the distinction between self and identity as defined by Rodgers and Scott (2008, cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p.179). They argue that the *self* is an evolving entity where meanings of external encounters are formed and understood in relation to personal beliefs and desires. The self therefore adopts (or resists) identities as the *meaning maker* while identity is the expression of the meanings made (Rodgers & Scott 2008, p.739). While this distinction is not necessarily consistent in literature (identities and selves may be used similarly) it links, for instance, to concepts of multiple identities such as those expected or desired and of imagined future-selves discussed in section 3.2.5.

Recognising the multiple nature of teacher identities facilitates understandings that identities are both personal, expressed in beliefs and emotions, and performed through social interaction and professional practices. Identities are shaped both by intersections between personal biographies and socio-educational contexts (Duff, 2017) and change according to the demands of new contexts (Cheung, 2014; 2017). Cheung (2014), for instance, discusses how her identity as a teacher became more complex as she moved from being a writing teacher to a faculty job which involved research and other new roles. Hence, she describes her identity as becoming multi-faceted, as "subject-matter expert" and also "pedagogical expert" when translating her knowledge to students as a university lecturer. This suggests that individuals become positioned differently

according to their roles in an institution and that each position is influenced by particular actors. As discussed later, postgraduate teacher-students may also become positioned in different ways in the institutions they study and work in.

Studies of language teacher identity have therefore placed increasing focus on the socially- situated nature of teaching and the multiple identities that teachers perform through their interactions with students, colleagues and others. To return to Barkhuizen's (2017) "composite conceptualization" of identity, these endorse concepts of teacher identity as multiple rather than unitary, as multi-faceted and multi-dimensional and as continually negotiated through engagement in socio-educational contexts and shaped by the expectations of the actors linked to these. This is partly why attempts to unify what teachers do in their classrooms have frequently been met with issues and resistance, as teachers are pressurised to adopt certain identity options (e.g. Tsui, 2007; Liu & Xu, 2011). Clearly, teaching is not confined to the classroom; instead, as Block and Gray, (2016) argue, it is influenced by social, political and economic conditions, and is entangled with local contexts, and their associated policies and ideologies. This further indicates the complexity of potential influences upon identity formation and negotiation.

3.2.3 Co-constructed Conceptualisations of identity

In this section, I draw on literature that frames teacher identity as co-constructed and negotiated. From this view, teacher identities are formed through social interaction and negotiation with others in a community. Power struggles may result when certain actors try to control others, for instance by imposing rules, expectations or practices on teachers (Block, 2015). This is of concern when teachers step from initial teacher training into actual teaching contexts, where their ideals may be destabilized. Britzman (1994, p.24) refers to these steps as a struggle to "borrow, negotiate and claim ownership to" what is already established in a teaching context. This may bring antagonism between the identity of a teacher as established by an institution, and a teacher's preferred identities. Teachers enter initial training and teaching posts with past learning experiences and as Britzman (2003) suggests, "their sense of the teacher's world is strangely established before they begin learning to teach" (p.1). Even though their

perspectives are based on experiences as a learner, rather than as a teacher, these are still influential on forming ideals of becoming a teacher (Britzman, 2003).

Entering a new teaching role, as a novice or experienced teacher, requires a process of adapting to the teaching community and norms adopted by its members. This move involves a process of identification, of becoming someone or something in that community (Varghese, et al., 2005) thus navigating one's position among other more established teachers. To gain insight into how teachers negotiate their positioning in the teaching communities they enter, some studies of teacher identity (e.g. Tsui, 2007; Trent & Gao 2009; Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Liu & Xu, 2011; Trent, 2010) have drawn on theories of situated learning (Lave 1996) and Communities of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998) to examine how identities are constructed in practice, or how teachers negotiate ways of *being* and *doing* as "enacted identities" (Kanno & Stuart, 2011, p.241).

In their study of novice teachers on an MA TESOL programme in the US, Kanno and Stuart (2011) draw on theories of CoP (Wenger, 1998), to examine the processes through which novice teachers identify themselves as professional teachers. They show how two American trainee teachers of English participating in a teaching assistant scheme began teaching by first enacting what they perceived as expected teacher identities, and learning through practice. As the participants gained confidence, Kanno and Stuart (2011) note that they were able to "identify what was important in their teaching" and focus on developing particular areas of skills and knowledge (p.246). Hence, the participants better understood the kind of teachers they wanted to become in relation to their learners and their perceived needs. Significantly, the study emphasises how identities are both shaped by practice and shape practice; the participants focused on aspects of their teaching that were closely aligned with their desires to meet the needs of their learners, which in turn shaped the identities they adopted. Kanno and Stuart (2011) conclude by suggesting a shift in MA TESOL programme design towards emphasising the importance of learning (and therefore identity negotiation) through practice. This suggests the significance of interactions with others through classroom practice as influential in shaping identities.

Upon entering a teaching community, new teachers may find that their identities are in conflict with the norms enacted by other members. Wenger's (1998) theory frames such situations as a mix of identification and negotiation with a community of practice. Newcomers try to create links within a community to become integrated and accepted, but at the same time are under the scrutiny of others (Wenger 1998). If their views differ, teachers may feel marginalised especially if given little opportunity to influence how teaching is enacted in a community. Indeed, related research has shown how attempts to unify teaching approaches by top-down curriculum reform without teachers' perspectives and needs being taken into account can be especially disruptive and destabilizing (Liu & Xu, 2011; Yuan & Lee, 2015; Li & Baldauf, 2011; Gao, 2017).

An example of such disruption is evident in Liu and Xu's (2011) study which examines the impact of curriculum reform in China. They analyse how a novice teacher entered a teaching community and was put under pressure to adopt communicative language teaching (CLT) in contrast to the teacher-centred approaches she was used to. The teacher identified herself as a *traditional teacher* with responsibility to provide knowledge to students and remained unconvinced by the pedagogical principles of CLT. Despite this, she was chosen to work with an expatriate professor under the expectation that she could be transformed into becoming a model communicative teacher. Although she initially tried to perform as the reforms required, when she began to question certain aspects of CLT, she found that there was little space for negotiation in her teaching community and was positioned as a non-participator. Despite this, Li and Xu (2011) conclude that this had some advantages; by being on the periphery of the community, she was under less pressure to conform and was able to adopt more desired identity positions.

Liu and Xu's (2011) research shows that while teachers undergo pressure to assimilate identities through processes such as curriculum reforms, they can still control the extent to which these become internalised. A further example is detailed in a study by Tsui (2007), which provides insights into a Chinese teacher's shifting identities as he struggled between his traditional-self, using methods which were teacher-centred, and becoming a teacher using CLT. Tsui (2007) illustrates that after being a learner in a CLT class, the participant entered

teaching with expectations of him becoming a model communicative teacher. However, the study shows that despite trying to identify with the teaching community and expectations placed upon him, he struggled with his beliefs that more explicit instruction was needed. Tsui (2007) therefore traces how different identities were expressed by periods of both participation and non-participation in the teaching community as the teacher searched for a desired identity as an *eclectic teacher*. Fundamentally, Tsui's (2007) study indicates how teachers' past learning experiences persist in shaping the identities they aspire to. This is also evident in Trent and Gao's (2009) study of second-career teachers in Hong Kong, which illustrates how these teacher-participants evaluated their former teachers to identify traits which they valued as part of their forming identities, as well as drawing on previous experiences as students and in former careers. However, the study also shows that when pasts are linked to present, reconciliation of practices from such different communities can sometimes cause conflict when accepted norms in one community are resisted by another (Trent & Gao, 2009).

The studies reviewed here, also indicate that former experiences, can influence how teachers perceive themselves as practitioners, and the identities they wish to adopt. Importantly for my study, they imply that the experiences of these teachers were shaped by different actors; other teachers, supervisors, and learners as well as institutional policies, teaching methodologies and their related resources. They also show that power relations which control participation in local teaching communities are inter-linked with the wider sociopolitical contexts of TESOL (Tsui, 2007, p.678).

While CoP continues to offer a useful framework in identity studies, there are limitations in its use in theorizing issues of marginalisation and resistance in teaching contexts (Clarke, 2008). It does not provide resources to examine how power infiltrates teaching communities (Gray & Morton, 2018, p.36) nor how new members can be controlled by established members (Mulcahy 2011). Given these limitations, some scholars (e.g. Clarke, 2009; Morgan, 2004; Simon-Maeda, 2004; Norton-Pierce, 1995) have turned to poststructuralist theoretical frameworks to examine how teacher identities are shaped by different forms of power and their associated discourses. Poststructuralist views of identity recognise that "identities are multiply constructed across different discourses,

material practices and positions" (Mulcahy, 2011, p.227), with more emphasis having been placed in research to date on discursive practices and positioning of self and others (Mulcahy, 2011). Norton's (Norton-Pierce,1995; Norton, 2001) concepts of investment and imagined identities have been especially influential on further directing teacher identity research, in relation to how teachers invest themselves in their work and development, encompassing the multiplicity of identity, and effects of power on identity formation (Norton, 2016). The next section continues with a discussion of these concepts and a focus on studies drawing on them with regard to teacher development.

3.2.4 Investment towards desired identities

Norton's (Norton-Pierce 1995; Norton, 2001) initial research was based on the engagement of ESL learners in English classes in Canada, in relation to their desired identities as users of English. Norton defines identity from a poststructuralist perspective as "the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (2013, p.4). Her view of identity is partly influenced by Weedon's (1987; 1994) work on language, subjectivity, and power, which situates language as a site of social and political struggle, but also as a site through which identities are constructed (Norton, 2001). From this perspective, identities are dynamic, changing over time and through experiences across different spaces, as individuals take up positions as thinking and speaking subjects and the identities that correspond to them (Weedon, 1994, p.18). Norton's concept of identity is also influenced by Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) work on how language and power are involved in forming concepts of self, particularly his notions of gaining forms of *capital* through which individuals acquire power and status. Influenced by this poststructuralist thinking, Norton (2016) argues that individuals reshape their relations with others in order to claim more powerful identities and therefore *invest* more in some aspects of identity work.

In her study of an ESL learner in Canada, Norton-Pierce, (1995) shows how *investment* occurs when language learners desire particular forms of cultural capital and strive to gain power through the investment choices they make. She

argues that learners invest in the target language in order to acquire a wider range of resources- both symbolic and material resources. She suggests that they accumulate what Bourdieu (1977) refers to as "cultural capital" by becoming users of English. This capital opens up different identity options, linked to opportunities that may become available and the prestige that being a user of English may carry in certain societies. As Norton-Pierce's (1995) study illustrates, learners may choose not to invest in learning that does not align with their needs, which suggests that teachers may need to adapt their teaching and thus identities to encourage investment.

Therefore, investment is equally applicable to teacher identity, and the different ways teachers invest in their practices and development (Miller, Morgan & Medina, 2017). Intertwined with how teachers invest themselves in their work are the efforts they make to engage learners. This is shown in a study by Waller, Wethers and De Costa (2016) who link the ways in which two novice teachers invested in teaching to an analysis of their teaching philosophies written for MA TESOL studies. The study connects their classroom experiences to principles of critical praxis illustrating how teachers invest in creating positive experiences for learners as part of their own identity formation. This desire to relate to learners is also evident in a longitudinal study of a 'non-native' English teacher in the US by Miller et al., (2017). The participant moved among various identity positions as he invested himself into finding ways to connect with his students against a backdrop of pressure to produce exam success. By developing strategies to create a "meaningful and successful" learning environment, he formed productive relationships with his students which did not detract from the exam- oriented system (Miller et al., 2017, p.99). The study shows that while experimenting with ways to engage students, teachers are at the same time experimenting with and asserting particular identity options in relation to the people and material resources they interact with.

The concept of investment is therefore of significance to my study, as teachers' investment in their work is influenced by different actors which also shapes their identities. Their investment (or dis-investment) is likely to produce particular emotions (Bukor, 2015) which leads me to consider how emotion may also influence identities.

3.2.5 Emotion and teacher identity formation

Intertwined with the complex processes and practices of teacher identity formation are the emotions that emerge through interactions with various social and institutional actors (Wolff & De Costa, 2017). In this way, teacher emotion is influenced by a myriad of sources through which power and politics play a role in shaping identities (Wolff & De Costa, 2017, p.79). Emotions are enacted and expressed through teaching and learning situations (Zembylas, 2005) and by experiencing emotional processes teachers develop "emotional knowledge", a term defined by Zembylas (2007) as:

> "a teacher's knowledge about/from his or her emotional experiences with respect to one's self, others (e.g. students, colleagues), and the wider social and political context in which teaching and learning takes place" (p.356).

According to Zembylas (2007), emotional knowledge is integral to a teachers' knowledge ecology, "a system consisting of many sources and forms of knowledge in a symbiotic relationship" (p.356). Emotional knowledge is linked to and shaped by social and political contexts and comprised through teaching experiences as well as social relations with students, colleagues and others in a teaching environment (Zembylas, 2007, p.357).

Emotions are also linked to forms of power which influence teachers and teaching environments, thus Zembylas (2003) draws on work by Foucault to examine how power infiltrates social and cultural structures to regulate expressions of emotion in daily practices. Different education cultures prioritise particular displays of teacher emotion while restricting the expression of others in accordance with moral norms and social values (Zembylas, 2007). Teachers may therefore suppress emotions through a process of emotional labour in order to respond to the emotional rules, embedded in "ethical codes, professional techniques, and specialized pedagogical knowledge" (Zembylas, 2002, p.201). For instance, in some contexts, teachers may be expected to be strict and maintain distance from their students, or even act as an authoritarian figure. This may conflict with personal ideals of being more approachable and therefore result in teachers

having to adopt less desired identities. In such situations, teachers may feel powerless and even feel shame about their work (Song, 2016) and hide their emotional identity from students and colleagues (Shapiro, 2010) in order to conform.

As argued by Zembylas (2005), emotions are interrelated with teacher values and beliefs and together these influence how teachers act and the decisions they make in response to different situations. Emotions therefore emerge through teachers' thoughts and actions which further suggests that they are interwoven with identities (Barcelos, 2017) and thus likely to be intertwined with the narratives of the teachers in my study. If we are to understand how and why certain emotional identities are performed, it is necessary to consider which actors are influential in determining teachers' emotional engagement, not only with their classroom practices but also their development (Zembylas, 2007). I therefore develop this discussion of emotion and teacher identity with regard to postgraduate study in section 3.4.5.

In the next part, I focus on future identities and the ideals teachers create of who they would like to become as teachers, and the different communities they would like to belong to. As Norton (2001) argues, imagination is a key factor in guiding the investment language teachers make in their development as it forms their hopes and desires for the future. In other words, investment "indexes issues of identity and imagined futures" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p.39).

3.2.5 Imagined future teacher identities

The concept of imagination has been woven into theories of identity, (e.g. Wenger, 1998; Norton, 2001) as a tool for investigating how future possibilities are aspired to. Imagination can help teachers to consider alternative future trajectories, and how they may gain access to desired communities (or not). According to Pavlenko (2003), the term *imagined community* originates from work by Anderson (1991) who discusses how imagination can be used in "perceiving a connection with people beyond our immediate social networks" (p.50). Through using imagination, therefore, possible identities are constructed which extend beyond a person's current environment. Anderson used *imagined community* to refer to the construct of a nation, but Norton (2001) transferred the concept to

language learners and learner identity, and the *imagined communities* which are desirable to them. These desires influence how learners and teachers invest in learning in order to access the communities they want to be part of. Thus, investment in an imagined community implies investment in associated imagined identities, which as Norton suggests "may continually change across time and space" (2010, p.3).

An imagined community is therefore a desired community, which "offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future" (Norton, 2014, p.62). This notion has been applied to studies focusing on, for instance, how imagined communities connect English learned locally to wider global uses (Ryan, 2006; Norton & Kamal, 2003). From a less positive angle, 'non-native' teachers of English may be denied access to imagined communities, particularly through judgements of their ability to use English effectively (Kanno & Norton, 2003).

However, development such as postgraduate study can play a role in accessing more desired identities. This is illustrated by Pavlenko's (2003) study which uses a critical praxis approach to challenge the 'native' vs 'non-native-speaker' categorisation of teachers of English. Using the concept of imagined communities to investigate other identity options for 'non-native' teachers studying on an MA TESOL course, Pavlenko argues that belonging to a community of 'native-speakers' should not necessarily be the objective of 'non-natives'. Instead, she introduces Cook's (1999) notion of multi-competence to her participants to suggest an alternative community of multilingual and multi-competent individuals. Pavlenko (2003) discusses how, by shifting their self-perceptions, individuals can create positive self- images and become more critically aware of the discourses which marginalise them. However, Gray and Morton (2018, p.17) point out that although teachers such as these may adopt identities such as *bilingual teacher* and *multicompetent user*, they can face prejudice in some contexts which could unravel these identities. That implies that teachers also need to develop resilience to counter such challenges.

The concepts of *imagined identity* and *investment* are certainly salient to international teacher- students and their imagined ideals of future *becomings*.

Imagined identities reach beyond a teacher's actual practices, towards new possibilities and communities, and therefore may differ from the identity a teacher actually enacts (Xu, 2013). In a study of four novice Chinese teachers in primary schools, Xu (2013) shows how imagined identities developed during training were later re-formed through the teachers' experiences in actual classroom situations. Furthermore, their experiences illustrate how imagined identities may fall apart when novice teachers face restrictions of institutional rules and expectations which they have to conform with. The study highlights how an imagined identity may become de-motivational if not fulfilled in the way the individual envisions, indicating how gaps between imagined and practised identities can become detrimental. Hence, as Xu (2013) suggests, imagined identities need to be guided by realistic perspectives of teaching to smooth the transition into actual classroom practice.

Evidently, teachers' investment in their development does not guarantee a smooth path to becoming a teacher, but instead is likely to unleash challenges to the identities they are trying to attain. In order to acquire desired symbolic and economic capital, teachers therefore require perseverance and agency to reach their goals (Kramsch, 2008). This implies that investment is actually a process of "investing" (Barkhuizen, 2016, p.637) which may be readjusted over time. This is apparent in Barkhuizen's (2016) study of a teacher of English from Tonga, in which he analyses her identity development as a 'non-native' teacher of English in New Zealand over time. Although she did not experience her future as she had initially envisaged, the process of imagining the kind of teacher she wanted to become inspired her to invest in MA studies which later opened up personal and professional opportunities.

Imagination is therefore a powerful tool for harnessing hopes and ideals and focusing these on tangible future possibilities (Norton, 2010). It can guide investment in professional development in various contexts of professional growth including formal and informal activities (Kubaniyova, 2017). As such, it is useful in studies of identity to examine how teachers envision different dimensions of their future-selves and how these are linked to other actors involved in their teaching and development activities. As teachers move through novice teaching years, their self-concepts and desires to become, for instance, more effective teachers or more confident as users of English, direct choices

made regarding further professional development (Hiver, 2013) which in turn add to their narratives of becoming teachers. In the next part, I discuss how narratives of teacher experiences are frequently used as tools for identity research, and how in my study narratives offer resources to examine which actors have been influential in the identity formation of international teacher-students.

3.3 Examining teacher identities

3.3.1 Identity as a narrative

Teachers express their identities through stories about their experiences, and therefore the content and context of these narratives can offer insight into the ways in which identities are formed (Pavlenko, 2007). Accordingly, different forms of narrative have been used in studies of teacher identity, and, in this section, I focus especially on use of narrative in identity research with regard to teacher development through postgraduate study.

Becoming a teacher is an "ongoing, narrated process" bringing together elements of past and present experiences as well as imagined futures (Block, 2017, p.34). When people communicate experiences to each other, they frequently do so by "storying" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002, p.35), by recounting events and portraying the involvement of characters in them. Teachers construct such stories of their experiences through daily conversations with colleagues, reflective practices such as journal keeping or spontaneously in discussion when a link is made to some event, by sharing views or listening to stories of others' experiences (Vasquez, 2011). By constructing and telling their stories, people make sense of their actions and their relationships with others, as well as re-enacting the past and imagining ideals for the future; narratives are therefore a site where people construct and reconstruct their identities (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). In this way, narratives provide resources for teachers to make sense of different 'happenings' in their lives and their part in these, how they position themselves and others, as well as how they become positioned (Søreide, 2006).

Interwoven with teachers' narratives are multiple subject positions (Weedon, 1987) or identity categories which are made available (or restricted) through historical, social and political influences of particular contexts. The institutions,

the schools, universities and training centres, teachers work and develop in, make available (or restrict) particular positions according to their values, policies and organisation (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000, cited in Soreide, 2006, p.132). Teachers make distinct responses to these positions, and thus frequently tell different stories about similar events, by positioning self and others according to personal perspectives.

Davies and Harré's (2001) theoretical work on positioning examines the social negotiation and construction of identities through discourses linked to particular situations. It emphasises the fluid and dynamic nature of how people adopt different subject positions, while enacting a particular identity (Davies & Harré, 2001) and is linked to poststructuralist understandings of how discourses continually shape the formation of multiple selves that people move among (Davies, 2000). According to Davies and Harré (2001), within the narratives individuals create and tell about their experiences, they position themselves and others as interacting elements of the story through which events unfold. However, Davies and Harré (2001) stress that people also bring histories of past experiences which further influence how people respond to each other. Additionally, English teachers may position themselves and others according to linguistic proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, or status among peers (Pavlenko, 2003; Zacharius, 2010). By accepting or rejecting particular subject positions, such teachers express their agency or lack of agency, for instance, if pressurised by more powerful actors in their institutions to adopt particular identities. This point is illustrated in Kayi-Aydar's (2015) study of trainee teachers on an MA course in the US, when mentors and a school director influenced whether teachers could enact certain identities.

Narratives have been used in studies of language teacher identity, including some discussed earlier in this chapter (Tsui, 2007; Pavlenko, 2003; Liu & Xu, 2011). Teachers' stories can be expressed in different forms of narrative, for instance, as a single response to a particular question or prompt, or embedded within a larger narrative of events (Barkhuizen, 2011, p.392). Narratives are also referred to as "small stories" (Bamberg & Georgalopoulou, 2008; Vasquez, 2011) which may be told as part of conversations with others, and therefore co-constructed with others (e.g. teacher colleagues). *Small stories* have been used to counter longer *life-history* accounts which have been criticised for perpetuating

“an image of identity that is much ‘larger’, more continuous, and more stable than small stories would suggest’’ (Freeman, 2007, p.59). Small stories are linked to specific contexts and moments in time and therefore illuminate how certain identities are negotiated, constructed and performed in these moments (Vasquez, 2011, p.539). While big stories provide a reflective narrative of a particular life period, small stories provide detail on everyday events which may otherwise be considered less significant (Freeman, 2007; Richards, 1999). Similar to small stories are *short stories*, a form of narrative which is created during more formal research settings, as part of an interview process (Barkhuizen, 2016). Barkhuizen (2016) for example, adopts a *short story* approach in his aforementioned study of an MA TESOL teacher-student, using stories of her experiences as an MA student and linking these to follow-up stories of her subsequent teaching experience. Short stories can effectively link different moments in teachers experiences over time and construct a coherent narrative of events. Barkhuizen’s (2016) concept of short stories especially guided how I approached data-collection with teachers participating in my study, to co-construct narratives of postgraduate study experiences, their pasts and imagined futures, discussed further in chapter 5.

Different narratives intercept each other; teachers are part of other peoples’ stories as well as their own, a concept which Craig (2005) refers to as a “maze of narratives”, that portrays how individuals make sense of their experiences and those of others (p.176). Within such a maze of narratives, material objects, in the classroom and teaching environment in general, could also have considerable influence on how teachers perceive themselves and are perceived by others (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017). As well as people, material objects become entangled in the flows of practices through which different identity positions are enacted over time (Hultin, 2019), and also change how teachers and students interact (Sørensen, 2009). This leads to questions of whether and how material objects can affect teacher identity (re) formation and are woven into the narratives of their experiences. Less attention has been paid to this, thus my study aims to illuminate the potential influence of *both* social and material actors on identity formation. I now develop this point further with a focus on the interplay of social and material actors with regard to international teachers, their experiences and development through postgraduate study in the UK.

3.3.2 Socio-Material influences on teacher identity

The literature discussed so far has highlighted how teacher identities are influenced by the teaching contexts and the social actors involved within these. Studies on social interaction among teachers, their mentors and learners have been useful in providing insight into the complexity of teachers' responses to classroom situations and development activity. Despite this wealth of research, my review has shown that the influence of material objects in classrooms and institutions has received less attention. There has been some research on how *learners* interact with material objects such as games (e.g. Tran, 2007) and technologies (e.g. Toohey et al. 2015; Toohey & Dagenais, 2015) in classroom contexts, and how identities are shaped by material aspects of community learning (Aberton, 2012). Nevertheless, as noted by Mulcahy (2011), less attention has been paid to how material objects present in teaching (and study) environments influence teacher identities not only in their classrooms, but in their wider professional development.

However, there is some indication in the literature of potential roles material objects have on language teacher identity. Hadfield (2017), for instance, considers the extent to which teaching materials influence the identities teachers adopt. Hadfield draws on her personal experiences as a teacher to show how a workshop on incorporating drama into EFL lessons led to the formation of new dimensions of her identity such as a willingness to experiment and play with ideas and her increased creativity. Thus, later on as a materials writer, Hadfield (2017) notes how creativity and play became significant in the materials she created and thus remained integral to her identity. However, Hadfield (2017) also cautions that materials can become an "orthodoxy" (p.253) if they are embedded within particular teaching methods and approaches. In this case materials become prescribed rather than used through choice (Swan, 2015) and shape the instructional identities teachers adopt, which may not align with preferred identities.

These points suggest that learning and teaching are not only mediated and negotiated through social interaction but by interactions with material entities, including materials as resources, technologies and the various forms of texts which promote particular discourses. These material objects shape how teachers

perform and are not just present, but participate in teaching and learning practices (Sørensen, 2009). In other words, material objects themselves have agency to influence human actors (Canagarajah, 2018, p.272).

Teacher identities are influenced by the relationships they form with others (Xu, 2017). Therefore, to consider more fully how different forms of material objects are intertwined with identity formation requires examination of these relationships and how they result in teachers adopting particular identities. These relations involve links among people, but also discourses, technologies and other material objects and each relationship produces particular effects. According to Toohey (2017) such a perspective on identity thus requires a focus:

> "not only on the person who is defined as teacher, and the people around them, but also on the material and symbolic arrangements that together assign particular identities to particular bodies" (p.14)

Viewing identity as a continual process formed through a web of relations between people and material objects affords a focus on how relations are forged, and who and what is involved, and also how and why people, discourses and things also become categorised (Toohey, 2017). This does not suggest that humans are determined by the material objects of their environment, but that they are in mutual interaction with them and that through these interactions, meaning and knowledge emerges (Canagarajah, 2018, p.271). As such, teacher identities form and become re-formed through their relations with *both* people and material objects.

Such relations are shown by Mulcahy and Morrison (2017), who focus on classroom spaces to analyse the effects of using different spaces for learning. They argue that individuals act differently depending on where they learn, implying that different spaces advantage and disadvantage different learners. Being in a more formal setting of desks and chairs may be preferred by some students while a reading corner with cushions may be preferred by others (Mulcahy & Morrison, 2017). The study suggests that spaces and the material objects that help define them invite and create particular interactions among students and teachers shaping the identities available to them.

In another study, Porter and Tanghe (2016) draw on the concept of *emplaced identities* to examine how tools such as the whiteboard can re-shape classroom

interactions. Their study focuses on a mixed nationality group of MA TESOL students and investigates how changes in the material configuration of the classroom impacted upon the positioning of teachers and students. They define *emplaced identity* as the "relations between material settings, objects, and spaces, with particular respect to the ways they contribute to experiences of the self" (p.773) and experiment with uses of classroom objects and space in relation to teacher and learner interactions. As part of their study, they reconceptualised the whiteboard into a "graffiti wall" on which students could add their thoughts during discussions and found that it became a more democratic as opposed to teacher-centred space. Not only did this change the nature of participation of some students, but created more student-oriented discussion. Significantly, the study shows how exploring the agency of material objects and the impact of spaces emphasises identity in relational terms and illustrates how identities are inter-linked with wider ecological networks of social and material actors (Porter & Tanghe, 2016, p.776).

Even though there has been increased interest in materialist perspectives of teaching and learning in applied linguistics and TESOL (e.g. Pennycook, 2018; Canagarajah, 2018) literature exploring teacher identity through such as sociomaterial lens remains limited. Such a perspective views identity as an effect of the social and material relationships formed by teachers in their communities, relationships which are in a continual process of forming and re-forming, or in other words, of *becoming*. This suggests the need for analyses to emphasise a blending of human and non-human activities and how these become entangled in everyday activities (St. Pierre, 2013).

Mulcahy's (2011) study investigates teacher *becoming* by illustrating how the material-semiotic approach of actor-network theory provides such a lens for analysing the webs or networks of relations which are integral to processes of *becoming* teachers, and the multiple identities formed and re-formed through the interactions of social and material practices. I discuss Mulcahy's (2011) work in the next section which focuses on actor-network theory, the main theoretical framework of my study.

3.3.3 Actor-network theory

As indicated in the previous section, material objects can influence professional practices through their unique interactions with those connected to them (Law, 2002). In terms of teacher identity, this implies a shift towards viewing identities as emerging effects of the networks (or assemblages) of relations (e.g. in classrooms with students and learning materials; in institutions with policy documents, syllabus, colleagues) through which identities are enacted (Mulcahy, 2011). As such, identities are not understood as discrete entities, but are continually formed and performed through interactive practices with others. Therefore, considering both social and material actors in studies of teacher identity highlights how material objects become interwoven in how teachers express themselves in their practices and development.

At this point, it is useful to provide brief definitions of the terms *actor* and *network*. *Actors* are formed through the associations (or disassociations) of both humans and non-human entities (e.g. artefacts, technologies and texts) (Michael, 2017, p.153). These associations may be forced, intentional or spontaneous, but it is through these interactions that particular functions or actions are performed (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.12). In other words, entities assemble and act together to produce particular consequences (Law & Singleton, 2000, p.774). As Law and Singleton (2000) explain, what might seem like a single object, or form of knowledge is a "set of related performances" (p.774). Each human or non-human is itself a product of inter-relations; everyone and everything has relations with other humans and non-humans integrated into their 'history'. *Actors* interact with others to create an *assemblage* or *network* of heterogenous components, held together by their relations with each other (Sørensen, 2009, p.55), and the term *actor-network* describes these assemblages of people and material objects. *Actor-networks* place emphasis on how relations are formed or broken and how they endure to perform particular functions. Teacher identities are therefore formed through their interactions with others, through relational processes with others and through the practices these relations produce (Mulcahy, 2011, p.227).

Teachers' practices include particular teaching methods, techniques and material resources used in lessons, which shape interactions among teachers and students. An example can be seen in the use of language learning games, which

evolved with a shift to communicative teaching practices (Warscheuer & Healey, 1998). Their use provides an alternative context through which learning can take place (Sørensen & Meyer, 2017). As Sørensen and Meyer (2007) suggest, because games have been recognised as:

> "a framework for providing a meaningful context for language acquisition, then games should be understood as significant models for the design of educational material for language teaching and learning" (p. 561).

Games can therefore function in ways which encourage learners to participate, to use the target language and interact with each other, and so can be conceived as *actor-networks*. A study by Jessen & Jessen (2014) further helps us to understand this conceptualization. Their study of computer, board and exergames (combining physical exercise with digital interfaces), uses ANT to investigate how games create social interaction and engage human *actors* by stimulating mental and physical responses. Games enrol human *actors* into participating and performing in ways guided by the rules and material objects (e.g. dice, cards) which invoke certain actions. As Jessen and Jessen (2014) illustrate, games "orchestrate actions" by bringing both humans and non-humans together to create entertaining experiences, therefore:

> "a game can be studied as a designed object with inscriptions that has agency and does something with the user, because the user invokes a network of actors and agency when he starts playing a game, i.e., following the rules of the "game world" (p.414).

This indicates that material resources such as language learning games both participate in and create particular interactions in lessons (Sørensen, 2009), and through this open up alternative identity possibilities for teachers.

Therefore, instead of focusing on events or issues as matters of human skill or cognition, an *actor-network* approach focuses on unravelling the webs of human and non-humans bringing about different happenings (MacLeod et al. 2019, p.178). Significantly, networks are continually changing as new actors become enrolled (and others perhaps disengage) and through the nature of the interactions among actors may not always follow expected patterns; in other words, interactions between actors may result in different actions being performed. I develop the theoretical concepts of actors and networks further in

chapter 4, but now briefly consider how ANT can contribute to understandings of teacher identity development.

3.3.4 ANT and teacher identity

A notable example of the links between ANT and teacher identity of relevance for my study, is Mulcahy's (2011) study of novice and experienced teachers in Australia, in which she challenges teacher development processes (*becoming* teachers) as being shaped by individual intrinsic capabilities, and instead conceptualises them as material-discursive inter-weavings of people, places, bodies, texts, and objects (p.220). Using actor-network theory (Latour, 2005; Law 2009) as a tool for analysis, Mulcahy supports her analysis with extracts from three teachers' narratives of professional *becoming* in which evidence of material practices in their teaching emerges. One teacher, for instance, shows how he used different material approaches in teaching (e.g. acting out problem-based scenarios) which interfered with the established text-based syllabus and enabled the teacher to adopt different identities as he responded to more student-led demands for knowledge. In another example, digital technologies enabled a geography teacher to spontaneously link her lesson to news events as well as using google images to engage her students with hands-on projects and discussions. Through these examples, Mulcahy argues that teacher identities are therefore formed through "a particular mix of social and material practices enacted in subject cultures and other contexts" (2011, p.239). Instead of being a staged process, therefore, teacher *becoming* is conceptualised as a *relational* process performed through multiple identities in response to a heterogenous web of human and material resources that are present in teaching environments (Mulcahy, 2011).

While Mulcahy's research focuses on teachers in general education, my study aims to contribute further by focusing on *language teacher* identity research in TESOL. It explores processes of becoming international teachers of English and examines interplays of social and material actors in shaping identities and how these actors are interwoven in teachers' stories of past and present teaching and study. I adopted actor-network theory, which, although not often used in TESOL studies, enables me to interpret the narratives of the teachers who participated in the study and trace the actors which have been, and (potentially)

continue to be, influential on shaping identities. The study explores how past experiences have influenced teacher identities, and how these are expressed in relation to more recent experiences of postgraduate study, examining who and what has been significant in the (short) stories participants construct. It then focuses on the future identities teachers imagine and how they may inter-link with past and postgraduate study experiences through networks of interacting actors connecting experiences over time, by which identities are (re)-shaped in a continual process of *becoming*.

3.4 Postgraduate TESOL courses as sites for identity (re)formation

This final section focuses on identity development (and the actors involved) of international English teachers engaging in postgraduate study in university contexts in English-speaking countries. Through postgraduate study, teachers become introduced to forms of theoretical and pedagogical knowledge they may not have encountered before (Nguyen & Dao, 2019; Zacharius, 2010), and therefore the next section examines ways in which such knowledge may impact on international teacher-students. This leads to a discussion of literature which has illustrated ways in which postgraduate study may influence teacher identity formation, and then highlights how the concept of multi-competent teacher identities is significant in relation to postgraduate study. Teachers studying on MA programmes in the UK may face challenges when translating knowledge back to local teaching contexts (Li & De Costa, 2018; Llieva, Li & Li, 2015), and therefore I discuss the implications of this in terms of identity formation for such teachers. The final part then expands on section 3.2.5, with a discussion of emotion in relation to teacher identity formation and postgraduate study.

3.4.1 Roles of knowledge in shaping teacher-identities

While teachers may feel that knowledge gained through initial training and novice teaching years is adequate at first, they often notice gaps in their knowledge as they become more experienced and seek to fill these (Quirke, 2008; Barkhuizen, 2021). Postgraduate study is a trajectory followed by many teachers to gain the knowledge they feel is missing (Burns, 2017) and at the same time benefit from broadening their perspectives of TESOL by working with lecturers and peers from

varied backgrounds. In this section, I therefore discuss how postgraduate study introduces teachers to different forms of knowledge and experiences which may become influential in their identity formation.

Postgraduate TESOL courses provide opportunity for teachers to participate in an academic study community, which facilitates learning not only through the theoretical knowledge and technical discourses explained by lecturers, but also through their social interactions with others in a new context (Singh & Richards, 2006). While engaged in study, such teacher-students are exploring alternative identities as they participate in seminar discussions, informally mentor their peers and engage in research activities which may open up further identity possibilities (Singh & Richards, 2006). An example of research involvement is shown in a study by Edwards and Burns (2016) of teachers participating in an action-research programme in Australia. They show how doing research can build confidence to take on new roles and voice ideas for change and development in teaching practices. Focusing research on classroom practices may include issues arising with particular learners as well as ideas for changing local practices and assessment (Burns, 2010; Burns & Westmacott, 2018). As Borg (2017) argues, research skills developed through academic study are therefore transferable to future teaching situations and not just useful in academic professions. Teachers may have resisted research involvement previously, for instance, by not understanding its relevance to their work (Borg, 2013), or for practical factors such as time and workload (Block, 2000). Teacher research activity may thus be linked to institutional expectations as well as the support institutions provide for research activity (Xu, 2014). Nevertheless, postgraduate study can help promote feasible teacher-researcher identity options.

The content of taught programmes is also significant in shaping perceptions of teaching. Postgraduate TESOL courses, MA TESOL courses in particular, typically include modules linked to methodology and second language acquisition (SLA) (Govardhan, Nayar & Sheorey, 1999). While employing these curricular topics prioritises core subject knowledge deemed essential for teachers, Morgan (2016) argues that these become prioritised in teacher education courses leaving little space for students' choice of content and of what may be more relevant for

them as teachers in their local contexts. For instance, back in 1997, Markee argued that SLA theory does not address the “real-life concerns” of teachers and therefore has limited effect on shaping language teaching (p.81). Similarly, MA TESOL courses have also been criticised for being overly focused on certain aspects of SLA theory without showing how they may be applied (Govardhan et al., 1999). This potentially leaves students with a disconnected view of theories that they are expected to write and talk about in their studies, but which they may struggle to relate to their practices (MacDonald, Badger & White, 2000). In view of this Ellis (2011) emphasises that any focus on SLA theory needs to be clearly relevant to pedagogy and linked to teachers own backgrounds.

Indeed, content knowledge is never neutral but is interwoven with ideologies, hegemonic relations and judgements (Morgan, 2016). Unless this is recognised in its transmission, teachers may accept theoretical and pedagogical knowledge without questioning associated ideologies and political motives (Abdenia, 2012). Therefore, a key aspect of postgraduate study should be developing what Crookes (2015) refers to as a *critical consciousness* of professional knowledge and the ideologies and intentions under-pinning it. This furthers conceptions of teachers as reflective practitioners (Farrell, 2012; 2015) towards becoming transformative intellectuals Giroux (1985) who are able to think critically and act to transform or change situations by problematising ‘norms’ (Pennycook, 2001). As Tripp (1994) argues therefore, to introduce change “is to identify practices that have become habits and examine them, revealing what could be changed to achieve different outcomes” (p.69). To encourage critical reflection, Hawkins and Norton (2009) suggest that teacher education should focus more intensely on consciousness raising of the ways in which power relations are constructed and enacted in society, as well as how historical, social, and political practices structure educational inequity. This is especially relevant to postgraduate TESOL courses, where theoretical concepts can be considered in relation to classroom and institutional practices, thus providing opportunities to explore Freire’s (1970) concept of ‘praxis’. Praxis is the site where theory and practice interlink to create actions to produce social change (Freire, 2006) and through postgraduate study, praxis may emerge through critical appraisal of different forms of knowledge in relation to past experiences, diverse teaching contexts, and the identities teachers claim or are expected to claim by others.

3.4.2 International teacher-student identities

As discussed in Chapter 2, postgraduate TESOL courses in English-speaking countries attract a considerable number of international students (Lillyman & Bennett, 2014). International teacher-students studying on these courses bring with them personal experiences of learning as well as knowledge and competences developed in different teaching environments, implying that their needs and interests may vary (Liu, 1998; Carrier, 2003; Park, 2012; Kamhi-Stein, 2000). As Kamhi-Stein (2000) suggests, most international teachers studying in English-speaking countries face issues which revolve significantly around factors such as lack of confidence in professional competence and linguistic proficiency, fear of prejudice against being a 'non-native' speaker and a lack of voice in the wider fields of TESOL.This has led to some research investigating international student experiences of MA TESOL programmes especially, with some, albeit limited, focus on PhD study, with regard to identity formation.

In a study of international student needs, Liu (1998) argues that through its ethnocentrism, TESOL in North America, Britain and Australia (NABA), does not recognise needs of international students, such as developing confidence in language use and understanding language learning theories in relation to the contexts they will return to. Liu (1998) therefore claims that many such TESOL programmes do not acknowledge traditions of teaching in other contexts and fail to accommodate the differences in needs of L1 and L2 speakers of English. Building on Liu's work, Carrier (2003), contends that 'non-native' teachers require different forms of support and input when enrolled on western TESOL programmes, especially in terms of language proficiency and academic skills.

However, research has shown that integration into an academic learning community involves more than acquiring given knowledge and developing academic skills. It is a complex process of negotiating new identity options, experiencing other cultures, and responding to power relations within an academic learning community (Pavlenko, 2003; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Aspects of identity that individuals had not considered before may be exaggerated when moving to a new learning context; for instance, by becoming more acutely aware of being positioned as 'non-native' speakers, and being denied linguistic-capital (De Costa & Norton, 2017, p.8). International teacher-

students may also become positioned according to others' impressions of the education contexts they come from. For example, it may be assumed that students from certain cultures will struggle to adapt to the demands of criticality and autonomy of British universities (Holliday, 2017, p. 207). Some might also experience identity disruption as they learn about alternative ways of teaching which may not fit smoothly into the contexts they are likely to return to (Liu, 1998; Nguyen & Dao, 2019). Hu (2005) also discusses the tensions between traditional and communicative teaching in the Chinese school system, illustrating how teachers returning to such contexts may face resistance if they introduce new approaches. Conversely, in a study of MA TESOL students in Australia, Nguyen and Dao (2019) show how pedagogical knowledge can also inspire ideas of adapting practices for different contexts. It seems, therefore, that postgraduate study is both a site where identities may be attributed and disrupted, but also where alternative identities can be explored. I now evidence this further by examining how discourses that negatively position teachers can be challenged through postgraduate study programmes.

3.4.3 Multi-competent teachers

Since its publication in 1999, Vivien Cook's article focusing on his concept of "multi-competences" of bi/multilingual teachers has been instrumental in challenging *native-speakerism* and its monolingual bias. The concept of multi-competence has since been drawn on in studies of teacher identity to depict an identity option which recognises the skills and attributes these teachers bring to their practice. Rather than being categorised as 'non-native' speaker teachers, thus being denied access to native-speaker privileges, adopting an identity as a multi-competent teacher emphasises the skills, cognitive ability and knowledge of teachers using English as an L2 (Cook, 1999; 2016). The concept of multi-competence is central to Pavlenko's (2003) study discussed earlier, in which she explains it as a "compelling alternative" for MA TESOL students studying in the US. By encouraging critical reflection on the ideologies, discourses and theories that inform teaching practices, her participants adopted identities which were inclusive, and which released them from the monolingual biases that had restricted their feelings of legitimacy as teachers of English.

International students, as exemplified by Pavlenko's (2003) study, often feel insecure in their proficiency in English when arriving in an English-speaking country. In a study of MA TESOL and PhD students in a US university, Zacharius (2010) shows how participants questioned their legitimacy as qualified and experienced teachers when they found difficulty interacting in English both in their academic and social life. This caused some participants to position themselves as less able than others and instead of questioning the communication skills of others, they blamed their self-perceived incompetence when problems arose. However, the study showed how engagement with literature challenging the bias of native-speakerism was beneficial; being *multi-competent* emphasised the skills and knowledge teachers had in contrast to what they lacked as 'non-native' speakers.

These two studies indicate that postgraduate study offers a potential site for challenging discourses which create inequality in TESOL by privileging some, but marginalising others. In effect, integrating forms of critical praxis created positive identity shifts. In a study of MA TESOL and doctoral students in the US, Saminy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) similarly introduced critical praxis but through weekly seminars. These were designed to raise students' critical consciousness of native versus 'non-native' discourses in ELT to introduce alternative identity options. The findings demonstrate the importance of providing space in postgraduate programmes for students to share experiences and bring wider perspectives of ELT to the course.

Therefore, being categorised as a 'non-native' speaker has implications for how international teacher- students position themselves and are positioned by others. To bring a stronger sense of inclusivity into postgraduate TESOL courses, Kamhi-Stein (2000) advocates a cross-curricular approach, which aims to encourage reflection on the impacts of native-speakerism across core modules, and also involve 'native' as well as 'non-native' speaker students in critical discussion to share varied perspectives of TESOL. By including alternative platforms for discussion, such as web-based formats, Kamhi-stein (2000) found that students who normally remained silent in face-to-face seminars participated more freely. Her study especially illustrates how 'non-native' speaker students came to "view their concerns and interests as an integral part of the TESOL MA program curriculum" (2000, p.13).

In order to become inclusive, therefore, TESOL programmes need to connect knowledge to diverse teaching contexts, and inter-link different ways of teaching to innovate practices which are feasible and appropriate for specific situations (Sheehan, 2015). Hence, rather than learning about a generalised best practice (Sheehan, 2015), teachers need to be able to effectively apply what they have learned.

3.4.4 Postgraduate study in convergence with diverse teaching contexts

From the discussion so far, it appears that while learning about different perspectives of TESOL can be stimulating, it may also create dilemmas on how to integrate teaching approaches and materials into established systems (Yeh, 2011). This is illustrated in a study by Li and De Costa (2018) which highlights some of the challenges two teachers faced when returning to China after studying on an MA TEFL programme in the UK. They show how aspects of the ideal identities the teachers had created through their studies were resisted or interpreted differently by learners and peers as well as limited by local resources. As a result, the participants adopted a more authoritarian teacher role and mixed communicative with traditional approaches to teaching. This suggests that the transition from studying in an English-speaking context to a teacher's local teaching environment is likely to place identities in state of flux as teachers try to fulfil a desired identity, but find themselves under pressure to fit in with the teaching environments they move to (Llieva et al., 2015). Llieva et al. (2015) refer to this as a *third space* that most TESOL graduates occupy when returning to teach in local contexts. The third space is a site where teachers negotiate the ideals and discourses they bring with those already established in the institutions they return to teach in.

In order to prepare teachers for this third space, some scholars (e.g. Korthagen, 2004; De Costa & Norton, 2017; Bukor 2015) have explored a holistic approach to teacher education, which encompasses sensitivity to local demands with knowledge and responsiveness to wider global demands and trends (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p.xii). A holistic approach was adapted by De Costa and Norton (2017) through a transdisciplinary framework conceptualized by the Douglas Fir Group (2016). The framework depicts the multi-faceted nature of

teaching and learning across macro-levels of ideological structures, the meso level of sociocultural institutions and communities and the micro level of social activity. While the framework recognizes identity as an element at the meso level, integrated with questions of investment, agency and power, it is the inter-relations between the levels which ultimately shape teacher identities (De Costa & Norton, 2017, p.6.).

From the literature discussed, it is apparent that adapting to postgraduate study in an English-speaking country creates both opportunities and challenges, and likely to produce a mix of emotions. Having already established the significance of emotion in identity formation, the next section further develops how emotion may influence teacher identities in postgraduate study contexts.

3.4.5 Emotion in postgraduate study

For international-teacher students postgraduate study involves activities where emotions are both reflected upon and formed. It provides knowledge resources for teachers to critically reflect on past experiences and their emotional responses to challenges arising in classroom interactions with students and also in their institutions (Shahri, 2015). It also encourages reflection on current practices, (e.g. in a teaching practicum), and how these are shaped by teaching and learning histories. In view of this, Shahri (2015) examines the interplay of emotions and identity of a Turkish teacher studying on an MA TESOL programme in the US. The study compares how her teaching practice at the beginning and end of the programme was reflected in the identities she constructed through interview narratives, and how it was shaped by her emotional responses to classroom incidents. This led her to reflect on her teaching and use the theories she had been introduced to in her studies to adopt a more favourable teacher identity. This is of particular relevance to my study as it shows that teachers' self-perceptions are formed not only through teaching and development, but are "embedded in teachers' emotional experiences of their histories and prior sociocultural contexts" (Shahri, 2015, p.102).

Emotions are also intertwined with low self-confidence that some international teacher-students experience in academic communities as 'non-native' speakers (Nguyen & Dao, 2019). In a study of a PhD student in the US, Reiss (2011) shows

how the participant experienced feelings of insecurity in his ability to use English effectively, through his belief in the 'native-speaker' myth (Medyges, 1994). This changed, however, when he was introduced to literature which offered a theoretical foundation of critique of 'native-speaker' bias and inspired him to become more assertive of the skills he possessed. His postgraduate experiences were thus marked by periods of emotional fluctuance between feelings of empowerment and insecurity.

As discussed, postgraduate study introduces theories and pedagogical knowledge that can be inspiring, but these might also create feelings of frustration or uncertainty when envisaging them in other teaching contexts. Wolff and De Costa (2017) investigate the emotional demands a Bangladeshi teacher faced during an MA TESOL programme in the US. The participant, Puja, came from a context where teachers were viewed as authorities of knowledge, but through experiencing different approaches of her lecturers, Puja realised the possibilities of a teaching style that valued students' views and experiences as contributions to learning activities. This caused her to re-think the strategies she had been used to and particularly reflect on *the banking concept of education* (Freire, 2006) that had produced teacher-centred classes. Puja experimented with other identity options than being a *knowledge-provider* and as Wolff and De Costa (2017) conclude, showed that challenges faced during MA studies can produce positive and negative emotions as different identity options are experimented with.

Teachers may therefore experience tension when desired identities, for instance, inspired through postgraduate study, are in conflict with identities that have been expected of them locally. This leads to a kind of *emotional dissonance* which brings a sense of instability or insecurity (Johnson & Golombek, 2016, p.45). In some cases, teachers may be unsure of what or who is creating these feelings, or lay blame on themselves or their students (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). However, Zembylas (2003) argues that emotions are features of conversations rather than internally held "mental mechanisms", therefore emotions are most effectively portrayed as "discursive practices operating in circumstances that grant powers to some relations and delimit the powers of others" (p.115). In other words, when teachers experience emotional dissonance, it is often linked to the ways in which they become positioned by other actors. Emotions are therefore

inter-twined with stories of teacher experiences and may (re)-emerge when these stories are told.

This is relevant to my study of international teacher-students as emotions may become evident during interview or focus group discussions of their experiences. In addition, knowledge gained through postgraduate study may be significant in encouraging individuals to reflect on negative situations they have faced in the past to gain deeper understanding of who and what has been influential on them and formulate ways to adopt more desired identities.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined some of the theoretical perspectives that have been drawn on in studies of teacher identity and shown how identity has come to be more widely considered as complex, changing and shaped by multiple influences that teachers interact with. I have illustrated how much of the literature has focused on the impacts of social actors on identity formation with less attention being paid to the potential influence material actors may have. This has established the focus of my study, to consider both *social* and *material* actors as potentially significant in teacher identity formation. In this way, teacher identities can be conceptualised as narratives of *becoming*, shaped by interplays of actors influential in teachers' institutions, and through their teaching and development activities.

I have also shown how literature has emphasised the various roles that postgraduate study may have on continuing identity formation and therefore be significant in processes of *becoming* teachers. While the studies I have referred to provide valuable insight into teacher identities, they have been largely situated in contexts other than the UK and so this study brings another contextual focus to the field. It also aims to link postgraduate study experiences with the identities teachers bring with them from past experiences and with ideals of imagined professional-selves.

In the next chapter, I extend the discussion of ANT in section 3.3.3 and explain more fully how ANT will be used as a theoretical lens and clarify the concepts of ANT that I will draw on in discussing my findings.

4.0 Theoretical framework of the study: Actor-network theory (ANT)

In this chapter, I will further explain the socio-material theoretical basis of my study with a focus on the concepts of ANT which I draw on in my interpretation of the findings. I begin with a brief rationale for my choice of ANT before explaining how ANT is positioned under a broader umbrella of posthumanist theories and the particular epistemological and ontological positions this brings. I then focus on sociomaterialism, a grouping of posthumanist theories to which ANT belongs and further explain how sociomaterialism conceives social situations. Following this, I explain and exemplify how the key terms of *actor* and *network* can be understood and further show the ontological and epistemological understandings this brings to my study. I then explain the concepts of ANT that I will draw on in my findings and discussion sections, from my analysis of teacher narratives and the identities expressed through these.

As discussed in the literature review, my study focuses not only on social actors influencing identity formation but also the potential effects of material actors. Sørensen (2009) argues that material 'things' are interwoven with educational practices and shape how teachers interact with their students. To acknowledge this requires a theoretical lens which enables a focus on the ways different actors may become influential. Therefore, while sociocultural theories such as Communities of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998) have been usefully applied to focus on the effects of social relations on identity formation, there is no specific attention to non-human actors. Like CoP, ANT focuses on the relations formed in a community, but also offers conceptual tools which support understandings of the ways in which human and non-human actors interact to perform particular functions, and how actors both act on others and become acted upon, (Fox, 2000) [4]. ANT especially focuses on the interrelatedness of different entities and the effects they have on each other (Law, 2009). In terms of educational practices, therefore, this emphasises the ways in which human and non-human actors may influence ways of teaching and establish particular 'norms' of practice (Fenwick & Edwards, 2013).

[4] See Fox (2000) for a detailed discussion of ANT and CoP

The concept of actor-network has some affinity with Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of assemblage which also focuses on heterogenous relations between human and non-humans and the effects these produce (Müller & Schurr, 2016). Müller and Schurr, (2016) discuss in detail how networks and assemblages have been understood as both similar and disparate in the literature. They suggest that a significant difference could be how ANT tends to focus more on presence and the particular functions of entities in an actor-network, while assemblage-thinking is more attuned to potentiality and unpredictability. This suggests that the *possibility* of future events influences how assemblages form in the present but attends less to the past (Anderson, 2010, cited in Müller and Schurr, 2016, p.220). Latour (2005) also argues that ANT is more empirically grounded through it's 'conceptual toolbox' which provides resources for examining situations under investigation and interpreting how these become influenced by relations among different actors. Therefore, as I explain in the following sections, ANT as a conceptual tool is potentially useful in examining the actor-networks interwoven with my participants experiences over time and interpreting the ways in which their *becomings* as teachers have been shaped.

4.1 Introduction to ANT

Posthumanism is an 'umbrella' term for various theoretical approaches including 'new-materialism' and 'socio-materialism' (Ferrando, 2013). It is defined by Letts and Sandlin (2013) as "a philosophical movement critical of the foundational assumptions of classical humanism that structure so much of life as we know, live, and understand it" (p.2) and by Ferrando (2019) as a paradigm shift which challenges an anthropocentric world view and notions of humans as autonomous "self-defying" agents separate from the world around them (p.165). In other words, posthumanism focuses around an epistemology that is not anthropocentric and thus not oriented around Cartesian dualism through which humans are seen as separate from nature and the world around them (Bolter, 2016; Taylor, 2017). Humans "examine and posit truths about the world and its workings with scientific detachment" (Bolter, 2016, p.2) and are active in shaping an anthropocentric picture of the world (Sørensen, 2013). In this way, the world is seen through divides such as society vs nature, in which people and 'things' exist separately (Latour, 1993). Instead, posthumanism rejects anthropocentric views of humans

and human knowledge and defines the world as relational and inter-connected; humans, nature, technologies, objects and artefacts are not separate but interlinked entities, a view which emphasises an interplay between humans and non-humans in social situations. Posthumanism has therefore facilitated alternative perspectives of educational research through its equal recognition of the influences of non-human elements, such as digital technologies, classroom objects, syllabus and exam texts as well as humans on teaching and learning (Edwards, 2015, p.107). It emphasises the significance of non-human and human actors in assemblages, and focuses on how different actors affect and are affected by others (Fox & Alldred, 2014).

Socio-materialism has been described as an 'attendant' to what is termed 'new-materialism' (McGregor, 2014). New-materialism emphasises matter as "active self-creative, productive, unpredictable" (Coole & Frost, 2010, p.9) and research adopting a new- materialist approach focuses on assemblages, affects and flows and challenges the traditional dualisms of social inquiry such as agency/structure; human/non-human; culture/nature (Fox & Alldred, 2014; Ferrando, 2013). The concept of assemblage provides an ontological framework for analysing the complexity of social situations and how different components assemble, interconnect and form self-organizing dynamic systems. These principles are equally embraced by socio-materialism which is adopted as a "preferred term" by Edwards and Fenwick (2014, p.1385) to envelop aspects of materialist research for instance, ANT, complexity theory, materialist feminism and spatial theory. From this ontological position, social practices, such as teaching, involve both human and non-human actors and these practices are produced, ordered and dis-ordered through relations entailing *both* humans and non-humans (Michael, 2017, p.5). Moreover, there is a principle of *symmetry* which does not assume distinctions and hierarchies among different entities; both humans and non-humans have potential to be influential through the relations formed with others (Bóden et al., 2019).

Thus, socio-materialist perspectives maintain that "the environment, other animals, objects and artifacts are treated as integral to the enactment of human existence and social life rather than as simply background context or tools" (Fenwick & Edwards, 2013, p.49). *Symmetry* brings certain epistemological

implications to a study, for instance we cannot know (or assume) who or what could be influential in a situation prior to inquiry; rather than forming hypotheses to be tested, understandings are drawn from examining happenings and the ways in which different actors (humans and non-humans) have shaped these (Boden et al., 2019). Because sociomaterialism focuses on what is performed through inter-relations among involved actors, it challenges assumptions such as a subject being separate from an object or a knower being separate from what is known (Fenwick et al., 2011, p.3). This means that researchers are also influential actors in the research they conduct and how findings are interpreted, a point that I will return to in the next chapter.

ANT was initially used in relation to science and technology to trace the actors involved in scientific processes (Law, 1986; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1987), leading to its introduction as an alternative approach to social theory. Latour (2005) argues that ANT emphasises how perspectives of the social world should not be restricted to humans, but be viewed as assemblages of both humans and non-humans. Hence, ANT views the world as consisting of assemblages or networks which are formed through heterogenous relations between humans, things, concepts, technologies (Law, 1992). This implies an ontology that considers reality as both relational and multiple, as series of networks which may shift or settle according to their interactions with others (Michael, 2017, p.133). In this way, Cresswell, Worth and Sheikh (2010) argue that "ANT helps to conceptualise how different realities are experienced and enacted by different actors, resulting in a more nuanced picture of the dynamic relationships between different actors" (p.3).

A study of actor-networks is therefore a study of associations between humans and material objects, through which particular social orders are made (Latour, 1996). Significantly, this implies that material objects have the same potential agency in shaping social practices (such as teaching) and also influencing identities performed in these practices (Michael, 1996). This is how ANT may be useful in my study of influences on teacher identity formation and what or who shapes identities adopted.

There are numerous terms used in ANT to describe particular concepts of network enactment and I now focus on those I draw on in the analysis of findings, beginning with the core concepts of *actor* and *network*.

4.2 Concepts of *actor* and *network*

Whenever we do something in our daily lives, we are acting in order to accomplish some function, and while doing this we are being influenced by other people and material objects we encounter or which are linked in some way to whatever we are doing (Jessen & Jessen, 2014). If we imagine, for instance, a lesson scenario, the teacher is acting in ways which deliver its content through a series of planned stages but is also influenced by the presence and actions of students, and maybe observers, the tools and technologies available and their help or hinderance (e.g. if the computer does not work), the teaching material, as well as institutional rules which may detail, for example, when to give a break or whether furniture can be moved or not. While the teacher is conducting the lesson (and is thus an important *actor*) s/he is at the same time feeling the forces of other actors (as listed above) and may have to compromise with, accommodate or resist them to enable the lesson to keep flowing and reach its end goal. Each actor therefore performs a particular function in progressing a lesson and can be disruptive if it deviates or fails to contribute as expected. They can also be more or less influential depending on their particular role in a network performance (Fenwick et al., 2011, p.98). This may suggest that the ways in which a teacher interacts with others during a lesson shapes the identity(ies) adopted and performed. For instance, as De Costa (2017, p.160) suggests, identities “come alive” when a teacher interacts with students, as seen in the ways they adapt to respond to perceived learner needs (e.g. Miller et al., 2017; Kanno & Stuart, 2011). However, if we consider both social and material actors involved in the lesson, then teacher–learner interactions may also be influenced by other material resources participating in the lesson and perhaps shifting the dynamics among teacher and students (Sørensen, 2009). The performance of a lesson is therefore shaped by the interplay of actors associated with it and each performance creates new interactions; for instance, teaching the same lesson material with different learners produces something new each time. ANT therefore helps us to conceptualise how different realities are experienced by teachers and enacted

through the ways in which particular actors interact in pedagogical situations and practices.

A particular point of importance is that actors are not discrete entities but “a combination of symbolically invested things” (Crawford, 2004, p.1); each has a history of how it was formed and which links it to other people and things (Fenwick et al., 2011). Interwoven with the ways in which a teacher conducts a lesson themselves are their relations and influences with others from past as well as present situations (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). Thus, their history is a web of inter-connecting others; former teachers, memorable learning experiences and objects linked to these as well as the methodological principles that under-pin their practices, supervisors and mentors, curriculum and other texts. Therefore, when we think of actors, there is recognition that they are always gathered with others, that is interconnected with other assemblages or networks. This is of relevance to my study as I am interested in the past experiences and related actors which shaped the identities of my participants before joining postgraduate study. For instance, participants may talk about influences of fellow teachers, supervisors or the impact of given textbooks on their teaching and the identities they have adopted.

The term *network* is used as a metaphor to show how different objects circulate and form such connections and hold together. Networks are held together through dynamic relations between different actors which function to produce particular effects, hence the term *actor-network* (Latour, 1996). An *actor-network* is not a fixed connected entity, but one that changes and flows, with no hierarchical order between the human and non-human actors interlinked in it (Latour, 2005, p.129-131). This implies *symmetry* among actors; there is no assumption that one will be more influential and powerful than others (Latour, 2005). Therefore, rather than assuming that human relations have the strongest impact on teachers, ANT facilitates an openness to impacts from relations with non-human objects and does not presume difference between the intensity of the effects they create (Latour, 2005, p.185). In terms of scale, ANT works with a flat ontology; everything is assumed to be associated and interconnected as actor-networks (Michael, 2017), and therefore any large social actor, such as an institution is comprised of its associations extending among smaller actors

(departments, staff, student cohorts). Any local changes or happenings are inter-linked with wider network processes so that local and global are inter-connected. This notion of scale implies that teachers, their practices and identities they perform are associated with classrooms and daily teaching situations (local) but that these may also extend to and be interconnected with policies linked with bigger institutional networks, of curriculum development and assessment boards (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 19). In my study, for example, some participants indicated ways in which they felt constrained by the institutional systems they had worked in. Their experiences showed the ways in which different actors, such as supervisors, texts such as teachers manuals, the presence of exams and given course material together directed them towards preferred ways of teaching and conformity with institutional expectations. Forms of knowledge therefore circulate between these local and bigger institutional networks and teachers provoking particular responses and actions, as will be discussed in the next section.

4.3 Performance of knowledge through actor-networks

To think of an actor-network is to think of interactions between humans and non-humans forming a dynamic web of relations and practices. Through these interplays, forms of knowledge are produced as well as reinforced through relations and interactions in an actor-network (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). Knowledge from an ANT perspective is not something that is universal and stable, nor is it simply a cognitive practice, but is linked with the realities in which it is practised (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.24). Knowledge is formed through interactions and associations of certain actors and these need to be continually enacted to make it recognised and accepted as *known*. Forms of knowledge become more dominant and established through processes of network re-enactment (Law & Singleton, 2000) as can be seen in institutions where norms become established as expected ways of practice. Some forms of knowledge may also be imposed, for instance education standards and new curriculum frameworks, which as Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p.33) suggest, may lead to conflicts when they are introduced alongside competing local knowledge. This has implications for teacher identities as can be seen in studies examining how identities have been shaped by the introduction of curriculum based on CLT (Tsui, 2007; Liu & Xu, 2011).

Sørensen (2009, p.91) argues that knowledge is both integrated into teachers' practices to inform what they do, and is produced as an effect of these practices. She distinguishes between representational and communal or shared knowledge. Representational knowledge is verifiable, based on certain policies or theories. Teachers' guides for instance contain representational knowledge to show how material should be taught, and teacher training programmes also endorse particular aspects of teacher knowledge (e.g. teaching methods, language learning theories). Communal knowledge is more local, generated by teachers' ideas and shared practices (Mulcahy, 2012) and strengthened by wider uptake and consensus among colleagues when these are shared. Material objects may also be integrated into communal knowledge, for instance through use of space or technologies which shape teachers' practices (Sørensen, 2009). There may be rifts between representational and communal knowledge if these do not align, which may lead to restrictions on the identities teachers can adopt. This is of particular significance to my study as participants illustrated how they felt under pressure to adopt identities different to those they aspired to in order to conform with the expectations of the institutions they worked in.

4.4 Actor-networks and identities

Actor-networks are therefore dynamic entities and power may shift among actors in response to events and influences. This indicates that relations are continually being formed and re-formed which has implications for its stability and duration. How different actors inter-link and work together also produces particular effects such as knowledge, routines and identities (Fenwick, et al., 2011, p.96). These relations therefore have implications for how professional teacher identities may be adopted and performed. As Michael (1996) suggests, different actors may function in the "formulation, dissemination and entrenchment" of certain identities (p.79). Moreover, identities may also become ascribed to others, for instance, in assertions of position and power. In essence, teacher Identities become shaped through interactions with others, with people and material resources; the ways in which relations form and the tensions and harmonies that may be interwoven with these relations therefore play a significant part in *becoming* teachers (Mulcahy, 2011). In my study therefore I am interested in the ways in which relations

between social and material actors and teachers have influenced identities of my participants over time.

To further consider how actor-networks may generate understanding of influences shaping teacher identities, I will now explain ANT concepts linked to their formation and durability. I specifically focus on concepts which I will draw on to help interpret findings. These are *translation, interessement, enrolment, mobilisation, purification, black-boxed (& matters of fact vs concern)* and *obligatory passage points.*

4.5 Translation and interressement

ANT has been referred to as a 'sociology of translations' which implies that no formation of social order or organisation is ever complete but is an effect of continual reordering and regeneration (Law, 1999, p.3). The concept of *translation* was used by Latour (1987) to describe what occurs when human and non-human entities come together and interlink, influencing one another in the process. Simply put therefore, an actor- network is an assemblage of people and material objects, brought together and inter-linked through processes of translation to perform a particular function (Fenwick et al. 2011, p.101).

Translation involves a series of negotiations through which roles are assigned and power relations formed, and in the process identities may be adopted or assigned. It is the process through which roles are defined or re-defined (e.g. in periods of change) which will enable actors to work together to perform an intended function. A more powerful actor may define the roles of others and so there may be moments of coercing, persuading others to accept particular roles. This is called interessement by Callon (1986), a process that may involve persuasion, resistance, seduction or compromise between both human and non-humans (Fenwick et al., 2011, p.10). The concept of *interessemen*t is relevant for example when considering how teachers may respond to a new teaching situation or to change, and how they may need persuading into compliance. Similarly, material resources and technologies may be introduced to coerce participation in lessons; reluctant students may be persuaded to become more

involved in lesson activities if something new or novel is introduced to create alternative forms of interaction. Of course, material objects cannot verbally *persuade* others to do things, but their presence may invite interest or conversely impose restrictions which will encourage particular interactions or provoke particular responses.

4.6 Enrolment, mobilisation & purification

The concept of *translation* is also linked to *enrolment;* Latour (2005, p.108) uses the term *translation* to describe how actors attempt to (re)define others and thus *enrol* them into an actor-network. *Enrolment* refers to the new associations formed when coordinated roles are designated to newcomers. When these roles are accepted and performed as required, the actor-network will become strengthened and more stable. However, stability may be threatened by those who resist enrolment. For instance, if a teacher tries to do something differently and resists following the 'norms' and expectations of their institution they may be challenged by others. This is apparent in studies which have examined teachers in situations of reform, for instance the introduction of CLT (e.g. Liu & Xu, 2011) or with teachers entering teaching institutions with established norms (e.g. Xu, 2013). If teachers try to step beyond what is prescribed or expected, they may disrupt the flow of institutional processes and practices and therefore be seen as a threat to stability. On the other hand, power becomes 'solidified' through endorsed practices over time and if all of the actors perform as expected this helps to strengthen and stabilise an actor-network (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.13). If teachers conform therefore, they will become fully enrolled into institutional networks of practices and help to strengthen these. Agreeing to fit into the requirement of a particular role and perform accordingly implies that an actor is *mobilised* or rather doing what is required. When this is achieved, the actor-network can then settle into a stable process that appears to maintain itself (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010, p.11). Sometimes, certain practices are more valued than others and may define what is selected as acceptable or standardised (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.49). This is called *purification*, the mobilising of practices deemed more valuable than others (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.49). Teaching methods like grammar-translation, for instance, value translation, memorisation and syntax, but place little value on speaking and

interaction. For teachers, conforming with expectations and standardised practices may impact on the identities available; for instance, they may adopt certain identities according to their institutional contexts and practices, but these may differ from those they aspire to.

4.7 Becoming Black-boxed

A state of stability may be reached in an actor-network and this is when ways of doing things become taken for granted. Latour (2005) refers to this as *black-boxed, a point when* functions become performed routinely without questioning; teachers, for instance, might follow the given book because it is there, carry out classroom routines because they are the given way of doing things. This implies that the ideologies and assumptions under-pinning policies, procedures and curriculum are unchallenged, and are what Latour (2005) refers to as *matters of fact.* Conversely, if these are questioned they can be opened up, reconsidered and turned into *matters of concern.* This links back to points raised in the literature review, when teachers may be encouraged to consider how entrenched practices and policies affect them by developing a *critical consciousness* of professional knowledge (Crookes, 2015). Critical processes thus turn *matters of fact* into *matters of concern*. This is of particular relevance in my study as it relates to the role that postgraduate study may play in introducing teachers to new knowledge and becoming more critically aware of their teaching situations and practices and who or what is influential in these. In other words, be able to question what might have become *black-boxed* and taken for granted.

4.8 Obligatory Passage Point

In forming an actor- network, there may also be a stage of problematization when something becomes established as a standard in response to a particular issue or need. This is called an *obligatory passage point* (Latour, 1987) which serves to ensure particular outcomes in the functioning of the network. An example of relevance to my study could be the ways in which a curriculum guide may act as an *obligatory passage point* for teachers (Fenwick et al., 2011, p.100). Teachers have to align lesson plans, materials and assignments with this, and supervisors and administrators are also involved in ensuring that everything ‘passes’ through

this point accordingly. *Obligatory passage points* can also orient enrolled actors towards sites where they can realize new roles or identities (Michael, 2017, p.161). For example, a TESOL qualification and its requirements, such as an MA, performs as an obligatory passage point; the participation and academic work of those enrolled must align with the learning outcomes and expectations embedded in its networks in order for teachers to pass through successfully and be able to move on to claim identity positions which are made available.

4.9. Recognising challenges and critiques of ANT

While ANT appears to offer a novel conceptual tool to examine the interplays of social and material actors influencing teachers and teacher identities, it has also been met with some criticism. This has been especially focused around its view of symmetry and flatness, and the risk of adopting an un-reflexive objective stance when using ANT for some purposes (see Whittle & Spicer, 2008; Gad & Jensen, 2009; Amsterdamstka, 1990). Proponents of ANT have responded to this and attributed many of these claims to misunderstanding of ANTs concepts and terms and have sought to further explain these (Callon & Latour, 1992; Latour, 1999). While there is not scope here to explore all of these points in detail, I will briefly discuss criticisms linked to *symmetry* and *flatness* which are more relevant to my study.

Symmetry, as discussed earlier suggests that humans and non-humans should be seen as active entities; non-humans such as technologies, or objects are not inert but have the potential to be influential by their presence and participation in actor-networks. Critics of this view have argued that symmetrical treatment towards humans and non-humans is problematic because it removes humans from their pivotal role in society (Whittle & Spicer, 2008) thus challenging the richness of human agency. It also contradicts the tendency in sociological circles to explain local practices in terms of wider social organisation which explains coherence and order through concepts such as structure, cultural norms, class, and gender differences (Gad & Jensen, 2010). Latour's (1999) response to this problem is that one should always describe the network before coming to any decisions on its structure and how it works. With this in mind, I use ANT as a tool to examine interplays of actors, and the ways in which they are influential (or not)

through their interactions and relations, without assuming that humans will play a more powerful role, i.e. without imposing a “pre-established grid” of analysis (Callon, 1986, p.201) As such, my research is aligned with a proposal by Callon and Latour (1992) of using symmetry as a means to develop a metalanguage to refer to humans and non-humans from an unbiased position, and to adopt it as an analytical stance.

The points so far also relate to the flat ontology assumed in ANT which emphasises the interconnectedness of local and global; society is seen as series of networks and network relations rather than structures of scale. For those arguing against ANT this may indicate that there is no acknowledgement of the regulating role that social structures play in shaping and giving consistency and continuity to relations developed among actors in particular contexts (Gad & Jensen, 2008). Latour (1993; 2005) however argues that the macro and microstructure of society should be analysed in the same way and the focus to be on the relations between networks at these different levels; what happens locally may be of equal significance as global happenings for those involved. While acknowledging the issues discussed, therefore, my study will involve examining the stories of teacher participants which may link to happenings at wider institutional level as well as at the more personal level of teachers’ daily work. My interest is to focus on the interplays of actors apparently influential in shaping these stories and as such they will be viewed in the same way.

This chapter has introduced concepts of ANT of relevance to my study which I will draw on later in my discussion of findings. I have also explained that teacher knowledge may be conceived in actor-networks and this can have implications for shaping teacher identities. In the next chapter, I will explain the methodological narrative framework of the study and explain how this is used in combination with ANT to examine the ways in which teacher identities have been shaped by interplays of social and material actors and their inter-relatedness with each other.

5.0 Methodology

5.1 Introduction

In previous chapters, I have established the context and focus of my study of teacher identity formation in relation to past experiences of teaching, present experiences of postgraduate study and imagined future identities. In the literature review, I discussed how teacher identities have been conceptualised from different theoretical perspectives and how narrative research has contributed to understandings of teacher identity formation. From this I explained my decision to use teacher narratives in the form of short stories (Barkhuizen, 2016) to identify the actors influential in shaping identities according to participant experiences, taking into consideration potential influences of human and non-human actors. This led me to position my research under the broad paradigm of posthumanism which defines the world as relational, consisting of inter-connected entities of both humans and non-humans.

In this chapter I focus on methodology, that is my use of teacher narratives and my rationale for selecting this approach. I will further explain why I decided to adopt a narrative methodological approach and justify my use of short stories as a form of narrative research. I then consider how my use of narrative complements ANT and facilitates an examination of social and material actors which are integral to the stories participants constructed about their experiences over time. This enables me to address my research questions which examine what and/or who has been influential on identities in past experiences and through postgraduate study, tracing links between these and future imagined identities. In the second part of the chapter I document how I used qualitative approaches to data collection. Qualitative approaches facilitate an investigation of personal experiences in relation to particular contexts (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020) and I discuss their appropriateness to my research on international teacher-students.

The chapter is organised as follows. To begin, I provide a rationale for my use of narrative in this study (5.2) and consider how it shapes the methodological approach adopted, and its usefulness to my study of teacher identity. Following

this, I discuss how I use ANT with a narrative methodology (5.3). As noted by Fenwick & Edwards (2010) while ANT has been used in various educational studies, it is often integrated with methodologies such as ethnography (e.g. Zhang & Heydon, 2010; Hamilton, 2009,2011; Aberton, 2012) but also forms of narrative research (e.g. Mulcahy, 2011; Vickers, Moore & Vickers, 2018.). I therefore explain how ANT and narrative research may complement each other. Following this, (section 5.4) I focus on researcher influence on research processes using Law's (2004a) concept of *method assemblage* to discuss this from a sociomaterialist perspective. Next (5.5), I describe and justify my choice of interviews and focus groups as data collection methods and strategies for recruiting participants. I then detail the procedures followed for the interview and focus group meetings and explain my use of mind-maps in gathering interview data. Next, I turn to data analysis (5.6) and describe the approaches I took and stages I followed. Finally, I complete the chapter with a section on ethics in which I further discuss researcher influences, reflexivity and considerations of consent, anonymity and confidentiality in view of my study.

5.2 Narrative research

Narrative research is a form of qualitative research that focuses on stories of life experiences (Ntinda, 2019) and is grounded in the premise that through stories, people can gain deeper understanding of themselves and of their lives (Ylijoki, 2001). Similarly, by listening to others' stories, researchers can gain insight into the ways in which people make sense of happenings linked to social and cultural contexts at particular times (Sharp, Bye & Cusick, 2019). Although the terms *narrative* and *story* often overlap, Smith and Monforte (2020, p.2) point out a useful distinction between them; narrative is a resource or scaffolding made available through cultural and social relations which help people to construct and tell stories. Narratives are therefore collections of stories linked to particular social contexts and resources. I adopted this understanding for my study as participants responded to interview themes (as prompts) and focus group questions with stories about different happenings linked to the contexts of their experiences.

As a methodological framework, narrative research is characterized by the three key aspects of temporality, sociality and place (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). In

terms of temporality, narratives pay attention to the influence of past, present and future and link happenings over time (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) (which is how I have framed my research questions). Sociality requires attention to personal and social conditions and participants' emotions and responses to these, while place refers to the physical and geographic location(s) of events (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). It is through this inter-weaving of time, place and individual emotions and experiences that narratives become useful in studies of identity (Reissman, 1993) and therefore conducive to my focus on teacher identities, and the actors that have influenced them. In accordance with Reissman, (1993), Clandinin and Huber (2005) describe how stories of past and present experiences shape teacher identities:

> "A teacher's identity is understood as a unique embodiment of his/her stories to live by, stories shaped by the landscapes past and present in which s/he lives and works" (p. 44).

Therefore, stories of teachers' experiences create a picture of teaching lives, as well as a focus on particular experiences and associated actors.

In my study, I used interviews and focus groups to collect narrative data. Interviews have been widely used in narrative research (Ntinda, 2019; Sharp et al., 2019), providing opportunity for individuals to construct stories of events usually in response to interviewer prompts. There is therefore negotiation and collaboration between researcher and participant in the construction of the stories told (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). On the other hand, while focus groups have been less used in narrative research, Freidus (2002) suggests that they provide opportunity for story sharing among participants and a more "deeply layered" understanding of a particular phenomenon for the researcher (p. 160). The story of one participant might therefore trigger another to recount a related happening which might not have come to the fore. Furthermore, Freidus (2002) notes that although the stories teachers shared in her study did not necessarily form concrete conclusions, they contributed to the exploration of issues raised and opened up further avenues of discussion. In addition, combining interview and focus groups adds rigour to data collection; what is said can be considered through different storied accounts, particularly if similar topics were discussed

(Freidus, 2002). Therefore, focus groups may provide further detail of influences shaping identities.

While it is not usually possible to include every detail of the stories constructed through interviews and focus groups in a research report, extracts can be shown which Clandinin, Dowey & Huber (2009) refer to as *story fragments*. These fragments (told as direct quotes) ensure that participant voices are present and contribute to authenticity of findings, as well as illustrating points (Sharp et al., 2019). As such, *story fragments* have been integrated into the findings of this study as appropriate and feasible.

As discussed by Reissman (2008), there are various approaches to narrative analysis (e.g. some focus more on language use or how a story is told). I am mainly interested in the *who, what* and *how and why* of participant stories of their experiences, and context they are linked to. In my study, I therefore focus on the content and potential interpretations of the *short stories* told in interviews and focus groups with regard to the research questions. I further explain my approach to data collection and analysis with attention to narrative research in sections 5.4-5.5, but now briefly discuss what a sociomaterialist lens brings to qualitative and narrative studies in particular, and show how narrative and ANT may work in complementary ways.

5.3 Narrative research with a sociomaterialist lens.

In terms of educational research, qualitative approaches enable a focus on how individuals become connected in “a complex maze of social interactions”, (Waller, 1932, cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 2010, p.23). However, from a sociomaterial perspective such a maze involves the interactions of participants with other humans and material objects. In my study, this indicates the equal potential of material objects to become influential actors in teacher identity formation. Sociomaterial approaches (including ANT) thus provide resources to investigate patterns in the heterogenous relations that produce educational activities (Fenwick et al., 2011, p.2). As Fenwick et al., (2011) highlight, they promote methods which focus on interactions, conflicts, negotiations and compromises and the students, teachers, spaces, learning activities and knowledge texts linked

to these (p.2). Integrating ANT into the conceptual framework of my study therefore facilitates a focus on how human and non-human actors have influenced participants' teacher identities in past teaching experiences and through postgraduate study in the UK.

There has been increasing attention paid to the potential links between materialist (and sociomaterialist) approaches to research and use of narrative analysis (Loots, Coppens & Sermijn, 2020). This could be interpreted as a response to concerns that the socio-constructionist foundation of narrative research places focus on human meaning making and social actors, while neglecting the potential roles of *non-human* as well as human actors in the stories constructed and told in research studies (see Smith & Montforte, 2020). Bringing a sociomaterialist lens into narrative research, therefore, does not assume humans to be the subjects who act and non-human material objects to be those which are acted upon. Instead there is a focus on heterogeneity and the equal potential of all to be influential actors (Smith & Monteforte, 2020). ANT is therefore useful in focusing on examining the relations between these different actors and pays attention to the heterogeneity of both humans and non-humans woven into narratives of happenings (Ingram, Ingram & Lejano, 2015). Therefore, the stories participants told about their experiences were analysed with attention to heterogeneity and the ways in which both humans and non-humans could be seen as influential.

Significantly, actors have equal potential to influence or disrupt flows of events and in directing their outcomes, or what happens in a story. ANT is therefore also useful in exploring power relations implied in narrated events, and in showing how these are formed at both macro and micro levels of the contexts of stories told (Vickers et al. 2018). In addition, while participants in my study may tell stories about situations which appear similar, there may be differences in how events unfolded, the actors involved, and the effects produced through the ways in which these interacted together. This reflects the multiplicity in how teachers perform their practices; they are not simply exhibiting different perspectives on teaching, but are frequently inhabiting different teaching worlds (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.158). These different enactments are shaped by beliefs, societal expectations and institutional policies, hence, as argued by Law (2004a,

p.13), there may be political reasons why a particular reality is enacted over others. Thus, although the stories gathered from my participants have been grouped during analysis, each is made distinct by the context it is set in and the interplay of actors involved.

5.3.1 Researcher influences and decisions

While researchers may not play a character role in participant stories, they can still be influential on the way stories are constructed and told. Traditional approaches to research assume what Snaza and Weaver (2015) refer to as a "subject-object relationship in the world" (p.8), in which the subject (researcher) enters the world of those studied (object) to interpret meaning. This suggests that "true knowledge exists apart from and can be understood separate from a researcher's values and beliefs" (Ravenik & Rudman, 2013, p.439). However, Law (2004a) argues for a rethinking of empirical research methods, which traditionally set apart the realities the researcher is part of against those which are linked to the objects of study. He uses the term *method assemblage* to address the complex, dynamic relations between these realities.

The method assemblage incorporates theory, data collection and analysis techniques and together with the researcher and researched, these construct a particular version of reality, defined both by what is included and what is left out (Michael, 2017, p.133). In effect, the researcher invites and *enrols* participants into a research assemblage and, as Connelly (2007) argues, decides which aspects of participant narratives to tell as findings and how to do this. Law (2004a, p.42) thus emphasises that research assemblages encompass not only what is present in final inscriptions, but that which is sidelined or absent. Indeed, researchers make numerous decisions, guided by their research questions, choosing what to include and exclude, applying methods designed to smooth complications in a quest for clarity (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.144). Therefore, 'othering', as Law (2004a) phrases it, is unavoidable in research; certain elements become included, and others removed. Research texts are also shaped into particular formats and this contributes to these decisions. I acknowledge this in my study; from the wealth of data the study produced, I have made decisions to select data which best aligns with my research questions, and the conceptual

framework of my study, as well as having to make decisions about what could be included within the scope of a thesis. In recognition of these choices, I justify the rationale behind my decisions in section 5.4.4.

I now continue with data collection and analysis processes and explain the stages and procedures I used and show how these inter-link with my methodological use of narrative and the theoretical concepts of ANT.

5.4 Data Collection

In this section, I first explain my use of interviews and focus groups to collect narrative data. Then, I describe the processes used to recruit participants and the procedures I developed and applied for organising and conducting interview and focus group meetings.

5.4.1 Individual Interviews

While I have already explained that interviews are frequently used in narrative research (5.2), it is also the case that they have been used in some socio-materialist studies frequently alongside other tools (e.g. Zhang & Heydon, 2016; Trummons, 2010), but sometimes as the main method of data collection (Mulcahy, 2006). In my study, interviews provide opportunity for one-to-one discussion and individual telling of experiences. I recognise interviews as more than simply an exchange of information from participant to interviewer, and agree with Kuntz and Presnall (2012), who argue that an interview becomes a “wholly engaged encounter” (p.733) during which interviewer and participant interact and therefore influence the narrative data produced. Thus, while we may replicate an interview procedure, we cannot necessarily replicate an interview event.

Therefore, although interviews are sometimes portrayed as ordered or controlled events in which participant responses are managed by the researcher the actual flow of interviews may be more unwieldy as it may be disrupted by unpredicted actions and responses (Honan, 2014). Thus, interviews, do not produce meanings as “stable social facts” (Briggs, 2003, p.247); instead the unique interactions of each interview event create different directions and affects

influenced by interviewer, interviewee and the experiences and histories they bring. Therefore, interviews may unfold in different, often unexpected directions, shaped by researcher and participant interactions, and the narrated experiences participants share. Both researcher and participants are both active and interactive in the interview process, and their relations are more complex than the neutral asymmetrical encounters sometimes described (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003). According to Holstein & Gubrium (2003) in being active, the researcher uses prompts to direct the topics in line with research aim but is also responsive to the directions participants take. In this way, and as understood in narrative research, different stories may be formed in response to similar prompts (Reissman, 2002), which guided my approach to interviewing.

While there are different approaches to gathering narrative data through interviewing, I use the concept of *personal narratives*, described by Reissman (2013) as individual stories, in response to single questions (or in my study *themes)*, which "recapitulate events that a participant witnessed or experienced" (p.172). These align with the *short stories* in Barkhuizen's (2016) work discussed in the literature review. From these stories, I hope to gain insight into the social and material actors linked to participant experiences. This involves actor-networks that can be inferred from the narratives constructed and told (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.151), and takes into account historical, institutional and contextual influences and the meanings they add to the stories told in the interview (Ntinda, 2019). Participant narratives are therefore highly individual, linked to different contexts, people and things, but in my analysis I will look for common threads which may inter-connect their stories or equally features which may emphasise particular points of interest.

Another point of significance to my study is raised by Reissman (2013) who illustrates how interviews may become more participant-centred when narratives are told, as participants direct the interview through the nature of the stories and the points and questions these produce. Therefore, stories of experiences are often lengthy and enable participants to organise meaning as they feel best and exemplify the points they wish to make (Reissman, 2013). In this way, *narrative interviewing* offers longer turns for the participant and less intervention by the interviewer creating less of a question-response pattern and more equal sharing

of power over the direction of the interview (Reissman, 2008). However, it is also noted that participants choices may be influenced by their desire to help the researcher (Rossenblatt, 2003), and therefore could also direct the discussion. These considerations influenced how I organised interviews for my study, which I will explain in section 5.4.4.

Having discussed my use of interviews, I now turn to focus groups which were used as opportunities for group interaction and discussion.

5.4.2 Focus groups

Focus groups are useful tools to explore different views on a particular issue (Petty, Thompson & Stew, 2012, p.380) and are defined as a technique of collecting data through group interaction on a given topic (Morgan, 1998). Morgan applies this definition as being 'inclusive' to a whole range of variations of group discussion, which can be formal or less formal in nature, and adopted to particular people and situations. Focus groups differ from other types of interviews because, as Gibbs (2012, p.186) points out, they aim to be 'interactive' rather than 'didactic', with the researcher providing context for and facilitating rather than directing discussion (Grossman-Dean, 1998) as was the intention in my study. It is through this interactivity that spontaneous and dynamic discussion can be produced which encourages the expression of opinion and belief on topics that connect the participants in some way (Gibbs, 1997; Williams & Katz, 2001). Thus, one person's contribution may trigger ideas from another, and the focus group can become a stimulating environment in which to freely express opinions (Lichtman, 2010, p.154). In a sociomaterial study of teacher learning, Mulcahy (2012) uses focus groups (which she calls "teacher panel meetings") to explore perceptions of teaching practices. The resulting discussions bring an "assembling of knowledge" formed through shared experiences, ideas and feelings about teaching practices (p.128). Mulcahy refers to these as "learning assemblages", each of which produces different discussions and knowledge and thus additional insights to her study. In view of this, as discussed earlier, focus groups may add further insights to narrative research through sharing of personal stories in groups (Freidus, 2002). I used focus groups to facilitate this sharing of stories with the aim of deepening understandings of how different actor-networks have been

influential on participants' identity formation, adding to data gathered in interviews.

The points made so far indicate that the type of information participants share could differ in a group versus a one-to-one situation and therefore interviews and focus groups often complement each other. For instance, while an interview explores individual reflections and experiences, a focus group may encourage otherwise reticent individuals to contribute either because they hear their own views being reflected in those of others, or because they feel compelled to respond to peers (Morgan, 1998). Although Freeman (2012) cautions that participants who are unfamiliar to each other may not openly share views, it is also likely that people facing similar concerns engage each other in discussion. However, there are certain factors to consider which could influence what emerges from these discussions.

The interactive nature of focus groups opens up space to agree or disagree, without necessarily reaching consensus, and to change opinions as a discussion evolves (Kidd & Parshall, 2000). Experiences may be re-considered in view of those of peers, especially those with whom they share a "common frame of reference" (Kidd & Parshall, 2000, p.294). As such, new understandings emerge or existing ones are extended through these relations (Mulcahy, 2012), therefore by relating oneself to others' experiences, links may be formed or re-formed depending on the flow of the discussion. Relations in a group may shift, and participants may also modify their opinions if they feel obliged to support each other or are concerned about the politics under-pinning certain questions. Additionally, how teacher participants become positioned within the group may be influenced by their professional status (Freeman, 2012). The attributes of others influence what individuals say (or refrain from saying), and thus what is actually shared may be shaped by the interactions of a particular group. For example, more highly-qualified teachers may dominate, or individuals may position themselves according to their perceived proficiency in English. Therefore, when conducting focus groups, I observed and noted participation and interaction and reflected upon the dynamics of the group.

Overall, the use of focus group discussions alongside individual interviews in my study provides the opportunity for participants to develop, reaffirm or reconstruct their views through sharing stories of their experiences with peers. Participation may further influence participants' views and interpretations and contribute to shaping identities. However, being involved in group discussions can have varied impacts as individuals interact with other participants, the knowledge and experiences they bring, and with the focus group environment (Friedus, 2002). As the researcher, I acknowledge the unpredictability of both interviews and focus groups, and in view of this, am alert to how relations formed or resisted during the data gathering processes of my study may be influential on the narrative data produced, and recorded observations of these dynamics in my notes.

5.4.3 The recruitment process for interviews and focus groups

Having discussed my data collection methods, I now explain the recruitment processes. To begin, potential participants were recruited in two British universities referred to as University A and University B (my workplace). Email was the most effective way of initially making contact and also allowed time for individuals to consider whether they could commit to participating. In order to contact potential participants in University A, I requested help from the School office, who forwarded my mail to MA, PhD and EdD TESOL students. I sent a similar mail to students in University B, targeting those on MA or PhD courses in TESOL as well as visiting scholars from partner institutions in China. I then established personal correspondence with those who expressed interest.

The email (see Appendix I) contained brief details of the study and I provided more detailed information sheet for the participants (Appendix II) attached to my mail. These were written in English because the target group of teachers was expected to have a good level of proficiency (given that they need IELTS scores of at least 6.5 to enter their courses) and, having been in a British university for some time, they were familiar with correspondence in English. The only criteria I stipulated was that participants needed to have some experience of teaching English and to be based in the UK studying on an MA or doctoral programme.

The information sheet explained the involvement of both interviews and focus groups, and their associated procedures. Drafts of both my email and information sheet were read for clarity by colleagues, and adapted accordingly. Confidentiality and anonymity were also highlighted in the information provided. I had 20 respondents initially, which became 15 confirmed participants across the two sites (seven in University A; eight in University B). One of these from University B was a visiting scholar who was auditing MA sessions but not actually a student. Although she participated in the study, I later decided only to use data from those who were actually postgraduate students. A summary of the final fourteen participants' profiles, (using pseudonyms), with details of their experience can be found in Chapter 6 and Appendix V.

I relied on email to arrange meetings in University A, but arranged an information meeting with MA participants in University B to discuss details of the study, and individual meetings with the two PhD students whom I had not met before. I then used email correspondence to confirm dates, places and times of interviews and later focus groups. As well as emailing documents, (information sheet, consent form, interview themes, focus group questions) I gave participants hard copies in advance of each meeting (by post to participants in University A), which, as also suggested by Wheeldon and Arhlberg (2019), provided time to reflect and think about the prompts beforehand.

For those participants in University A, I organised interviews and focus groups around three visits to the site (each over two days) and negotiated times for interviews on one day and focus groups on the next day. The third visit was planned in case of any missed appointments or follow up needed. There was therefore less flexibility possible in arrangements with participants from University A due to its distance from where I lived. Arrangements were more straightforward in University B, and I conducted interviews and focus groups over a period of about twelve weeks.

5.4.4 Interview Procedure

I conducted interviews first to provide an opportunity for participants to gain confidence expressing their views one-to-one before entering a group situation.

This was especially important as there was a range of ages and experience among participants, and mixed familiarity with research processes.

The interview was based around a set of interview themes which I sent to participants a week before we met. The interview themes were chosen for their potential links to teacher identity and corresponded with areas frequently mentioned in literature on teacher identity (examples indicated below) and are also linked to Barkhuizen's (2017) composite conceptualization of identity explained in the literature review. In other words, these were themes which were likely to resonate with participants' experiences and which linked back to the aims of the study.

The themes are:

- **Encouragement**

  Language teacher identities may become shaped by various factors that motivate and encourage them, e.g. desire to meet needs of their learners (e.g. Waller et al, 2017), or through fellow teachers, mentors etc (e.g. Kayi-Aydar, 2015).

- **Beliefs**

  While not always explicitly expressed, beliefs are interwoven with the narratives of identity formation (Søreide, 2006); beliefs may be shaped by, for instance prior learning experiences (e.g. Trent & Gao, 2009; Xu, 2013), and the ways in which teachers enact or wish to enact particular approaches to teaching (e.g. Li & Di Costa, 2017; Kanno & Stuart, 2011). Beliefs may stimulate certain emotions which are also interwoven with identity formation (e.g. Barcelos, 2017; Zembylas, 2005).

- **Challenges**

  Barkhuizen (2017) argues that language teacher identities are both "struggle and harmony". As struggles they can be "contested and resisted by self and others" (p.4). Challenges may for instance come from imposed norms, reforms and expectations which may clash with personal desires (e.g. Xu, 2013; Tsui, 2007; Li & Xu, 2011) and beliefs as outlined above

- **Opportunities**

  Language teacher identities may be shaped by opportunities to take on particular roles or engage in forms of development (e.g. Bukor, 2015; Barkhuizen, 2016; Miller et. al. 2012). They may also arise from challenges in which identity negotiation takes place (e.g. Xu, 2013, Tsui, 2007).

- **Classroom practice**

  Language teacher identities are socially negotiated,and involve understandings on what is good and bad practice or what should/not happen in classrooms and schools (Barkhuizen, 2017, p.5). Identities may become shaped by teachers' desires to create particular learning experiences in response to learner needs (e.g. Li & Di Costa, 2018), and be linked to the resources they use (e.g. Hadfield, 2017).

- **Change**

  As highlighted by Varghese et al., (2005) instability and change are integral to teachers working lives and therefore influential on teacher identities. Identities are influenced by changes in institutional practices, e.g. curriculum reforms and teachers' responses to these (Clarke, 2009b; Liu & Xu, 2011; Tsui, 2007) and also by ideals of change through practice and experience (Block, 2015).

- **Professional aspirations**

  Language teachers' imagined selves guide their desires for future directions, and how they invest in themselves in order to gain access to different identities and possibilities (Norton-Pierce, 1995; Pavlenko, 2003).

Each theme was accompanied with a series of question prompts to stimulate (but not restrict) thinking and are detailed in Appendix VI.

As discussed earlier, both interviewer and participants are influential in the direction interviews follow (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003) and my use of themes aimed to encourage participants to map out their own path through the interview. In order to reflect on the themes, I asked participants to produce a mind-map (or

similar visual representation). Mind-maps enable an arrangement of words, concepts, pictures around a central theme (Buzan & Buzan, 1993) and are flexible as there is no set way of producing them. As a data-collection tool they have become more popular in social sciences research because they are participant-generated and therefore less likely to be influenced by the researcher (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2019). Mapping ideas in this way enables participants to produce a graphic representation of their experiences (Wheeldon, 2010) and can also help participants to think through ideas and relations among these and put them on paper without being over-concerned with use of language, which is especially important for my participants as L2 users of English.

Participants were asked to make a mind-map using the interview themes as prompts for reflection on their experiences. The mapping process was intended to stimulate deeper thinking around each theme, prior to the interview, and encourage participants to form connections between different points. As explained by Wheeldon and Ahlberg (2019), associated ideas radiate from a particular theme and the process of mapping these can encourage deeper thinking. Participants were also advised to add ideas to the mind-map over a few days rather than try to respond to all themes at the same time, to encourage ideas to evolve.

The mind-map additionally provided reference notes during the interview and each participant was invited to decide the order in which themes were discussed. Therefore, participants could choose and focus more on themes most relevant to them. The interviews therefore became more participant directed. An example of a participant mind-map is available in Appendix VIII, although each map was different; some participants used colours, and pictures, while others simply sketched out their main ideas in a basic format. However, introducing a mind-map into each interview seemed to stimulate reflection and provide prompts during discussions which participants could use as a framework to bring to the interview. This concurs with Wheeldon and Ahlberg (2019) who indicate how in a comparative study, mind-maps seemed to promote deeper reflection among those participants using them who discussed a wider range of concepts in their interviews. Having notes to look at might also alleviate any awkwardness through continual eye contact between researcher and participant, as shown by Meier

and Daniels (2013). I kept a copy of each mind-map which was later helpful in data analysis and interpretation.

I held interviews in pre-booked seminar rooms and anticipated an hour for each session. Each interview began with a welcome chat during which the participant was invited to ask any questions. I then explained the format of the interview, checking that the participant had his or her mind-map, a copy of the themes and was comfortable being recorded, as indicated by the consent form. At the beginning of the interview, the participant was invited to introduce themselves and give a brief overview of their teaching and learning background in order to contextualise the discussion. I then asked the participant to choose a theme to begin using the mind-map as reference. When the participant had finished talking about the first theme, they chose the next and the discussion moved on. I sometimes asked questions in response to the points raised, for instance, asking for further detail, or to encourage the participant to continue. The interviews were therefore not ordered by a script of questions but designed to encourage participants to voice their thoughts freely on themes most relevant to them and to move back and forth among these. Interviews ended when the participant felt that relevant themes had been fully explored, which was on average an hour.

5.4.5 Focus Group Procedure

There are various suggestions of the 'ideal' numbers of participants to have in focus groups; some suggest between 6-10 (e.g. Morgan, 1998; Petty et al., 2012) while others indicate that as few as 4 and as many as 12 can still result in a useful discussion (e.g. Kitzinger, 1994). My intention was to aim for 4-5 in each group, according to participant availability.

The time between the interviews and focus groups varied between the two sites because of the different logistics involved in organising meetings, but focus groups always took place after interviews. In University A, I arranged focus groups to follow the interviews on each visit. For instance, I interviewed four participants, on one day and planned the focus group on the following day. One female participant had requested to be in an all-female group and hence I had a male and a female group in University A. In University B, I offered different dates

and times for focus groups and negotiated these among the participants. Notably, some participants were keen to stay together with peers from their MA group, and this created a larger group of five. The groups (names are pseudonyms) were thus planned as:

Group 1 **University A**	**Group 2** **University A**	**Group 3** **University B**	**Group 4** **University B**
Hakim	Manar	Rena	Khahn
Yusuf	Aysha	Arkar	Beden
Sami	Lian	Maya	Chun
Juan		Muriel	
		Hua	

Table 1: Intended focus groups

Issues arising:

Although I had planned meetings in advance, there were some last-minute problems resulting in changes to groups. Two participants of group 2 sent apologies just before the meeting, and while I tried to reorganise this on my third visit to University A, these participants had other commitments. However, Group 1 had been a very engaged group and I arranged a follow up meeting on my third visit to University A with available participants to discuss questions we had not covered in depth. Finally, in University B, one participant forgot about the meeting, so I conducted the meeting with those who attended. Hence, the actual groups were:

Group 1	**Group 2**	**Group 3**	**Group 4**
Hakim	Hakim	Rena	Khahn
Yusuf	Juan	Arkar	Chun
Sami		Maya	
Juan		Muriel	
		Hua	

Table 2: Actual focus groups

Although having just two people in a ‘group’ was not ideal (and it could be argued that it was not a group but a paired interview), the participants participated actively in the discussion. However, it is noted that there were fewer individual perspectives brought to the discussion which shaped its dynamics, responses and directions.

The questions for the focus group meetings (see Appendix VII) related to the interview themes and used to expand on these. These questions were intended to initiate discussions and were used as a framework, providing a starting point for discussion paths. Like interviews, focus groups were held in pre-booked seminar rooms, and seating was arranged around a table in the room. I recorded each session with a voice recorder placed on the table between participants, after gaining permission from participants. Because not all participants knew each other, they gave brief introductions to share background information (studies, origin, teaching experience) before the actual discussion began. This contributed to a convivial atmosphere and provided context for later contributions to the discussion. I explained I would only prompt the discussion as needed and that individuals could choose whether to respond to questions or not. Hence, I only intervened to prompt and encourage contributions, for instance, to invite some participants to speak.

Each focus group meeting generated different dynamics and responses producing particular flows of discussion through the interactions among participants. Notably, group three required more prompting from me, possibly because the presence of Muriel, a PhD student, could have intimidated less experienced members in that group. Conversely, in group one all participants were doctoral students and although Juan had not met the other participants before this did not seem to affect the discussion, perhaps because of their wider experience and confidence. Such dynamics were noted during data collection and analysis.

The interview and focus groups together brought forth participant perceptions and experiences of the actors influencing different teaching contexts. Points raised in interviews were sometimes reiterated or expanded on in focus groups in different ways. Each meeting was a unique event, guided by the questions, and shaped

by the participants and the ways in which they related to each other, to me and to each other's stories.

5.5 Data Analysis

Having gathered data through interviews and focus group meetings, the next stage was to re-visit what was said in order to trace links, and note similarities, differences and ambivalences related to my research questions. To plan my data analysis, I considered narrative research and forms of analysis which have been commonly used, while keeping in mind also how data has been analysed in previous studies using ANT. Accordingly, in the following sections, I first look at data analysis from narrative research perspectives and explain how I decided to analyse the short stories of my participants, and then show how other studies drawing on ANT have approached data analysis and how these further informed the processes I developed. I then explain data analysis processes I followed and the different stages involved in these.

5.5.1 Data analysis in narrative research

There is no standard analytical procedure for data analysis in narrative research (Reissman, 2008), but amidst the varied procedures applied, Polkinghorne (1995) proposed two broad categories which provide a reference point: *paradigmatic and narrative cognitions*. Paradigmatic cognitions refer to the ways in which several stories are used to gather data, through which common themes or concepts are identified. As Polkinghorne (1995) indicates, "the researcher inspects the different stories to discover notions that appear across them" (p.11). This produces what Polkinghorne refers to as *an analysis of narratives*. Alternatively, a narrative cognition approach focuses more on a series of happenings which are configured into a story by the researcher; data may come from different sources (interviews, texts) which is integrated to form a coherent narrative account, for instance in a biography or case study (Polkinghorn, 1995). This would become a *narrative analysis*, combining stories to produce a coherent narrative (Polkinghorne, 1995). However, these two categories are not meant to be prescriptive (and sometimes used interchangeably in literature) and, as Sharp et al. (2019) emphasise, there are numerous variations evident in narrative

research. Furthermore, they are not mutually exclusive and researchers often draw on elements of both in their studies (Sharp et al. 2019).

I used *short stories* (guided by Barkhuizen, 2016) from different participants produced through interview and focus group discussions, and looked for similarity and dissimilarity across these, therefore a broadly paradigmatic approach is appropriate. Using a paradigmatic approach entails configuring the different elements of a story to understand why a person acted as such and to look for links with other stories by the same or different participants. In accordance with Polkinghorn (1995), I am concerned with identifying both categories in which to group data and relations across these.

However, it has been cautioned that when using a paradigmatic approach, data might become separated from the point or story it belongs to (Sharp et al., 2019; Polkinghorn, 1995). To avoid this, it is important to keep view of the context in which a point was raised and the wider narrative in which it was produced, in view of the over-arching past, present, future themes of my study. Individual stories were therefore interpreted with close reference to wider perspectives of layered micro (e.g. classroom) and macro (e.g. institution, society) contexts they are linked to, which was facilitated by revisiting data in series of stages.

Rather than deriving themes or conceptualizing categories from theory or previous research before reading data (a deductive approach), I chose a mainly inductive approach to analysis and grouping data through reading and re-reading the data (Polkinghorn, 1995; Sharp et al. 2019). In this sense, I looked for narrative themes, defined as “a pattern that runs through a story or set of stories” (Smith & Montforte, 2020, p.4). As explained by Smith & Montforte (2020), the concept of narrative themes differs from that of *coding* data line by line, as often used in qualitative research; coding extracts data from transcripts and places it into categories, which are then broken down under further codes. This process may result in over-coding a narrative text, with danger of breaking up the stories and disconnecting points within them so that “the researcher is left with a set of codes, not a story” (Smith & Montforte, 2020, p.4). Instead, Smith and Montforte (2020) suggest *theming* data, to look for common threads and group related points but keeping each story linked to its context and how it was told. This

emphasises the significance of key elements of temporality, sociality and context described earlier (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006) and was important in my reading and grouping of different points. Smith and Monteforte (2020) also suggest combining different techniques of reading which may include highlighting and circling key sentences, but also involve annotating, summary writing and using diagrams. They advocate a continual process of re-reading and reflecting on other possible interpretations with regard to research questions. In effect, this means re-reading transcripts and each time noting if new interpretations form and change the initial grouping of related points. This is integrated into my approach to data analysis, as will be shown in section 5.5.3. Before I explain the data analysis processes used, however, I will briefly discuss two posthumanist studies which also informed my approach.

5.5.2 Influences of ANT on data analysis

In the previous part, I explained my decision not to apply traditional coding of data, to avoid potential breaking up of storied experiences. Another issue is highlighted by Pierre and Jackson (2014) who argue that by putting data under codes it becomes static (i.e. other possibilities are not considered). This conflicts with posthumanist understandings that data is an ongoing process of *becoming* (Leibowitz, 2019). In other words, rather than searching for what data represents in a conclusive manner, data analysis involves exploring different possibilities of what data might *become*, accepting that data can be read from multiple perspectives (Martin & Kamberalis, 2013, p.670).

However, this does not mean that familiar qualitative methods are not used in sociomaterialist research, but that the research keeps in mind that data viewed through a sociomaterialist lens is relational, emerging (re-visiting data may bring forth a different view) and has other potential interpretations (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). In view of this, some ANT studies have incorporated familiar forms of qualitative data analysis, such as thematic analysis, but have applied these along with other tools. For instance, Zhang and Heydon (2016) used Law's (2004b) concept of "looking down at data" with a thematic analysis in their study of literacy curriculum. Looking down focuses on relations and their influences rather than searching for overviews or generalisations (i.e. looking up) (Fenwick & Edwards,

2010, p.152). Looking down emphasizes context and the actors linked to particular situations and does not assume these situations to be replicable. It requires an acceptance that whatever is being studied is an effect of multiple interactions and relations in a network (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.152). Zhang and Heydon (2016) used this concept to unravel responses to curriculum changes in a Chinese-Canadian school partnership. Their study involved both an analysis of policy texts and perceptions of these, and of the interactions of teachers and students with materials in the classroom. While they applied some degree of coding to their data, they also compared data from interviews, diaries and observations, to *look down* for connections amongst the global and local actors involved in curriculum change processes across two different contexts.

The concept of looking down focuses on relations between different entities, and mapping data provides a visual resource to show different relations. This is illustrated in a case-study of a novice primary teacher by MacKay et al. (2014), which shows how the participant developed her teaching practices through critical reflection. Although, the researchers used Deleuze and Guattari's concept of assemblage rather than ANT, the study similarly focuses on identity formation through relations and experiences. They used thematic analysis to code data, but data linked to the themes generated was plotted into concept maps which helped the researchers to identify relations across data and indicated how some points could be grouped in multiple categories (Mackay et al., 2014).

Mapping as illustrated by Mackay et al., (2014) inspired my use of mind-maps for interview data analysis. Mind-maps can be used alongside reading transcriptions to create diagrams of what is discussed (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2019), which can be added to at any time. They facilitate flexibility in drawing relations among elements and groupings and provide a visual perspective of data which may open up perspectives beyond pre-formed assumptions (Burgess-Allen & Owen-Smith, 2010). Mapping data can therefore work in a complementary way with transcribing by providing a visual resource to identify issues, concepts and ideas from data (Tattersall, Watts & Vernon, 2007) and the actors linked to these.

From these two studies, the concept of looking down and mapping data were useful in shaping my data analysis. I further explain how I created maps of

interview data as part of my analysis in the next section.

5.5.3 Data analysis processes

The data analysis process brought together data from the fourteen interviews and four focus group discussions described earlier. This was guided by the narrative methodological framework of gathering data through participants' *short* stories, and the ANT lens that focused upon the various actors, interactions and relations which were potentially influential on identity formation. I now explain the analysis procedure for the different data sets.

5.5.3.1 Transcribing and annotating

I first transcribed data 'verbatim' for both interviews and focus groups using tools in NVivo. My aim of analysis was to read and understand the experiences participants talked about and therefore my main focus was on narrative meaning conveyed semantically rather than features of discourse (as with conversation analysis or similar techniques). While there is no fixed format of transcription for narrative studies, the process always involves a series of choices (Davidson, 2009). Accordingly, with regard to narrative transcription, Pavlenko (2007) cautions against "addition and omission". By this she refers to the addition of punctuation which turns a spoken text into a written text, and the omission of natural pauses, fillers and repetition which are part of most authentic speech. I included these in my transcriptions (indicated by ellipsis or a filler such as *errm*) and also added expression of emotion such as laughter were appropriate (see Appendix IX). In accordance with Smith & Montforte, (2020, p.3), I considered transcribing as a "constructive" process which not only familiarized myself with the participants' stories, but also began to stimulate thoughts on potential groupings.

When a transcript was complete, I printed it out and re-listened, handwriting amendments to the script. I then went back into NVivo and amended the e-transcripts, re-listening to the recording as I did so. While this was a lengthy process, it both enabled me to correct points I had mis-heard, and helped me become more familiar with the data. This is in line with Lapadat & Lindsay (1999)

who emphasise the importance of constructing a transcript by listening and re-listening, viewing and re-viewing (p.82). Transcribing is thus an interpretative process (Mischler, 1991; Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999) and also an evolving one as interpretations may shift with each reading of data. The transcribing process also helped me to become familiar with the data and to construct a picture of each participant in terms of their background, teaching and study experiences.

Once data had been transcribed, I re-read the transcripts as printed documents, and listened to the recordings at the same time, pausing to add more annotations (by hand and later replicating in NVivo). My annotations included additional notes about participant emotions, when applicable, and also indicated parts where what could be significant experiences or actors were discussed (see Appendix X). The next step was slightly different for interview and focus group data so I address these in turn.

5.5.3.2 Interview data

Mind-maps were used in two ways to analyse interview data. As explained earlier each participant produced a mind-map (or similar visual) of their responses to the interview themes. This was a tool to encourage participants to think about past and current situations and link these to future aspirations. The maps they produced also illustrated some of the social and material actors linked to their experiences and were an additional resource to see how these were integrated into some of their stories. With participants' permission, I kept a copy of each mind map, and referred to this during the transcription and analysis processes linking points in a map to what was said. An (anonymised) example of a participant mind-map is available in Appendix VIII

Following transcription, I also produced analytical maps (Appendix XII), mapping participant responses to interview themes (and with reference to their mind-maps) on A3 sheets of paper. This initial stage therefore used the interview themes to show the experiences participants talked about in relation to these (from which data was later grouped). The maps I produced included reference to the people that appeared influential, and material objects such as texts,

technologies, pedagogical tools. I added notes of explanation as appropriate. I drew lines to indicate links among interview themes, for instance if a story was connected to different themes. Each interview, therefore, had a visual map which showed key points made around the story the participant expressed and the potential actors involved. The maps were thus a tool which could be read and referred back and added to at any point of the analysis. The physical process of drawing out maps also offered another way of interacting with and seeing data. This process resulted in fourteen interview mind-maps being produced.

Following the organizing of interview data into mind-maps, I created a written summary for each interview and transcript using the memo tool in NVivo (see Beekhuyzen, Nielsen & von Hellens, 2010). The purpose of the memos was to expand on details noted in the mind-maps and to produce a written summary of each interview. The memos were organized around the over-arching themes of past experiences, present postgraduate study and imagined-futures of the study and were written in note form. There is an example of a memo in Appendix XI. These added detail to points noted on interview mind-maps, and recorded time references to points in the related interview transcript. I also noted links to focus group discussion as appropriate as well as observation about the participant (emotion, confidence etc.).

5.5.3.3 Focus group data

Focus group data added to points discussed in interviews and also brought additional perspectives to the data constructed through group participation. The data was first transcribed as for interviews. However, when I began creating mind-maps, I realised that due to the nature of group discussion this approach became complex because mapping each group's responses went onto multiple pages. I also wanted to link points across discussions to see how different participants had responded to the questions used as prompts. I therefore decided to follow a different process. I continued by re-reading the transcripts and made notes on each one in a memo format (as for interviews). For each group, this produced a summary of participant responses to questions discussed, and included time reference to the associated transcript and notes to highlight any links with interview data and notes of group dynamics. However, while this

process provided details of each focus group discussion, I needed to also compare responses to each question across groups and for this I used Padlet Boards.

Padlet is a software package that enables users to pin electronic 'sticky-notes' on a board and to write key points on these notes. The notes can be moved around thus facilitating a dynamic site for data analysis. I created a board for each question (see Appendix XIII) and added notes for participants who had shared views on that point with an abbreviation indicating the participant's initial and focus group (e.g. Hakim = HFG1). I also indicated the point in the discussion for reference back to the transcripts, and the context it was spoken in. The boards brought together data from different discussions and notes could be easily moved around or added to if another point was traced in re-reading transcripts. The boards were also useful in checking links between what was said in interviews and focus group discussions. I produced eight Padlet boards each with responses to a particular focus group question.

5.5.4 Further theming of data

The processes described so far involved re-reading of data and developed my familiarity with the participants' stories. I also kept notes of potential ways of grouping data, for instance, through expression of similar and diverging issues, or experiences. However, I also included other points of interest linked to individuals. In other words, as discussed by Braun & Clarke (2006), I reflected on whether data captured something that could be relevant in relation to the overall research questions.

The next step involved further grouping of data into past experiences, present postgraduate study in the UK and imagined futures. I then created analytical groupings of significant and related points as told in the interviews and focus groups through the stories constructed. I made notes of the participants involved, reference to the story (the context, people and/or materials talked about, what happened or what point was expressed) and the point of the interview/ focus group it was told and which interview theme or focus group question it was linked to. These notes were made by hand at first before being saved as more formal

notes in Word when I was satisfied, I had included all relevant data. Through this *theming* process (Smith & Monteforte, 2020) I formed further groupings of data and in the process looked for links between past, present and imagined future to trace identity formation, and interplays of various actors influential on shaping identities in participant stories.

My general approach of manually writing notes and drawing maps, combined with creating documents and annotations that could be stored in NVivo created a process which facilitated considerable re-visiting and re-reading of data. It is also in line with Smith and Montforte's (2020) suggestions of writing as a form of analysis: "As you jot down notes, write memos, edit your report, you discover ideas, what counts and how stories hang together" (p.4). The various stages of my analysis I have described increased my familiarity with the narrated experiences of each participant and the different maps and Padlet documents provided a visual reminder that kept data at the surface, while reference to annotated transcripts, memos and notes provided detail and links on particular points. I have summarised the stages of data analysis presented as an overview in Appendix XIV.

It became apparent that given the wealth of data, I would need to choose what to include in my reporting of findings. The data on past learning and teaching experiences was especially extensive and relevant as participants related their experiences to the interview themes and focus groups questions. However, I decided to focus on points linked to participants' teaching experiences before coming to the UK for postgraduate study. For all participants, these experiences were more closely linked in terms of time to their study experiences and responses to aspects of postgraduate study. This decision to focus on this particular aspect of past experiences also enabled a balance across the themes of past, present and future which frame my research questions.

I have explained the stages of data analysis that I followed in order to examine and group data in line with my research questions, and with my methodological use of narrative and theoretical basis of ANT. However, I acknowledge that as with any data analysis, my approach produced particular insights among other possibilities (Fenwick and Edwards, 2010). Moreover, recognizing that I am part

of the research process, brings certain ethical questions for consideration. Therefore, I will now discuss considerations of ethics which are central to this study and how I have responded to these.

5.6 Ethics

5.6.1 Introduction

As emphasised by Taylor (2016) “posthumanist research practices offer a new ethics of engagement for education” by involving material objects as well as humans in questions regarding what and who is important (p.5). While there is still a requirement of *procedural ethics* to satisfy the demands of ethics committees (see Appendix IV for ethics approval) *ethics-in-practice*, the issues and unpredictable behaviours arising during research activities (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) demand attention to how both human and non-human actors may affect consistent application of procedures in a research assemblage. The researcher is also integrated with the processes of doing research and is influential through interaction, decision-making, and self-other awareness. In view of this and the data collection techniques used, I focus on ethics linked to researcher positioning and influence, reflexivity, consent, anonymity and confidentiality, with attention to implications the sociomaterialist underpinnings of the study also brings.

5.6.2 Researcher Influence and Rapport

Research processes unfold as enactments in which researchers are involved, and as Barad (2007) suggests, “play a role in producing the very phenomena they set out to describe” (p.207). The researcher is, therefore, integral to, rather than detached from, data collection and analysis, and his or her interactions with others shape the findings presented. For example, the ways in which interviews are conducted, questions asked, and rapport is built varies among researchers (Rosenblatt, 2003) and this influences participants’ responses. Therefore, the entanglement of the researcher with research processes brings questions of their influence to the fore.

Much qualitative research involves building relations between researcher and researched, and to smooth this process researchers also build rapport with participants in order to create a relaxed environment conducive to discussions on sometimes sensitive, personal or political topics. Duncombe and Jessop (2002)

refer to rapport building as “doing rapport”, a process of creating more personalized relationships with participants (p.6). However, Duncombe and Jessop (2002) also point out the instrumental purpose of doing-rapport, the complicit intention to gather data through which rapport-building techniques are employed during interviews and group discussions. These techniques are influential on participants’ responses, and as Anyan (2013) suggests, their continued involvement.

Attention needs to be paid, therefore, to the rapport-building techniques used either intentionally or unintentionally during research processes (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002). Inter-twined with rapport-building is the researcher’s voice, body language, facial expressions, comfortable seating, refreshments, in other words whatever is employed to create a relaxed atmosphere (and maximise data gathering). Together these encourage participants to share information, sometimes information that they would otherwise keep to themselves (Kvale, 2006), and this divulgence brings other actors into discussion, revealing information linked to them. Hence, rapport-building is significant through its potential effects on the participants, and their interactions with research processes.

I therefore recorded how I used rapport-building throughout data collection and analysis processes. I kept notes of the nature of interactions of each meeting, the techniques used to create rapport, through greetings, chit-chat as well as attention to material influences, such as layout of chairs and offering of refreshment. These were transferred to the memos stored in NVivo as appropriate to serve as critical reminders of the possible effects of “doing-rapport” with each participant and focus group through my interactions with them. I now continue with the theme of critical awareness of these influences with a focus on reflexivity.

5.6.3 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a methodology to question researcher influence at different stages of the research process, and thus increase transparency in data analysis and representation (Pillow, 2003). This includes looking at how relations of power

operate in a particular situation and how these impact not only on people, but also on knowledge production and how particular forms of knowledge may become prioritised (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2016, p.3). Mann (2016) argues that reflexivity recognises mutual-shaping through reciprocity and bi-directionality in the relations of researcher and participants. In other words, a practice of recognising intersubjectivities, of how each individual may influence the other. Hence, reflexivity is a methodology to critically reflect on researcher-self at different stages of research and identify how pre-conceptions, contexts, and emotions may have influenced those stages (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003, p.418). However, Pillow (2003) argues for more rigorous self-awareness and suggests a "reflexivity of discomforts" to continually challenge and critique research processes and include in analyses "messy examples" of research instances which have been less successful (p.192-193). Moreover, Mauthner and Doucet (2003, p.425) argue that some influences will remain hidden or be revealed over time as research is revisited, and hence suggest that there are "degrees of reflexivity" because some influences are always easier to identify.

However, reflexivity is essentially an anthropocentric methodology because it involves the researcher stepping back from the research process and critically reflecting on and evaluating his or her involvements. Through this, research becomes objectified by the perspectives portrayed by the researcher which shape and control its analysis (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 15). This implies that being reflexive can still turn a research assemblage into an object represented by a particular human-centred view. This suggests that practices of reflexivity do not (traditionally) acknowledge materiality in data, nor recognize the participation of both human and material objects in research (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2016, p.7).

This problem is addressed by Latour (1988, cited in Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p. 536) through his relational perspective of reflection. In order to make visible and analyse the links between humans and material objects, Latour argues that reflection is not a separate individual action, but instead is enacted through a network, influenced by those encountered and interacted with. He refers to this as 'infra-reflection' and as discussed by Hultman and Taguchi (2010), reflection of an event or situation always involves inter-connecting with people and things

and is never an isolated process. Thinking (and thus reflection) is propelled by encounters and experiences with others, and happens “in-between heterogenous bodies and agents, rather than being localized in the mind of an individual agent” (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010 p.536). Therefore, the thought processes of the researcher are formed through interactions with others, for example in this study, with participants, the tools and techniques used during interviews and focus groups as well as the topics discussed in participant narratives.

This resonates with Law’s (2004a) concept of *method assemblage* discussed in section 5.3.1. Law (2004a) explains how the *method assemblage* addresses the nature of interactions between the realities of the researcher and those of the objects of study. It involves not just interactions between researcher and researched but also the empirical processes (and related tools) as well as theoretical concepts. Through these interactions a particular interpretation of reality is enacted among other possible depictions (Michael, 2017, p.134). Michael (2017) further explains how the researcher is entangled with research activity with his concept of *co-becoming* research event. In the *co-becoming* research event, both researcher and researched are mutually changed or affected through their interactions with the research processes; maybe through unexpected directions arising or shifts in thinking through involvement in a discussion. This contrasts with what Michael (2017) calls a *co-being* research event in which the researcher remains unaffected by their object of study (p.135). Research studies and the data produced are thus not static entities but in a continual process of becoming, which implies multiple (not one) potential interpretations of their realities.

This leads me to my self-awareness of my involvement in this study. Certainly, I should be aware of the choices I make when reading data in terms of decisions of what data to include to answer my research questions, but recognize that details excluded or as Law (2004a) terms it “othered” (p.85) or left out is still inter-linked with the research and data produced. The choices made shape not only the interpretations I form in a particular reading of data, but impact on further directions explored. Therefore, each research action, each interpretation, is an ethical matter which in turn affects how things are and how they are understood to be (Davies, 2014).

Furthermore, I recognise that the researcher is always positioned within the research assemblage being examined and that the processes through which research is enacted are both "maintained and disrupted" through the conversations and observations the researcher is involved in (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.62). As Bozalek and Zembylas suggest (2016), there thus needs to be an openness to difference, and a recognition that becoming involved in research may also be a destabilising experience for the researcher and bring unanticipated questions to the fore (Bozalek and Zembylas (2016). In other words, my thinking and understandings may become re-shaped through my participation in the research, through interactions with others in data collection and through processes of interpretation of data produced. With this in mind, I now turn to further ethical considerations; matters of consent, anonymity and confidentiality.

5.6.4 Matters of Consent

Embedded in procedural ethics is the requirement of consent to participate and accordingly, my participants were required to sign a consent form (see Appendix III) after being provided with information about the study. However, although such steps of good practice are designed to protect the institution, researcher and participants, the unpredictability of research processes suggests a certain ambiguity as to what 'informed consent' means. Certainly, consent relies on the information provided being clear and accessible to participants (Alldred & Gilles, 2002) and given that this study focuses on participants using English as another language, I paid particular attention to language clarity and asked international colleagues to read the documents I would give to participants before actually using them. From their observations, I made some adjustments to enhance clarity.

Furthermore, Miller and Bell (2002) argue that consent should not only be considered at the beginning of a research process, but revisited and re-negotiated at various stages of data collection and analysis. Thus, for instance, if extra interview meetings are requested, the participant needs to be told the purpose of these. They should also be reminded of their 'right to withdraw' and given time to think about their continued involvement. I therefore understand consent to be an ongoing negotiation between myself and the participants

appreciating that instances occurring during interviews or focus groups may affect their continued involvement. For instance, when one participant contacted me after her interview to seek reassurance of anonymity, I reminded her of the right to withdraw.

Finally, although information was given to the participants in written form and explained face-to-face in the first meetings, I acknowledge that each participant may have interacted with the information in various ways and formed different understandings. Hence, I recognise that participants formed individual interpretations of the information provided.

5.6.5 Matters of anonymity and confidentiality

Integral to consent, are assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality is the assurance that what is discussed or revealed will not be repeated without permission and confidentiality of data requires the separation of data from identifiable information and also secure storage and restricted access to that data (Wiles, Crow, Heath, & Charles, 2006). As a tool towards ensuring confidentiality, anonymity requires that the names of participants and other 'identifiable' information should be removed from final research reports (Vainio, 2012, p.687).

Removing names from qualitative data is the first step towards *maximising* anonymity, while accepting that complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed (Saunders, Kitzinger & Kitzinger, 2015). Hence, research participants are often referred to by labels (participant A, B etc.) or by pseudonyms, chosen by the researcher or by the participants. While there is some argument that both labeling participants and using pseudonyms takes away the voice of the individual (Vainio, 2012), the removal of names is required by ethics committees. Moreover, Vainio argues that anonymity may promote freedom of expression; individuals may feel more relaxed and willing to share opinions if their identity is protected. In accordance with University ethics procedures, I removed the participants' names from data transcriptions, and used pseudonyms instead, which as Saunders et al., (2015) suggest, help readers to follow participant narratives and prevent the report from becoming over-impersonal. I decided against asking participants to

choose their pseudonym because in previous research I found that participants had chosen a name of personal relevance (e.g. the name of a child) and this could expose them if read by personal contacts.

Places and organizations may also be anonymised, although this information is sometimes considered less sensitive (Nespor, 2000). However, some details of 'place' are useful in order to trace how various settings (universities, towns, countries, classrooms) influence research participants and the researcher. Indeed, Massey (1994, cited in Nespor, 2000, p.557) suggests that places "can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations" and thus influence others within those networks and have the potential to produce action. Therefore, I provide information of the contexts linked to this study, but do not specifically name institutions or cities in the main text.

Conducting research studies also involves a degree of "public visibility and engagement" (Nespor, 2000, p.547). There are therefore threats of "internal confidentiality" (Tolich, 2004) where anyone close to a particular situation is likely to recognise people and places. For instance, within the School in which I work, colleagues are aware of each other's research and meetings with participants may be visible, even if arranged in other buildings. Participants also talk and inadvertently share information about what they are doing, even if detail is lacking. Hence, while anonymity can help to avoid identifying what individuals say, it is not always easy to conceal those participating. Moreover, during focus group discussions, identities are exposed to others in the group and any commitment to maintaining confidentiality is spread among the group (Kamberalis & Dimitriadis, 2011) Therefore, even though participants are trusted not to reveal any information to identify others, it is difficult for the researcher to monitor this once the group is dispersed.

For these reasons, I decided to draw on 'Chatham House rules', devised to facilitate openness of discussion (see Appendix XV). I adapted these to be accessible to my participants through the following statement:

'As some of the discussions will be in groups, I ask you not to reveal the identities of participants in your group to others, or repeat in detail any shared information outside of the group.'

Participants were asked to indicate agreement to this statement by signing consent forms.

Finally, both confidentiality and anonymity may be challenged through the unpredictability of working with people and their interactions with evolving internet and media technologies (Saunders et al., 2015). Hence, it is necessary to be mindful that participants' may also compromise confidentiality through their actions outside of research meetings.

5.6.6 Recording and transcribing data

Issues with anonymity in recorded and transcribed data are more complicated when data is being shared around a research group (Saunders et al, 2015). However, as I was the only researcher in this study, no information was shared during data gathering and analysis and from the beginning I assigned pseudonyms to the participants, so that their names did not appear on any transcripts. Moreover, in order to further protect participants' identities, transcribing was done in a private space to ensure voices on the recording were not over-heard and potentially recognised (e.g. by colleagues). Voices were also erased from recording devices and recordings transferred immediately after each meeting to a separate storage device.

5.6.7 Summary

From this discussion, it is clear that ethics needs to be considered throughout a research study and ethical questions viewed with an openness to different perspectives. I was mindful of my participation and influence throughout data-gathering processes and also in the processes of reading, organizing and interpreting data. My system of analysis facilitated re-reading and re-listening to the interview and focus group discussions, and this helped me to read data with a critical openness to interpretation, accepting that other possibilities may arise

at different stages.

Finally, I emphasise that despite my efforts to provide clear information, there are always limitations to consent. I am also mindful that participants have not actively sought participation but are doing so because they have been asked (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) and therefore consent may always be at least partly influenced by feelings of obligation. Moreover, I agree with Saunders et al., (2015) that anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed, and its limitations need to be discussed with participants so that the implications of participation are clear. Hence, I aimed to listen to participant opinions about anonymity throughout the research process and sought to discuss and respond to concerns over confidentiality openly. With this in mind, I now continue with the findings of my study.

6.0 Findings and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present and discuss my interpretation of findings from the data collected through interviews and focus groups in response to my research questions:

- What (f)actors have played a part in shaping participants' professional identities as English teachers through their past teaching experiences?
- What (f)actors have shaped participants' current professional identities as English teachers engaged in postgraduate study in the UK?
- What kind of identities do participants imagine for their futures?
- In what ways (if any) has postgraduate study been influential in shaping participants' imagined future professional identities?

In order to show how teacher identities may become shaped and re-shaped over time, I used the participants' stories of teaching and study experiences told during interviews and focus group discussions. I analysed these as explained in chapter 5 and will now present my findings to show how particular social and material actors appear to have been significant in teacher identity formation. In line with the over-arching themes of past, present and future influences on identity formation, the findings are organised into three main sections: 1. *Past teacher becomings* and the *actors and actor-networks* influential in shaping identities through local teaching and development experiences; 2. *Present* experiences of postgraduate study in the UK; how *re-becoming* a student and theoretical and pedagogical knowledge became meaningful in relation to past experiences and desired identities and the actors and actor-networks interwoven with these; 3. *Imagined future* identities and how these may be inter-linked with postgraduate study as well as past experiences and associated actor-networks.

The findings are from data gathered from fourteen interview and three focus group discussions and analysed as explained in chapter 5. The tools used in analysis were:

- Fourteen Interview transcripts (and my annotations)
- Fourteen Participant-generated mind-maps (interview prompts)
- Researcher mind-maps created for each interview
- Memos created for each interview in NVivo
- Notes, handwritten and in Word to develop groupings of data
- Four focus group transcripts (and annotations)
- Eight Padlet documents (linked to each interview question)
- Memos for each focus group in NVivo
- Notes (as for interviews)

The analysis process aimed to facilitate re-visiting and re-reading data, referring back to transcripts, and as advised by Sharp et al. (2019) keeping data close to the story and context as told by a participant. Mapping, writing memos and notes, and annotating were intended to invoke a process of *theming* narrative data as described by Smith & Montforte (2020). This means searching for patterns or links among different stories and recording these with the story and context in mind. This approach of analysing narrative data also accommodates the sociomaterialist concepts of *looking down*, analysing detail and relations in data rather than generalizing (Law, 2004a). I now explain how each of the main sections of findings are organised and divided to provide an outline of the chapter.

In the first main section (6.2), I focus on participants' past experiences of teaching and development in local contexts. I examine how actor-networks of both social and material actors have been influential in shaping and re-shaping participant identities prior to postgraduate study in the UK. This provides insight into how participant perspectives of teaching English have been formed and illustrates some of the opportunities and challenges interwoven with their experiences. I go on to provide examples of local development activities described by some participants and specifically focus on workshops (on using games, whiteboards and visuals) which had been influential in re-shaping identities.

In the second section (6.3), I focus on themes emerging through discussions of postgraduate study in the UK. I show how *re-becoming* a student presented both challenges and opportunities. This includes how participants positioned themselves and felt positioned in view of their linguistic proficiency and experience, and how some participants have reflected upon their experiences to re-think their understandings of student participation. Also of significance, are the links different participants made with theoretical and pedagogical knowledge introduced through postgraduate study in view of their local teaching contexts and desired identities. I report on the importance of these in terms of re-shaping identities for the remainder of this section.

In the final section (6.4), I focus on the imagined professional-selves that participants formulated. I first look at desired identities, of becoming a teacher-researcher or teacher-educator, and of becoming a materials designer and exam writer. These were found to have links to past experiences and/or have become more accessible through postgraduate study.

Together, the three main sections indicate the significance of past, present and future, across certain participants' narratives and show how actors linked to these become, and might remain, influential in re-shaping identities over time. In my interpretation of findings, I draw on and link to the literature discussed in chapter 3 and theoretical concepts of ANT explained in chapter 4.

6.1.2 The Participants

The fourteen participants came from varied cultural backgrounds with a range of learning and teaching experiences. They were from Saudi Arabia, Oman, Indonesia, China, Myanmar, Algeria, Vietnam, Ecuador and Greece, and six were male, the rest female. The information shared by participants at the beginning of each interview (see 5.4.4) provided insight into their educational backgrounds, teaching context and number of years of teaching experience. This information is summarised in table 3, and in more detail in Appendix V. Although one participant (Chun) from China participated in an interview and focus group, I decided not to include data from these in the final report as she was a visiting scholar. Although she participated in MA modules she was between MA and PhD study.

Participant	Country of origin	Teaching experiences	Years of experience	Link to the UK
Hakim	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia (state schools ages 11 -16).	17	MA/Doctoral study
Juan	Ecuador	Ecuador – Universities mainly / young adults / Cambridge exam preparation.	15	MA/ Doctoral Study
Yusuf	Oman	State schools [all levels] and college students (16-18).	17	MA/ British Council Doctoral Study
Sami	Saudi Arabia	State schools (ages 7-11 for 3 years and now middle school ages 11-14).	11	Doctoral Study
Bulan	Indonesia	Lecturer in a polytechnic teaching English to Broadcasting students. Studied MA in Australia.	13	Doctoral study
Lian	China	Private school: TOEFL, mainly listening exam preparation. Spent 1 year in US on a teacher exchange.	2	MA
Manar	Saudi Arabia	Teacher in private schools, taught Arabic in the US (12 months). Later, taught university foundation and support classes.	18	MA/ Doctoral study
Aysha	Algeria	High school [11-16] in state school system.	2	Pre-Sessional / MA
***Chun**	China	Teaches university English foundation and support classes. Spent 1 year in the US teaching Chinese.	17	Visiting Scholar/ research
Hua	China	General English in high school (ages 15-18). Now works for an English language newspaper designing materials.	5	MA
Rena	Greece	Private language school, teaching General English to young learners and adults.	2	MA
Khahn	Vietnam	University TOEFL preparation classes (2 years), then 2 years in UK teaching English for academic purposes.	4	MA/ post as an EAP tutor
Maya	Myanmar	Teaching young learners in a private language school/ in- company teaching and private home tuition.	2	Pre-sessional / MA
Arkar	Myanmar	University English courses (foundation year and support), private language school classes for General English.	4	Pre-sessional / MA
Muriel	Saudi Arabia	University English foundation year classes with young adults.	4	MA / Doctoral study

Table 3: Background of Participants

6.1.3 How actor-network theory is used in the interpretation of findings

In this chapter I refer to both social and material actors, and the actor-networks they are linked with, which have impacted on participants' teaching and development and influenced their identities. ANT is drawn on in the discussion part of each main section to examine how various actors have triggered particular responses, emotions and perceptions illustrated through the stories of participants' experiences. I have provided details of the ANT terms and concepts drawn on in chapter 4 and in a glossary following the Appendices. ANT terms are *italicised* throughout the chapter.

In my reporting and analysis of findings, I show that different entities (e.g. coursebooks, syllabus texts, teaching resources) became active or *mobilised* in teaching practices to take on particular roles as *actors*. An ANT perspective suggests that when *actors* are *enrolled* and *mobilised* in a network, they can help to stabilise it through a process of *translation* which entails conforming with its norms. Conversely, they can destabilize it by not conforming and acting differently. This is illustrated through findings in section 6.2 which show how institutional actor-networks function to direct teachers towards adopting particular identities that conform with institutional expectations. Thus, I draw on concepts of *translation*, *enrolment* and *mobilisation* in relation to these findings. Another key concept used in section 6.2, linked to *mobilisation* is *interessement,* which refers to how social actors may be enticed into participating in an actor-network. *Interessement* is used in relation to games introduced to a participant through local workshops (6.2.6.2) and which had a significant impact on his teaching and thus identity. Similarly, another participant talked about workshops which had changed her use of whiteboards and visual resources in lessons and how this had influenced classroom dynamics. These findings exemplify how *mobilising* material resources in particular ways opened up different identity possibilities.

In section 6.3, I focus on postgraduate study experiences. Some participants linked aspects of these (e.g. theories, teaching methods and approaches) to their past teaching experiences, and therefore the concepts *mobilisation, enrolment* and *black-boxing* are used in my interpretations and discussion of findings. For instance, routines and practices that had previously been taken for granted (and

black-boxed) became more critically questioned by some participants through the knowledge and critical skills developed in postgraduate study, and therefore changed from *matters of fact* to *matters of concern.* In addition, some participants talked about the challenges presented by the expectations of academic study in the UK, for instance oral participation in seminars. These participants were reticent to speak in seminar discussions and the findings illustrate that they did not become fully *enrolled and mobilised* as active participants in seminar activities. In view of this, I use the concept of *purification* which refers to ways in which certain practices become valued over others (in this case oral participation in such seminars). Certain participants also shared experiences of their difficulties adapting to academic conventions and expectations of writing in the UK. I discuss how developing these skills, however, gave access to wider research networks and draw on the concept of *obligatory passage point* to explain this.

In section 6.4, I illustrate the imagined futures of participants and then present findings on how these may be linked to past teaching and present study experiences, and the actors which have been shown as significant in these.

The ANT concepts drawn on (and summarised in Appendix XVI) help to highlight the significant roles that social and material actors have played in the experiences of the participants and the stories they shared of particular happenings. They provide a lens which focuses on relations and how these are produced, re-produced, ordered and resisted, with emphasis on their heterogeneity (Michael, 2017, p.5) and therefore pay attention to the various interplays of human and non-human actors and the effects they may have on shaping identities.

6.1.4 Organisation of each section

The remainder of the chapter is organised as follows. To begin each main section (6.2-6.4) I outline the main points to be covered and the order in which they will be reported (as sub-sections). At the beginning of each of the sub-sections I name the participants whose data I will draw on. I then report the findings, including extracts from the data and the interview themes/ focus group questions they were related to. Each main section has a discussion part to relate points to

literature and analyse the interplays of social and material actors and how these may be conceptualised as actor-networks. There is an overview of the findings reported in Appendix XVI.

6.2 Teacher becomings: Influences from pasts.

In this section, I present findings of the social and material actors which appeared influential on participants' experiences and identities as teachers in universities and schools. As shown in the literature, teachers are in continual negotiation with sociocultural factors in their institutional contexts (Yuan & Lee, 2015; Liu & Xu, 2011) and identities are shaped by the social expectations of institutions and communities they work in, and well as their activities through classroom practices (De Costa & Norton, 2017). This section therefore reports on *who* and *what* appeared to be influential in the institutions participants' had taught in, exemplified by extracts from their storied experiences. It also shows how responses to others in daily happenings and practices may be imbued with emotions, as discussed by Zembylas (2003). These emotions are therefore understood to have become interwoven with the identities formed.

I have organised this main section as follows. In the first part (6.2.1), I look at the inter-related functions of supervisors, syllabus and coursebook texts integral to some participants' teaching. This is extended in 6.2.2 to show how certain actors interacted together to maintain standardisation and its effects on teacher identities. Next, (6.2.3) I report on the presence of exams in different institutional systems and the implications of this with regard to teacher identities. Then, (6.2.4) I show the influences of fellow teachers and the different ways in which these had impacted on some participants to emphasise desired and undesired identities. The last part, (6.2.5) focuses on local development opportunities. The discussion section (6.2.6) analyses the interplays of the actors discussed (and the actor-networks they are linked with) with regard to participant identity formation, and offers an interpretation of findings with reference to previous literature and by drawing on concepts of ANT.

6.2.1 Implementers and conduits: conforming identities

As participants talked about their previous teaching experiences, they provided insight into the ways their institutions functioned, highlighting the significance of the "meso level" of institutional organisation in shaping teacher identities enacted at a "micro-level" of classroom practice (De Costa & Norton, 2017). They thus provided insight into what Clarke (2009) refers to as 'authority sources' in their teaching contexts. These shape identities, in ways through which teachers are expected to "assimilate into pre-determined roles" (Zembylas, 2003, p.228). For instance, Maya, Hakim and Sami talked about their limited autonomy as teachers and how they were monitored and directed. Together, their stories indicated the prominence of the syllabus in their teaching and the functions of its associated coursebooks and teacher manuals. In addition, Hakim, Sami and Juan talked about the presence of supervisors and their ability to intervene in teachers' lessons. In this part, therefore, I report on these points discussed in relation to interview themes of *challenges, classroom practices* and *change* and focus group Q6.

To begin, Maya talked about *challenges* she had faced as a novice teacher in a primary school in Myanmar. She first described the procedures which ensured that teachers followed the syllabus:

"I had to take a class for the primary school students.. I have to make a report to give to the principal about what I teach in the class .. they have prescribed lessons you know[…]"
"Mostly in primary schools they have their prescribed text-books and lesson plan, so I have to follow them and finish the lesson that day….err it's quite strict and not very […] not very fun for the teacher." [MayaI13]

As an inexperienced teacher, Maya initially accepted the regulated teaching system, but explained that as she grew more aware of learner needs, she began to question it:

"It becomes much more and more about how to teach them and how to persuade them.. students are different one student don't like learning the book […] they need breaks [..] so individual differences are important and a teacher should know his or her students as individuals[..] but then the book is telling you what to do all the time." [MayaI13]

Thus, Maya wanted more flexibility over how she could relate to her students, and when asked about her thoughts about doing this, she talked about having '*fun*':

"*What did you realise?"* [I]
"*I learn how to make them [students] laugh not to be boring I want to do things that are fun" [MayaI13].*

However, she found the restrictions limited her *becoming* a *fun teacher* and instead directed her towards completing the course material and adhering to the given lesson plans, leaving little time for other activities. This was demoralising and eventually influenced her decision to switch to private tutoring.

While Sami and Hakim worked in a different context in Saudi Arabia, they expressed similar concerns about their syllabus and coursebooks, but also showed how supervisors were inter-linked with the functions of these. Sami, for instance, explained how he was continually aware of supervisor presence:

"*Well we have a book and exercise book and the supervisor follows you… asks 'what about your progress?'" [SamiI4].*

He also indicated how supervisors were above teachers in the school hierarchy:

"[..]we are implementers of the curriculum …er..[…]..everything comes from the top and the supervisors" (SamiI4)

Therefore, supervisors had the power to intervene in lessons which Sami illustrated with a story of how a supervisor had prevented him using supplementary materials:

"I remember once I was just getting students some extra paper and other exercises and the supervisor told me 'Stop it, just stick to the book and [err] exercise book…." [SamiI4].

Sami said that he brushed such intervention away ("*I say, OK, it doesn't matter"*), but over time he began to feel that teachers were marginalised by the system because they had no input into the syllabus and material they were teaching. Although he said he aspired to *changes* in how English was taught in schools, the top-down nature of the system made this difficult:

"[..] for example, somebody can go to America and study all the books in the world and he is a very expert teacher… if I go to Saudi Arabia.. I will be the implementer of the text-book and the exercise book" [SamiI4]

He returned to this point during a focus group discussion on the *negative aspects* of teaching experiences [Q6]:

"We have a text-book we have an exercise book ..we have guidelines we have to follow there is no release from that to be creative" [SamiFG1]

As well as being creative, Sami indicated that although he wanted to be less formal with students and personalise his teaching, he was still an i*mplementer*:

"I just go to class..give the meaning of some words students answer my questions and I give homework [….] there's no personal aspect of me" [SamiFG1]

Working in a similar context, Hakim's experiences had much in common with Sami; he especially talked about the challenging ways in which teaching texts were prescriptive. Notably, he referred to the concept of *conduit,* a term used by Freire (1970) to describe how knowledge is carried and transmitted to students.

"*You have your text book and you have your teachers' guide like a manual to use […..] these made me think of myself more of an instructor than an educator because I have to carry out ready-made material even the guide.. the manual tells you how to teach what to teach when to stop*"
And you aren't comfortable […..] [I]
Absolutely you're not a teacher actually you're just like Freire calls a conduit"
[Hakim I1]

Supervisors reinforced this by monitoring teachers to ensure they complied with syllabus and teacher's guide:

"if you don't do it [follow the syllabus] you're accountable by the Ministry […] they have their supervisors watching you and you are watched by them"
Really?[I]
"Yeah they came to my class to see my teaching errm are you going according to the plan? Are you behind the plan? Why are you behind the plan? If you are a bit fast, you shouldn't have done that you have to show them how you delivered this particular class like 'Did you do a roleplay or a gap-fill? if not please do it…. this class should be given by this teaching methodology [..] I call it the prescriptive route of ministry education" [HakimI1]

As such, through presence and position, supervisors ensured that teachers adhered to the syllabus, coursebook and teachers' manual. As Hakim points out, preferred methodologies were interwoven with these texts, and so teachers were monitored for not just *what* but *how* they taught.

While these participants worked in schools, Juan provided a further example of supervisor monitoring in a university context. In particular, he explained (when discussing *challenges)* how coordinators established their authority over teachers:

"One of the problems is the contradictions…institutional contradictions err coordinators politics and other internal contradictions.. let me give you an example…Typically coordinators would have their own policies how they see the way you should behave as a teacher and each institution has different one[..]"
"Why do you think […]?" [I]
"Ego first lack of democracy for teachers […] it's a top-down way of thinking..I'm the boss, you follow what I say[..]" [JuanI2]

Juan explained that when he had questioned their decisions he had been "*very close to losing my job*". Moreover, coordinator roles were competitive so individuals would use their power to assert their positions. Notably, Juan talked about how coordinators used teacher observation to monitor teaching, and as a way of affirming their presence over teachers. He illustrated this with a story of a surprise observation:

"One day she [coordinator] arrived without telling me and I arrived 5 minutes later to the lesson because the technology was not set up so I went to get help but she didn't listen and wrote a very mean document for the director" [JuanI2].

This '*mean document'* was applied as an evaluation tool and Juan did not have any input into the report. As such, rather than support him developmentally, as might be expected from someone in a supervisory role, coordinators seemed to be there to check and report on teachers' performance:

"Some factors limit our effectiveness as teachers wanting to develop like lack of help from coordinators.. so the coordinator will send somebody to check your lessons or check themselves and everything has to be negative" [JuanI2].

The ways in which coordinators performed their roles was in conflict with the identity Juan preferred to adopt, as a helper and guide:

" *[…] I became a teacher because I want to be with students to be helping them as much as I could and showing them how to learn" [JuanI2*]

These extracts so far have provided some insights into the ways in which social (supervisors) as well as material (syllabus and coursebook texts) actors have worked together to promote particular practices, making it difficult for participants to move beyond what these texts dictated to adopt desired identities.

Further effects are illustrated in the next part which shows how these texts were interwoven with the maintenance of institutional standardisation processes.

6.2.2 "I'm not a machine": impacts of standardisation

In this part I focus on experiences of Muriel, Manar and Khahn discussed in relation to themes of *challenges* and *classroom practices*. Muriel and Manar worked in universities in Saudi Arabia teaching on foundation English courses to prepare students for degree study. Their stories provided examples of pressure to adhere to the given syllabus and materials which depicted a standardized curriculum through which all teachers use the same texts and teaching approaches (Reeves, 2018). They talked about concerns over the administration of coursebooks by their institutions and the effects they felt these had on their *classroom practices*. Of particular concern to Manar was the lack of consultation with teachers in the choice of material:

Do they ask teachers what they would like? [I]
No…it's not based on teacher's opinion and judgement.. it's based on certain boards, committees, they meet and they decide" [ManarI7]

However, Manar pointed out that teachers were actually better-informed to make such decisions. We returned to the topic of coursebooks further into her interview talking about the *challenges* she had faced. Of particular concern to Manar were the time restrictions imposed on covering sections of the book:

".[..] every year you know we needed to teach like 6 weeks the whole book. In 6 weeks so it's like a lot of information in a very short time period and then you need to test the students on this whole book [..]"

“So you are under pressure?” [I]
“Yes, teacher and students…I thought if I were the student studying this book and this period of time I won’t be able to pass and even if I pass I would just pass, [..] I would not make any sense of English” [ManarI7]

This meant that all classes had to be at the same point of the book at a certain time whether or not students had understood the material. Covering allocated pages was prioritised over effective learning and this frustrated Manar as it limited how she could engage and support her students. The fact that the content was tested placed another layer of pressure on teachers’ focus on the book content.

Muriel was similarly frustrated by the syllabus and course material which she felt restricted her teacher personality. For instance, she had tried to engage her students with jokes, stories and also more topical discussions to become closer to her students’ interests, but this was discouraged:

“I like to joke you know.. tell stories [..] one of the students complained about me talking politics and with a very conservative society [..] I was warned by the supervisor…focus on your lesson”
“How did you feel?” [I]
“*I’m not a machine I’m a person as well.. I have to engage some of my personality in the classroom [..] but in the Institute they started to take privileges from the teachers [….] we’re gonna give you this book which is 300 pages and you have to finish them within 4 weeks and there’s no time for you to be creative*” [MurielI15]

Muriel felt pushed towards mechanical delivery of the syllabus instead of the creative identity she aspired to. She also expressed her empathy for her students and desire to make learning enjoyable and useful:

“I used to think I care about how you [her students] behave in the classroom participate how you try to work or learn or at least be funny have fun.. not just sit there” [MurielI15]

“[..] *so with the challenges I’m bound by the syllabus these are the things you can give.. you shouldn’t try to ponder […] whatever you want it’s the book you have to teach and it’s exam-based teaching.” [MurielI15]*

As will be shown later, these experiences led Muriel to become especially concerned with student motivation. In her view, the interplay of time pressure, and material which directed to the syllabus and its associated exams limited her autonomy to become a motivating and engaging teacher.

Muriel's and Manar's stories were both set in institutions with a large number of students and teachers. It is likely that the issues they described were linked to institutional attempts to standardise programmes which Khahn also talked about regarding the Vietnamese university he had worked in:

"I think the restrictions were made by the teaching tools, materials and curriculum because the university is a big one and they want standardisation […] they have strict rules so they [supervisors] gave us these books and you can't bring in any materials from outside…and I was thinking that's no way to teach I hate it as a teacher[…] I can't bring you any materials …I can't do anything outside the book [..] it's very boring for me […] again it's difficult to motivate students" [KhahnI12].

Khahn thus highlighted issues that may result from standardisation processes and which resonated with Muriel and Manar's experiences. He depicted the different actors, given coursebooks, syllabus texts, time, supervisors and exams working together towards maintaining standardisation (a state of stability) and how these acted in ways which could direct teachers to perform particular identities.

The extracts shown so far indicate how different actors, supervisors or coordinators, along with texts such as coursebooks, teachers' manuals and syllabus (with its associated methodology) may inter-connect and together further pressurise teachers into compliance with the expectations of institutions, and associated 'norms' of teaching and thus expressions of expected identities. What is also becoming apparent from participant narratives is how desires to enhance learning and engage students and develop identities such as *creative, fun, supportive* teachers could be in conflict with the expected identities constructed by institutional or ministry policies. Interwoven with these is the presence of exams, which has already been indicated by Muriel and Manar, and which will now be reported on in more depth.

6.2.3 The presence of exams

Exam results are often critical for students' progression and therefore students, parents and institutions expect forms of exam-oriented teaching which influences what teachers prioritise in lessons (Li & Baldauf, 2011). Accordingly, my

participants indicated how the presence of exams had in some way been influential on their teaching. They generally accepted the necessity of exams, but raised concerns over their dominance over teaching and learning. Indeed, as indicated in the previous section, exams or exam-oriented syllabi brought additional *challenges* in their teaching lives. Arkar, Sami, Hakim, Hua, Muriel, Khahn, Manar and Bulan talked about the presence of exams in their daily teaching. I include extracts from some of these beginning with Arkar talking about *challenges* and *classroom practices* in his interview and negative *teaching experiences* [Q6] in the focus group.

Arkar explained the stress of teaching classes of over fifty students in his university, especially as a novice teacher. In addition, teachers had to follow a strictly exam-oriented syllabus:

"It's difficult for the novice teacher to manage the class and the system is exam-centred [..] you have to teach them equally well so that they pass the exam" [ArkarI14]

"They [the institution] has set the book and their rules, you have do this […] its nothing about the students' language so it's only I think going for the exam to pass the exam […] I remember I feel dissatisfied when the students cannot speak the language when they study from kindergarten…." [ArkarI14]

From his own experience of learning, Arkar believed that being able to *use* English was important, but if exams dominated the syllabus, passing them became the goal of the students. Moreover, because speaking was not tested it was not seen as useful by students which made it difficult for teachers to include speaking activities. Instead, Arkar explained that exam-oriented teaching emphasised "*learning by heart*", which guided the methods used by teachers. Consequently, teachers were reluctant to diversify from these in fear of students failing:

"*If teachers teach differently students might not pass the exams*" [ArkarI14]
"*Teachers intentionally leave the listening and speaking skill because students need to pass the exam so they give attention to reading and writing and use mainly translation*" [ArkarFG3]

Therefore, the presence of exams seemed to promote forms of grammar-translation, which in turn directed teaching.

Like Arkar, Khahn found students were focused on passing an exam rather than learning how to use English practically. Because the syllabus did not emphasise speaking and the test did not include it, it was difficult to persuade students of its value:

"When I was training and in my teaching practices I realised that the system in Vietnam is difficult…err the first thing is the testing system and the curriculum.. those two go together..[…..] it's a difficult situation because obviously we can't test all four skills with student numbers there's no speaking […]…it's quite difficult to motivate students." [KhahnI12].

Moreover, teachers were not usually involved in writing exams and tests so had little influence on their focus. Muriel added that she did not always know when classroom tests were going to be given. These were short tests given throughout the term but still contributed to students' overall mark:

"We also had quizzes…err…tests and you don't know exactly which day…so the first time I remember in the break the supervisor came with papers and said right now you give this test and I was so worried in case I hadn't taught everything [MurielI15].

As a result, Muriel said she was continually aware that a test might be given unexpectedly, and this further led her back to following the syllabus and books.

In addition to the relations between exams and student learning and the impacts of exam-oriented teaching, Hua and Hakim added that *how* students performed in exams were also used as an indicator of effective teaching. Hua, for instance, talked about how teachers are evaluated in China:

"The challenges I've come across as a teacher is the exam-based system ..exams are the one and only criteria to judge a teacher, its whether your students score high in the exams, so the teaching method in China is grammar translation […] just do the practice and the mock test." [HuaI10]

This precedence of exams therefore conflicted with her inspirations to become more creative:

"Sometimes I had creative ideas for activities but [..] the president would say, 'What's your results? Are your students scoring high?' so we can't focus on really useful learning, just scores" [HuaI10]

Hua's story was echoed by Hakim when talking about *good students* [Q3] in his focus group discussion:

"..the difference between good and bad [students] is not created by the teacher himself, but is created by the system and you are judged actually by the results of the students" [HakimFG1]

This depicts how the presence of exams can further act to shape what teachers do and how this presence affects both teachers and students. Moreover, what is also becoming evident is how students and student motivation were woven into participant narratives and influential on their desired identities. In the extracts shown, some participants have indicated concern over student motivation, reflected in the preferred identities they talked about. To conclude this section, I now focus on fellow teachers' influences on identity formation.

6.2.4 Influences from fellow teachers

Ideally, as Farrell (2012) suggests, teachers should be given ongoing support in their work and while it seemed that some supervisors did not always provide this, fellow teachers were sometimes helpful in providing knowledge and guidance. Lian, Maya, Sami and Hakim especially talked about the significance of other teachers as sources of support and I illustrate this with examples from Lian, Maya and Hakim related to the theme of *encouragement*. Conversely, Bulan and Rena indicated how fellow teachers were not always role models, but could highlight less desirable identities through the practices they adhered to.

To begin with positive influences, Lian showed how she valued the guidance of fellow teachers while working in a private school. Due to the intensive nature of courses, teaching was especially challenging for her:

"*There were a lot of factors interrupting the progress because in the private schools time is very limited …but the students especially listening and speaking their levels are very low"* [LianI6]

Lian explained that while she taught listening, other teachers shared the class for other skills, and so their insight into individual student issues was especially helpful:

"I will talk with my colleagues about the students and their problems and we will discuss a student's performance in another class and discuss about solutions to help them[...]" [LianI6]

These discussions, while informal, provided guidance for Lian and enabled her to gather different perspectives from teachers who were familiar with the context and students.

As well as guides, fellow teachers could also be role models. Maya, for instance illustrated how other teachers had helped her when she began teaching in primary schools:

"My colleagues were good models and they give me advice on the lesson plan and books..[..] If I don't have good colleagues around me I can't work properly so they, the experienced colleagues are some part of motivation as well, and having a good environment encouraged me as a teacher" [MayaI13].

Maya said she felt more confident having colleagues who supported her and advised her on how to follow the given teaching materials. In a similar way, Hakim remembered feeling insecure when initially faced with a class. He was assigned a mentor, and told to observe and follow him:

"*I remember, the head said 'go in with one of the older teachers' […] I spent a month and a half, with him.." [HakimI1]*
Observing? [I]
"Yes he gave me direction on ..err.. how to manage and deliver the content […]"

While fellow teachers could play significant roles in supporting teachers, Bulan and Rena talked about peers who were the kind of teachers they did not wish to become. Rena worked in a language school in Greece and despite her limited experience critiqued how classes were delivered. She talked about these with regard to her developing *beliefs*:

"*I might have had some beliefs when I began my teaching career but I got these from my previous teacher in contrast to the head teacher in the school..err so this [previous] teacher used CLT like movies, games […]"*

"The head teacher [at her work] was not confident using English so sometimes I could sense she couldn't speak right and that demotivated me ..[..] I mean is it good for the students?...and she was a grammar freak like playing safe"
[RenaI11]
Rena did not want to become '*a grammar freak*', so aligned her preferred identity more with the former teacher. Bulan also talked about colleagues who seemed to resist more innovative approaches which had made her think about what she wanted to *change* in the university situation she worked in:

"*There was one teacher who was not that old, just like five years older than me who said "I teach the way my lecturer taught me that will work with our students". [BulanI5]*

Bulan felt angry about this as she believed that teachers should develop and adapt to changing student cohorts:

"that's an old method of teaching that's a traditional way and they are teaching like that for this generation….it didn't make sense.. it didn't work and they insist on doing it that way…they need to get out of the box and try new things"
[BulanI5]

These story extracts illustrate how fellow teachers as *poor models* can highlight undesired identities which Rena and Bulan wanted to avoid. Whether good or poor models, however, fellow teachers may be significant as social actors in identity formation. In the next part, I look at further influences on identity formation through local development initiatives.

6.2.5 Influences of local professional development activities

As in other professions, teachers are guided by validated and shared practices (Fenwick, Nerland & Jensen, 2012). For teachers of English, recognised practices are embedded into certified teacher education programmes, or introduced through developmental activities. All of the participants in my study had university degree qualifications, some with a teaching practicum (except Hakim, Sami, Rena). Nevertheless, there was evidence in participant stories that opportunities for continual development were valued when relevant.

Teachers develop their professional skills through a continual process of "investing" (Barkhuizen, 2016) for instance by engaging in local teacher

development activities. My participants provided examples of their experience of development activities particularly institutional or locally arranged workshops. Some of these were judged as 'tick-box' exercises (e.g. by Sami and Hakim) to suit institutional requirements rather than teacher needs which, as Hu (2005) argues, make little contribution to teacher development. However, other participants gave examples more useful activities and in the following section, I examine how workshops on using games and digital technologies as well as alternative use of whiteboards shaped Yusuf's and Manar's identities, which were discussed in relation to themes of *opportunity* and *classroom practice*.

6.2.5.1 Creating different forms of classroom interaction

Yusuf worked in schools in Oman and initially followed the teacher-centred approach of his former teachers and colleagues. However, he became aware that although his students complied in his lessons, they were not enthused by English:

"*When I was teaching students were obedient but there was no fun." [YusufI3].*

He enrolled on a series of workshops about using language learning games, organised by British Council which changed his perceptions of teaching:

'They [British Council] *focus on games and language it was something totally different as.. as I told you I am from the old school therefore games rhymes such things we didn't have in the old curriculum.' [YusufI3]*

These workshops were inspiring for Yusuf who had not considered how games provided alternative teaching possibilities:

"*How did this change your teaching?"* [I]
"[..] What I found was the interaction with the content changed they were telling me 'teacher teach us the language, teach us the fun of the language' […] I'll give them the language in a hidden way in a very interesting way and they use English themselves without me instructing them I watch and listen and help" [YusufI3].

It seemed that when playing a game, students interacted in English instead of Arabic (their L1) as the games required use of English. Moreover, Yusuf could focus on language discretely, rather than through presentation and, at times, facilitate rather than instruct. Therefore, the games changed his interactions with students:

“It changed the relationship between student and teacher they respect you they like you and like English because it is given or served on a different dish or plate..it is not served as the dish they used to get..no this year we have a different dish with different spices[..]” [YusufI3]

The workshops also gave Yusuf ideas about using outdoor learning spaces such as the school playground. He noticed how this impacted on students:

“I saw err *students really like it it’s new experience for them and new experience for you the teacher and you see the interaction you see how interested the students were at that time” [YusufI3]*

Yusuf therefore extended the boundaries of his classroom and in effect reconsidered what a classroom could be. Instead of being enclosed by four walls, the classroom was instead formed through the interactions between teacher, students and game activities that engaged them:

“*When we think about teaching .. just stay in class of four walls and a whiteboard and this is teaching..if you go outside its another format” [YusufI3]*

However, while his students enjoyed this new concept of classroom, the school administration objected:

“If you go outside you’re making something fuzzy.. you are making chaos something is a mess….please get in the class” [YusufI3].

Yusuf therefore had mixed feelings of enthusiasm and disappointment; games opened up alternative identity options for him and created different forms of interaction with students, as did moving classes into new spaces. However, changing the concept of the classroom to an outdoor space was resisted by his institution despite the positive learning effects it seemed to have.

6.2.5.2 Whiteboards, visuals and technologies

Referring to another context, Manar also talked about how development activities had impacted on her teaching. She explained that there were workshops organised by local institutions:

“I’ve attended different workshops err seminars..some were very boring, some beneficial and err those that were beneficial added a lot to me ..like seeing how other people do things” [ManarI7]

Manar described her identity as a novice teacher as *strict and formal*, focused on classroom management and a teacher-focused use of the board:

"..the board was important to explain things and make it clear and organised information…err I was very strict when I was first teaching and I thought classroom management was most important…I made the students watch and copy down"[ManarI7]

However, a workshop introduced her to different ways of using the board:

"I remember I attended a grammar workshop …you know teaching grammar is essential [….] the teacher was a real expert in grammar teaching and I liked how she used the board simply but made pictures and diagrams as well as writing err….and she demonstrated how to make fun and involve students with like them adding things" [ManarI7].

Manar had always presented grammar through text rather than pictures, but the workshop introduced her to alternatives which involved student participation; students could be invited to interact with the board instead of it being a teacher-only resource and this changed the dynamics of her classes. Manar especially commented on how these techniques were "*simple not hi-tech"* and therefore feasible for her to use.

As well as the grammar workshop, Manar remembered others which had focused on digital technology to facilitate uses of visual resources in lessons. She found that visuals helped her to explain concepts of language, stimulate discussion and arouse interest. She explained the effects of these on her teaching:

"You know whether it was video or pictures.. images so err this technology helped a lot making what you want to say clearer and less difficult students give ideas when they see images and with the internet it is easy... instant ..err one of the things that really improved in this was my sense of humour and laughter in class and I noticed the secret of having a happy class with good energy [..] it's not about information but how to make information fun" [ManarI7]

Her stories revealed how digital, visual resources helped her to connect her students to language in novel ways, changing her relationship with them and enabling her to form an identity she became more comfortable with; the technologies supported how she conveyed language to her students with different techniques, and this seemed to create a positive environment in her lessons. Manar considered this to have been a significant shift in her identity,

helping her to become, in her words, "*a more human*" rather than "*strict and formal*" teacher.

The workshops Yusuf and Manar talked about were delivered by teachers familiar with the local context and thus likely to be under-pinned with a socio-cultural awareness of the realities of teaching there (Johnson, 2006). Although Yusuf met some resistance when he tried to take his classes outside, it seemed that the use of games, technologies, and alternative uses of the whiteboard had considerable influence on their teaching and made other identity possibilities feasible for them.

6.2.6 Discussion

In this section, I discuss and interpret the findings reported on participants' past experiences as teachers. The discussion will first focus on social and material actors influential in participants' institutions, and then turn to local development activities and how related material actors may also be significant in teacher identity formation.

6.2.6.1 Influences on teaching practices

The findings linked to some participants indicate the tensions that can emerge between an institutional system and the *actors* it *enrols* to maintain stability, and teachers' desires to express their identities in particular ways. Participants' experiences show that while *actors* such as supervisors, coursebooks, syllabus and exams seemed to direct them along particular paths, it seemed there was friction between identities expected by the institution and desired by individuals. Similar reports of tension are evidenced in the literature as teachers experience disharmony between their desires and institutional expectations of teaching (Tsui, 2007; Liu & Xu, 2011). However, the stories of my participants highlight influences from supervisors, syllabus texts, coursebooks and manuals, and exams as well as other teachers and students. These performed particular functions and were therefore *actors* in the institutional *actor-networks* of the participants.

For some participants, supervisors and coordinators played a prominent role in monitoring teachers and extracts show how they were perceived as influential through their ability to intervene and direct teachers to keep to the syllabus and material prescribed. We see how they could enter teachers' classrooms putting pressure on them to adhere to the syllabus, timing and material. As reported by Liu & Xu (2011) such intervention aims to keep teachers "on the right track" (p.593) and conform with the identity expectations of an institution. By doing so, teachers (as social actors themselves) become *enrolled* into institutional *networks* of practices through processes of *translation* which direct them to teach in certain ways.

According to Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p.57), syllabus texts determine what is taught and are inter-linked with the wider curriculum, the institutional organisation (its size, management, resources) as well as its associated hierarchies and expectations. My findings further exemplify how syllabus texts are inter-linked with other actors, for instance, how supervisors seemed to concentrate upon ensuring teachers followed syllabus, books and delivered lessons according to institutional expectations. Their monitoring and corrective actions were intended to *enrol* teachers into an institutional network of policies and preferred practices and guide them towards compliance so that teachers functioned in ways which would further endorse them, to stabilise the institutional *actor-network*. In effect, successful *enrolment* means that *actors* perform the identities required of them through processes of *translation* (Hamilton, 2011). When a network becomes *stabilized* it begins to "become heavy with norms of all sorts" (Callon, 1992, p.91). These norms were, for instance, reflected ways in which supervisors checked how some participants delivered lessons, the materials they took in class and the ways in which they adhered to timing (e.g. Hakim, Sami, Muriel). Monitoring by supervisors encouraged teachers to follow certain methods and materials and perform in ways that the syllabi endorsed. Thus, in accordance with Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p.24.) this made the institutional knowledge of how to teach increasingly visible and influential. In other words, if the majority of teachers follow the books, teach from given lesson plans and employ preferred ways of teaching, the system 'norms' become strengthened. Supervisors in my participants' stories thus functioned to maintain such stability.

While supervisor roles and actions appeared to be directed by the syllabus and coursebook texts, my findings also show instances when supervisors were perceived as using these as tools to exert their power over teachers. Through their capacity to intervene, for instance, by entering classrooms unannounced, they were able to assert their position while at the same time strengthen the functions of these other actors. This emphasises a fluidity of power among relations between different actors which as described by Michael (2017) is used to "wield influence, deploy various resources, marshal other actors (human and nonhuman) and establish and make durable a pattern of associations among those actors" (p.21). Participants such as Hakim and Sami, for example, were admonished by supervisors when they appeared to be deviating from the coursebook and teacher's manual. These actions diminished their autonomy, emphasising the influence the coursebook texts had over them. It also highlights how *symmetry* (equal potential of being influential) can be played out; supervisors could both *act upon* others and be *acted upon* by others in that they were also directed by syllabus and coursebook texts and the presence of exams. These findings thus highlight ways in which supervisors were inter-linked with other *actors* influencing teachers and the identities available to them.

Institutional syllabus texts require teachers to conform both in what they do and how they do it. Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p.18) argue that a syllabus, itself formed through the heterogenous networks that informed its existence (e.g. decision-makers, curriculum and policy texts), functions as an *obligatory passage point* with which a teacher's lesson plans, materials and supervisory guidance should all be aligned to maintain and hold a network of teaching practices together. A syllabus therefore functions to provide direction for teachers but can also be restrictive. Hakim, for instance, referred to the '*prescriptive route'* of the ministry to describe how he was influenced by the inter-related influences of supervisors and texts upon his teaching. Britzman (1994) captures such struggles of teachers forming and enacting desired identities with her reference to the "pre-established borders" of institutions and teachers "desiring to be different while negotiating institutional mandates for conformity" (p.24). Britzman's (1994) depiction of the ways in which teachers are guided towards conformity resonates with the experiences Hakim and others shared. Conformity

however *translates* identities into what Xu (2013) calls *rule-based* identities, and by limiting expressions of *desired* identities teachers (e.g. Muriel, Sami, Maya) may become disillusioned and frustrated. In effect, my participants' desires to build supportive relations with learners were countered by institutional socio-political policies and rules which created negative emotions. These emotions of frustration and disillusionment are examples of how emotion emerges through relations with institutional policies as well as classroom practices forming what Zembylas, (2007) describes as a teacher's emotional knowledge of a particular institutional context and the relationships formed with others (colleagues, managers, students). The restrictions of syllabus and supervisors indicated in the stories told by various participants were expressions of the curricular ideologies and politics of what and how English should be taught, and these created particular emotional responses.

Associated with syllabi, the presence of exams was also influential on participants in their different contexts. Exam success becomes a priority for teachers, students, institutions and parents as these exams provide access to progression and may, as Li and Baldauf (2011) indicate, be decisive in a student's future. Indeed, Li and Baldauf (2011) found that teachers in Chinese schools considered test scores to be the main purpose of their teaching. The presence of exams therefore further directs teachers back to the syllabus and coursebooks given, as shown by my participants. In addition to this, Hua and Hakim both indicated that their teaching was *judged* by student performance in exams. A good teacher may be measured by student satisfaction of learning as established by Abdenia, (2012) and in the case of my participants, this was reflected by expectations of high exam scores, irrespective of other factors such as student motivation or ability to use English in communication.

Teachers may therefore prioritise exam practice materials in lessons over content they see as more beneficial for their learners (Li & Baldauf, 2011). For instance, from Hua's perspective, an exam-oriented focus restricted her desire to become creative in her teaching. Moreover, as some participants experienced, exam-oriented teaching can dictate what is taught; because speaking was not tested in the Myanmar and Vietnamese universities referred to, it was not valued.

Exams can therefore be conceptualised as a gateway, an *obligatory passage point,* which must be passed through to access (become *enrolled* into) new networks of study in further education or gain employment. To do so exams can *mobilise* ways of teaching and learning, rigidifying these according to their content. The content of such exams typically measures accumulation of skills and aspects of representational subject knowledge (Sørensen, 2009). As Arkar and other participants indicated, exams in their institutions included reading, writing and grammar but paid little attention to speaking and listening. Thus, as also shown in the literature (Li & Baldauf, 2011; Abdenia, 2012) their students could resist attempts to introduce learning not directly linked to exam success. In effect, students could choose to invest in learning they deemed closest to their needs (Norton-Pierce, 1995) which has implications for the identities available to teachers such as Arkar.

The findings also show how in-class tests were used by Muriel's supervisors to remind teachers to follow the syllabus. Both students and teachers were aware of the *threat* of a test which pressurised teachers to keep up to date with the syllabus in case a test was given without warning. This threat strengthened institutional *actor-networks* of supervisors, syllabus and given materials and served to further limit the identities available to participants.

Associated with their students' focus on passing exams my participants expressed concern that students were not deeply motivated to learn English. This was critical in defining participants' desired identities which involved building closer rapport with their learners, resonating with previous studies (Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Waller et al., 2017). Some participants expressed wishes to use their personality and creativity to engage students (becoming *fun, supporting* and *creative* teachers), but seemed to be continually pulled back to fulfilling the demands of the exam-oriented syllabus. This meant that teaching was directed by exams, but participants did not necessarily see this as the most beneficial direction. In a similar way, Trent (2010) notes from his study in Hong Kong the identity conflicts created when exams need *traditional teaching* while student enjoyment may be more associated with *modern teaching.* Teachers may find it more advantageous to adhere to the identities assigned by their institutions, to be seen to fit in (Abdenia, 2012). However, participant stories (e.g. Muriel, Khahn

and Arkar) indicated that this does not erase desired identities, but suppresses them, perhaps temporarily, in ways which bring emotions such as disillusionment, frustration and disappointment.

As well as syllabus, materials, presence of exams and supervisors, fellow teachers were also inter-related in actor-networks of teaching practices. The findings illustrated contrasting influences as colleagues being both sources of guidance and 'poor' models of teaching. For instance, mentors and colleagues became valued through their sharing of experiences and knowledge. By sharing communal knowledge formed through similar experiences in the same context (Sørensen, 2009), they helped less-experienced participants negotiate challenging situations and interactions with students. It is also likely that they guided less-experienced participants towards practices which would not disrupt the stability of the actor-networks of institutional practices.

However, by contrast Bulan and Rena's stories showed how some teachers' adherence to traditional practices emphasised *undesired* identities. Bulan expressed particular disdain for the teacher who needed to step '*out-of-the box'* instead of adhering to routine practices. Traditional teaching to Bulan indicated something teacher-centred and uncreative, while stepping *out-of-the box* meant adopting identities more aligned with student interests and possibly needs. Similarly, Trent and Gao (2009) refer to '*out-of-the box'* teaching as connecting with students and becoming inspirational. Both Bulan and Rena were more attuned to becoming *inspirational* teachers than adopting the *traditionally-oriented* identities of their colleagues. Mentors and fellow teachers therefore may be significant in shaping identities, although this may be through negative acts or attributes as well as through more positive guidance. Similar to the teacher participants in Kayi-Aydar's (2015) study who positioned themselves in opposition to undesired identity traits of their mentors, my participants showed how the identities of their colleagues contributed to defining the identities they wished to adopt.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) argue that context plays a significant role in shaping teacher identities and this section has exemplified how interplays of actors in participants' past teaching contexts have been influential in identity

formation. Participant narratives showed how different social and material actors were inter-linked with their context and the politics of institutional settings. They illustrate how these interplays of actors shaped institutional networks of practices and promoted certain teacher identities to stabilise preferred practices. In essence, this reflects how by conforming, teachers become less likely to "intervene in the complex conditions that push them to take up the normative practices that discourage their desires for change" (Britzman, 2003, p. 223). However, as my findings indicate, this may result in tension as teachers negotiate expected versus the preferred identities they wish to invest themselves in (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

6.2.6.2 Influences of local development activity shaping identity formation

In this section, I examine how, games, whiteboards, visuals and technology seemed to perform particular functions, becoming *actors* within the *actor-networks* of lesson enactments and influence how teacher, students and materials interact. Yusuf and Manar's stories illustrate to some extent how these material *actors* not only change what takes place in classrooms, but also the identity options of teachers.

Sørensen and Meyer (2007) suggest that because games have been recognised as "a framework for providing a meaningful context for language acquisition then games should be understood as significant models for the design of educational material for language teaching and learning" (p.561). Language learning games are often used in CLT and can create different dynamics among learners and teacher. If learners respond with enthusiasm and engagement this is likely to have a positive impact on the teacher by making new identity positions available (Hadfield, 2017). For instance, Yusuf's stories explain how he became more facilitative and less instructive as students learned by participating in a game rather than through teacher-led instruction. According to Sørensen & Meyer (2007) participation may be encouraged because language learning games require students to draw on their linguistic resources and perform language skills rather than just produce right or wrong answers, as also indicated by Yusuf.

Jessen and Jessen's (2014) study conceptualises games as *actor-networks* to show how games entice players into participating through what they say and do as they interact with game scenarios and materials. This resonates with Yusuf's experiences of games; their novelty encouraged participation and coerced communication in English. The games thus created particular interactions between students and language, as using English was necessary to participate in the game. The materials integrated into each game (e.g. dice, cards, board), also performed novel functions as *actors* to enable the game to be played. Therefore, as indicated by Kossuth (1987, cited in Sørensen & Meyer, 2007, p.561), students became more focused on the action of the game and less anxious about their language use, or as Yusuf suggested, language was taught in a "hidden" way. This was a strategy of seduction or what Callon (1986) refers to as *interessement*, into the game network, by which students were enticed into using English and thus learning. It created a shift in Yusuf's teacher identity as he facilitated and helped students rather than instructing and managing them. As Hadfield (2017) points out, a positive and engaged class can enhance teacher identity options and this is illustrated by Yusuf being able to decentre his position in lessons when games were used.

Therefore, conceptualising games as *actor-networks* facilitates understandings of how they can create different interactions and participation among teacher and students. Thus, this approach could be beneficial in teacher-development to deepen awareness of the *effects* of such materials on learners and to critically analyse how and why different learners interact in particular ways, as well as high-lighting how introducing materials such as games can produce different dynamics with different groups of students.

As well as games, Yusuf's stories showed how different spaces may affect participation and engagement. Classroom spaces help to create particular learning experiences and the presence or absence and format of different objects (e.g. seating, pictures, toys, computers) encourage or limit particular interactions between them, students and teacher (Sørensen, 2009). Thus, as shown by Mulcahy and Morrison (2017), different spaces invite particular human and non-human interactions shaping the activities that are carried out. By teaching in the playground, Yusuf similarly suggested that moving into another space changed

the ways in which students responded in contrast to the usual classroom, and became more interested in the lesson. However, teaching outside was objected to and resisted by administration. This could be linked to a belief critiqued by Latour (2005) that social systems, *as actor-networks*, are maintained through "durability, solidity and inertia" (p.67) and by introducing change, control is weakened and norms destabilized. Hence, by moving out of the classroom, Yusuf challenged the institutional norms of where teaching should take place.

In standard classroom environments, the presence of objects such as the whiteboard are often taken for granted. Whiteboards have been described as a centralizing device (Sørensen, 2009, p.170); writing on the board directs student's gaze towards it. This seemed to be how Manar used the board initially as a place to write, display information and focus attention on the language to be learned. Therefore, the whiteboard is usually a teacher's domain (Sørensen, 2009) and Manar controlled the lesson from here. She described herself as *strict and formal*, and we can infer a more distant relationship with her students aided by the whiteboard which channelled their attention towards the teacher. Porter and Tanghe (2016) refer to whiteboards as a "sacred teacher-y space" which creates teacher-centred dynamics. However, there was a shift in these dynamics when Manar *mobilised* the whiteboard in different ways to reconfigure the routines and functions it normally performed in her lessons. Instead of just writing information to be copied down, it became a place of display of graphics and pictures to connect students with the language being taught. Like Porter and Tanghe (2016) she also invited students to write on the board which turned it into a more democratic space to be used by all. Therefore, the board seemed to create different interactions in her lessons both through its functions as a visual display and as an invitation for students to contribute their ideas. It was no longer a mundane space but an *actor* functioning to communicate language to students in novel ways. This enabled Manar to become more relaxed, less strict and to express her sense of humour as part of her identity.

Manar's identity shift was also facilitated through her discovery of how visuals can stimulate interest in lessons and simplify the knowledge she was trying to communicate to her students. This effect is shown by Mulcahy (2012) who illustrates how images enhanced the topics a geography teacher was teaching,

and enabled her to bring current happenings into the classroom. Similarly, Manar talks about digital images as resources which were 'easy' to access and which stimulated responses from students (who might otherwise have been silent) creating *interessment o*r enticement into participating.

The findings discussed in this section, show how material *actors* can perform particular functions in lessons, influence teacher and student interactions, and teacher identities. Students were said to use English more freely, appear involved in lessons, for instance, by writing on the board or through playing games, responding to visuals and this decentralised to some extent the teachers' role. This conceptualisation of lessons as *actor-networks* of teaching practice helps to reveal how material objects can create novel dynamics in lessons and shape interactions among teacher and students. In other words, they create *translations* of practices through which new ways of participation are produced. Therefore, as Mulcahy (2011) argues, identities may become shaped through a *mix* of social and material interactions and the practices they produce in particular learning activities. This suggests potential in teacher-development for deeper examination of the ways in which such learning activities and classroom resources influence interaction among teacher and students and the identities they adopt. One channel could be through teacher-training techniques such as loop-input which can also be integrated into postgraduate programmes, a point I will return to in the next section.

Having looked at past experiences and illustrated how participant identities were shaped through influences of social and material actors linked to these, I now turn to postgraduate study and participants' storied experiences of this.

6.3: Re-becoming a student: re-shaping identities in postgraduate study in the UK.

Postgraduate study was an opportunity for professional development for my participants even though transitioning to a UK university also brought certain challenges. In this section I examine how participants' professional identities were influenced by processes of re-becoming students and then look at ways in which some participants responded to theoretical and pedagogical knowledge and how this became meaningful in relation to their past teaching experiences.

The first section (6.3.1) shows certain effects of *re-becoming* a student. As previous studies have illustrated, 'non-native' students on postgraduate TESOL courses may feel insecure in their use of English and position themselves (and be positioned) negatively in an academic community (Brut-Griffler & Saminy, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 2000). My findings provide further examples of how some participants positioned themselves in relation to peers when in taught sessions which impacted on their confidence to participate. This stimulated reflection on instances when their learners had resisted participating in lessons and a renewed understanding towards such difficulties.

The next two sections (6.3.2/6.3.3) show how particular forms of knowledge have been significant in shaping the identities of participants. According to Richards (2017) teacher education provides conceptual as well as procedural knowledge which helps teachers to reflect on their beliefs and practices. This is especially relevant to postgraduate study and the theoretical and pedagogical knowledge teacher-students are introduced to. In this part I also trace links between past experiences and the meanings participants drew from the pedagogical and theoretical knowledge introduced and the significance of interplays between theory and practice.

Gray and Morton (2018, p.163) argue that teachers need to understand different types of knowledge in relation to the wider institutional and social contexts that influence their identities and agency. This may lead to a more critical appraisal of the institutional systems teachers work in. Accordingly, the fourth section (6.3.4), focuses on how postgraduate study encouraged some participants to become

more critical about the teaching 'norms' of their institutions and question what had previously been taken for granted. The final section (6.3.5) then shows how academic writing presented challenges but also opportunities towards new identity options.

6.3.1 Participating in academic study

As well as an opportunity to gain further qualification, postgraduate study was a chance for my participants to study in an English-speaking country. This involves not just formal seminars but social interaction with others in a new context (Singh & Richards, 2006) and experiencing and interacting with different cultures (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). It also means adapting to different social and academic expectations, as indicated by some of my participants. A particular challenge was expectations of oral participation in taught sessions and interaction with fellow students (both home and international) and lecturers.

I report on findings from the experiences of Muriel, Maya, Arkar and Aysha who talked about the issues they had faced in taught sessions. The extracts shown were linked to interview themes of *challenges* and *classroom practices* of their experiences as well as *professional aspirations* through the MA. It was noted that participants did not talk explicitly about these points in the focus group, perhaps because they felt especially sensitive about expressing their feelings to other students.

When Muriel began studying in the UK, she attended taught sessions for her MA (and later for her PhD). However, reflecting on herself as a student highlighted the *challenges* she had in participating:

" *it was interesting because as a teacher you might not understand how students feel even though you were a student before, but as a teacher who became a student, I noticed that when I attended my err classes I didn't participate at all"*
Why [..] ? [I]
"…I have a fear of speaking out in front of a group especially if it's not my language, and there are others who speak English as mother tongue and I'm afraid I'm going to make mistakes […..] so whenever the teacher says 'OK you're going to report back' I was like 'I hope it's not going to be me" (MurielI15)

Recognising her own discomfort at expectations of oral participation made Muriel rethink her students' reticence back in Saudi Arabia:

"[..]for me it's a fear of speaking out.. making mistakes being laughed at embarrassing myself ..[…..] so I put that into consideration when I was doing my research…OK students you're very good you know the answer why don't you want to participate? And they said 'I don't want to embarrass myself I know the answer but someone else is gonna answer'" (Muriel115)

This realisation of student reticence formed the basis of her research, which will be returned to (6.4.3). However, her experiences illustrate a particular challenge she faced as a 'non-native' speaker in situations with expectations of participation in English with both L1 and L2 users of English among students and tutor.

Maya and Arkar similarly talked about their self-consciousness when speaking in MA sessions, linking this to their understanding of students in Myanmar. For instance, as Maya explained:

"*It depends on the class ..according to our own context you know we students don't want to speak all the time so we prefer to be silent"*
Really? [I]
"Yes, I want to change it […] as I was in the classes on the Masters I preferred to be silent let others better than me answer….it's not because I don't want to participate but because it is ..how do you say..our habit one of Asian habits" [MayaI13]

With a mix of peers who had more experience and some who were either L1 users of English or who appeared more confident, Maya talked about times when she avoided speaking out:

"*I remember times like I am more shy when there are British students or some others who are good and they always answer quickly but…. err I need more time I think"* [MayaI13]

However, her experiences stimulated her to think about how she could encourage students to speak, which will be returned to in section 6.3.2.

Arkar's story was very similar to Maya as he also talked about the shyness of people in his country and experiences with his students. However, he added he was frustrated about his struggles to participate in classes in the UK:

"[…]whenever I was asked here, I was like, I was shocked and I was disappointed…it was err hard to answer….because it is very rare in our country to point to a student and ask a question so I want to be a good student here but I get frustrated because I cannot answer easily and others are better maybe" [ArkarI14]

On the one hand, Arkar valued speaking and as shown previously, recognised that teaching speaking was not given enough attention in the institution he had worked in. However, reflecting on his own responses to speaking out in sessions brought emotions which prompted further thoughts on his students' shyness to speak in class.

Aysha's experiences resonated with the others' difficulties participating in sessions, yet she had found an aid which helped her to build confidence in participating:

"I've noticed the ELE [electronic learning environment] which I tend to think is a magnificent idea that you can see sessions before attending […] it gives students the chance to prepare themselves and ask questions for things they haven't really understood [….] if you leave it to the time of the session…err like I didn't think fast enough and couldn't give opinions and when I get home I realised I have questions..it's a change here as everything is in English err at home teachers use our language sometimes"
"So how do you feel now?" [I]
"With ELE? I think I am better in classes and I …err not as much as others but I talk in class …and I know what I need to say" [AyshaI8]

This illustrates how having prior access to material strengthened Aysha's confidence in voicing her ideas rather than remaining silent. ELE therefore seemed to provide a link that invited participation and facilitated inclusion in the sessions. Notably, Aysha was in university A unlike the others discussed in this section, who may not have had prior access to material.

This section has shown how international teacher-students may face *challenges* with oral participation in seminars, an issue which Kamhi-Stein (1999) links to low self-confidence especially in relation being 'non-native' speakers. This is further exemplified in the stories of my participants which also highlight how *re-becoming* a student prompted some participants to reconsider their students' willingness to speak in class. This indicates potential links between present and past

experiences and also relates to the next section on the effects of learning about methods and approaches introduced through postgraduate study.

6.3.2 Alternative methods and approaches: Aligning identities

In the previous section we have seen how some participants experienced shyness, disappointment and frustration during interactive sessions in which they were expected to participate. Their experiences as teacher-students resonated with their concerns as teachers trying to encourage students to speak in class; for instance, Muriel indicated this deepened her understanding of why students could be reluctant to speak. The reflection this stimulated perhaps made content on teaching methodology especially significant for these participants. As typical of many MA TESOL courses (MacDonald et al., 2001; Govardhan et al., 1999), teaching methodology was integrated into MA modules in both university A and B. Such content was especially significant for some participants who had not been aware of methods beyond more traditional grammar-translation practices. This part shows how learning about communicative approaches especially impacted on Muriel, Manar, Arkar and Rena which they linked to interview themes of *classroom practice* and *change*.

Before studying her MA modules, Muriel, for instance, was unaware of the range of language teaching methods that have been developed. As explained previously, the university she worked in had rigid norms of teaching which Muriel had followed even though she was not always comfortable with them:

"It was a kind of shock to me when it came to my Master's degree and we had to take a course on methods and approaches in language teaching …'Oh God I've never heard of that!' When they asked me what approach I use I say 'I teach I just read from the book!'" [MurielI15]

Learning about other methods was therefore an important step as Muriel then realised that these could open up alternative identity options to her. Muriel spoke about this further when talking about effects on her beliefs about teaching in the focus group [Q3]:

"So in Saudi they give you a few course of teaching methods and send you for a few months to do training in schools and OK here's your certificate…you're a

good teacher now go and teach…[..] but errm you're not qualified really to teach"
I see [I]
"So you know some of the things I did not know even existed until I came here to do my masters…like what's task-based teaching? These methods like direct method teaching grammar with speaking and ..err communicative teaching …'Oh what is this?' I was surprised to see all these different ways [MurielFG3].

While learning about different methods Muriel realised that lessons could become more learner-centred, and therefore engaging. This helped her to connect methods to learner motivation which had previously been an issue in her teaching, and she focused her PhD research on forms of task- based learning through technology.

As shown earlier (6.2.3; 6.3.1), Arkar and Maya, were both concerned with students' reticence to participate orally. Their MA studies introduced other methods which inspired them to think about different ways of teaching and potentially encourage their students to speak in lessons. For instance, Maya talked about sessions which had demonstrated techniques used in CLT in relation to the theme of *change*:

"I'm thinking to use eliciting questions…eliciting techniques yes because you know if we don't ask the students by name or begin a group discussion they won't talk..I know my students!...and I prefer CLT now to use in real teaching situations I see how it can be good for my students"
Why do you prefer CLT? [i]
Because it allows students to improve speaking skills that's important err and also critical thinking skills ..they are so important for discussion"
What activities […]?[I]
Well there are a lot of activities I've seen in my classes err different ways of learning...I remember many like err demonstrated like jigsaw activity we tried and conversation topic…. err…so it depends on the lesson but like through group discussion and maybe they present ideas to the class" [MayaI13]

Maya therefore highlighted the effects of actually *doing* activities in her MA sessions which helped her to understand their function. From this, Maya had begun to conceptualise the kind of teaching she wanted to create in the future:

"Now, I want ..you know interactive situation interactive classroom to.. I want them to participate […] so they could be active, enjoy and they will have more knowledge and won't lack of confidence …err like well we did [laugh] so I want to make an intelligent lesson or classroom" [MayaI13]

The kind of classroom Maya described above aligns with her desired identity integrating *fun* and *creativity* into her teaching indicated in section 6.2.1.

While Arkar was also enthusiastic about the potential of communicative activities, he acknowledged that they may be difficult to introduce in the university he worked for:

"When you taught us the lesson on communicative speaking tasks in lessons I was thinking 'How am I going to use it in class?' [ArkarI14]

Arkar's desire to teach more communicatively was challenged by the size of his classes. He also indicated that his colleagues may challenge him if he tried to introduce something different into the usual practices teachers adopted.

"Even though I will use the CLT approach in my class because I got only 40 students I may be able to use that a bit but not if we have bigger classes …but other teachers err my neighbours may go crazy if they see me doing CLT in class!" [ArkarI14]

Despite this he was beginning to formulate possibilities of transferring aspects of what he had learned:

"For example if I got a class which is not very big we can start using different communicative teaching approaches that I haven't used in that class ..err maybe it's based on learner autonomy for example I start with a small homework researching a subject that will not be counted [assessed] and they will talk about it in the lesson ..err I will give them some rewards to attract them!" [ArkarI14]

This idea of introducing activities step-by-step was a way of compromising with the exam-oriented system (discussed in section 6.2.3) and of avoiding potential clashes with other teachers.

Reflecting on this, during a discussion on *professional development* (FGQ8), Arkar talked about how he had been dissatisfied with his teaching before, but that through learning about different ways of teaching, he now felt inspired by other possibilities:

"I think I will be improved [when I go back home] because I was disappointed with myself my teaching style ..previous teaching style it's like I stood in front of the class and I repeat what the textbook told me to repeat..[..] I think I will use different teaching methods ..more communication and when I go back I will be doing some different types of speaking activity in some classes" [ArkarFG3]

These examples provide insight into how Maya and Arkar were influenced by learning about communicative teaching approaches and were beginning to consider ways of translating this knowledge into their future lessons.

In accordance with others, Rena said that learning about other teaching methods was an important aspect of her development. Like Maya, she gave examples of demonstrations of methods and activities by lecturers:

"well…the methodology the way you [lecturers] work and the way you teach and give the materials in our sessions..and giving these activities to us that's interesting… like making group work in a communicative way and giving activities like jigsaw reading of articles …information gap activity…all these new ways I learned about but we also tried them" [RenaI11]

Rena explained that she found this useful in helping her understand the application of activities in relation to the communicative approaches she was learning about, and which were in contrast to teaching in Greece. Moreover, as a novice teacher she was especially concerned with practical aspects of teaching but was beginning to understand the interplay of theory and practice:

"Everything is practical in teaching and is going to be practical in my future apart from the theories that will stay in my mind to remind me just how things work and why they work [….]." [RenaI11]

What appeared to be important was how theoretical knowledge was linked to practice in some of her taught sessions and these examples from Rena's interview suggest that this helped her understand the concepts introduced.

"*It's all a beginning for me but that kind of fits with the methods the language acquisition theories [..]because they all mix in a way ..err the methods you choose and beliefs about language learning and everything so I'm just a sponge right now excited to getting to know this stuff" [RenaI11]*

These findings support how the inter-linking of theoretical knowledge and teaching practices is significant in deepening teachers' awareness of the

principles underlying the methods and approaches they adopt (Nguyen & Dao, 2019). This point is further shown in the next part which focuses on the impact taught theory had on participants' development.

6.3.3 Re-thinking practice; resonance with theory

Postgraduate study introduces teachers to theoretical concepts that they may not have been aware of before or have limited understanding of. Building deeper understanding of theoretical knowledge and awareness of how theory and practice interlink in relation to teaching is therefore significant in ongoing teacher development (Waller at al., 2017; Hawkin's & Norton, 2009).

In this part, I will focus on the areas of theoretical knowledge which resonated with certain participants and will show how they related theory to their teaching experiences. I will first show how Hua and Maya responded to second language acquisition theories as taught on their MA. Following this I will examine how Hakim was especially influenced by Paolo Freire and his work on critical pedagogy and why this was relevant to his teaching in Saudi Arabia.

6.3.3.1 Understandings of second language acquisition theories

A focus on second language acquisition theory is typically integrated into MA TESOL programmes (MacDonald et al., 2001), and in the case of Hua, Maya and Rena was studied as a separate module but also integrated into other sessions. Hua had not been introduced to SLA theory before her MA and she indicated how this helped her conceptualise language learning processes. She talked about these points in her interview in relation to *professional aspirations* and her MA studies:

"I think MA study here also helped to improve my knowledge of language learning as a whole for example those SLA theories although they are difficult they are quite interesting"
"Do you reflect on these and your language learning? [I]
"Yes that's what I was thinking about a lot because in China SLA was not popular I didn't have any background knowledge on that part."
"Why…"[I]
"Well I was talking with my err English teacher when I visited home last time err I was asking him SLA theories are so helpful and so interesting why didn't we

study that in China? His answer was also interesting he said Oh it's basically a Western thing"
Really?[I]
"Yes its not popular in China but they're quire helpful it helps me to understanding that…how I learned my language and others"

Understanding more about theoretical principles of language acquisition helped Hua to reflect on herself as a learner as well as think about the students she taught. This was something Hua also brought up in the focus group discussion when talking about her relationship with English [Q4]:

"My personal relationship with English.. I don't think it changes because as an English teacher I'm still a learner so we are going through the learning processes that all learners are going through and it's useful to think about this processes in our err teaching and how our learning and teaching are connected" [HuaFG3]

As such, Hua explained that she perceived connections between her identities as a learner and a teacher of English; her learning experiences shaped her teaching.

In her interview, Maya referred to aspects of SLA theory learned through her MA modules. These were Krashen's (1985) theory of comprehensible input emphasising the need for learners to receive input slightly above their current level of interlanguage; Swain's (1993) Output hypothesis highlighting the significance of learner output or production of language and the interaction hypothesis accredited to Long (1981) which promotes the importance of face-to-face interaction. However, Maya talked about her difficulty in understanding these concepts as a *challenge* in her MA studies:

"There are some theories in second language acquisition that is really hard to imagine in practice….really hard to imagine in real practice" [MayaI13]
"How…[I]
Well for example how we can relate input and output hypothesis and interaction theory to our class..err I mean I wondered how do these work in a lesson?"

Despite this, Maya pointed out that when the lecturer explicitly talked about theory in relation to classroom teaching, this had become more accessible to her. For instance, by analysing coursebook material and how such content may be informed by under-lying theories:

"I remember you talked about coursebooks linking with second language acquisition theories and that part is interesting …err I could see how the exercises and activities in a book worked with the theory…so I can imagine it in real lessons" [MayaI13]

Maya added another example of a dictogloss acivity that had been used in a session to demonstrate noticing and conscious awareness in learning (Schmidt, 1990):

"One time I remember we did an exercise like a story writing and the lecturer talked to us about err noticing as a second language theory…err we had to listen and then write what we thought we heard and that was really interesting err to compare our ideas and mistakes [laugh]" [MayaI13]

These extracts indicate that how talking about theory in relation to examples of learning activities helped Maya better understand the concepts which had seemed difficult to her. Theory appeared to become more meaningful by actually *doing* activities in sessions rather than presenting theory in an abstract sense; by experiencing a dictogloss activity herself, she could better understand the concept of 'noticing' in learning activities.

6.3.3.2 Freire's Banking concept: that's what we do

We have already seen how Hakim described teachers in Saudi Arabia as *conduits* (6.2.1), and in this part I will show further examples of how Freire's theoretical concepts resonated with Hakim and helped him to become more critical of his experiences. Freire (1970), developed the 'banking concept' of education which depicts teachers as depositors of knowledge and students as those who "receive, memorize and repeat" (p.72). Hakim referred to Freire's work both in the interview and focus group and I include points from both of these.

Hakim was affected by the ways in which the ministry system guided teaching and in his view limited teachers. He described himself as a *conduit*, a term he had learned through his doctoral studies:

"Something I feel will have a big effect on my moral ..on myself as a teacher is the way the ministry of education treats me as like errm when I read the book [textbook] I feel I think of myself as a language transmitter instead of an educator I'm just an instructor [..] I'm not a partner in education reform and that

is something that affects me severely and I have to cope with it err I don't know how to change it ..if I'd ever do that" [HakimI1]

In a discussion about initial beliefs about teaching [FG1Q3] Hakim expanded on the relevance of Freire's term *conduit* by explained how the *banking concept* reflected how he was expected to teach:

"I had a belief at that time I used to believe as a student who's sitting on his chair not giving trouble to the teacher [laughs] yes…[] again I'm going back to Paolo Freire …[..]..but I'm thinking of the banking model of education where my role is to throw information and the students' role is to take information ..err this was my ideal at first, a student going back home doing all the exercises coming back again .." [Hakim FG1]

Hakim referred to the banking concept again in a focus group while talking about his difficulties engaging students:

"I'm fond of his idea of a banking model of education.. some parts.. because this is what actually we do in our context, how I treat my students like in an empty container.." [HakimFG2]

Freire's concepts had thus resonated with Hakim as they helped him to understand why his students seemed disengaged in his classes; the actors shaping how he was expected to teach (the syllabus, books, teachers guides and supervisors) made students into recipients of knowledge and also pushed him towards adopting an identity of a *conduit* rather than engaging his students in ways he would prefer. This is expanded on in the next section, which will show how Hakim's understanding of Freire's (1970) work in critical pedagogy and the connections he made with his past experiences helped him to become more critical and to question rather than accept what was taken for granted in his context.

6.3.4 Becoming critical

Postgraduate study requires students to further develop their ability to critique and question information presented to them and their academic work is judged partly by their ability to do this. In UK university assessment, the term critical is often embedded into learning outcomes and evidence of criticality is advocated through these (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004). Becoming more critical was thus part of

the identity development of participants as international teacher-students, some of whom initially struggled with questioning other peoples' ideas and with turning what is taken for granted into '*matters of concern*' (Latour, 2005). This section shows examples of how postgraduate study and its emphasis on critical thinking influenced participants' reflections on teaching and how becoming more critical shaped their identities. Maya, Arkar, Khahn, Hakim, and Juan all talked about the significance of criticality in view of their development and I include examples from Hakim, Khahn and Maya.

Engaging in postgraduate study stimulated a change in the ways in which some participants analysed teaching and learning and their experiences of these. Hakim talked about this in relation to *professional aspirations* and the impact of his EdD programme:

"A source of learning is the EdD programme, a major source of learning and a turning point as well, I think of the kind of reading, the kind of workshops, the kind of things we have here like different resources and technology errr they are all a major source of learning and change"
"Do you think you've changed?" [I]
"Well, I feel a change in my thinking, actually, the way I think now, the quality of my mind ..I used to think, to reflect because I'm a reflective person about my students and teaching […] but now this reflection has a new element to it which is criticality actually, studying the issue from various angles and I see how I'm changing, in seminars err discussing with others.. when I read" [HakimI1]

Hakim reiterated this in his focus group discussion when talking about his relations with English [Q4]:

"I began to re-evaluate most of my conceptions and perspectives even …what teaching should be , of what I've been doing…so I think like I said the EdD will manage to add like an element of criticality to the way I see things and accept things as well" [HakimFG1]

Hakim connected his ability to think more critically to different aspects of learning, for instance, in interactions with peers and with written texts through his EdD. Through interacting with peers of different backgrounds and reading more widely he seemed to consider issues from other perspectives, and to question rather than accept them.

Maya and Khahn also talked about criticality, but in relation to teaching material. In addition, Maya talked about her initial struggles with the concept of criticality in her MA studies:

"*When I did my master in translation, we had to learn by heart and even in the exam we have to memorise things and we know what the questions are…"*
"So you are prepared?" [I]
" Yes and it's something I really don't like and I want to change..[..] so I say we students from Myanmar most of us have lack of critical thinking skills and it was really hard here"
"What have you found hard?" [I]
"Well..[…] we have to read a lot and sometimes we don't need to agree the things by the writer [of articles], we have to disagree..I didn't know that" [MayaI13]

While Maya had difficulty questioning others' research and views, she found that applying critical thinking to coursebook material was especially useful to her. Indeed, she had always taken given material for granted and had not questioned the material she had used:

"When I was teaching back home I mean we had to follow text books like Headway ..you know the culture is quite different even..if err we are teaching or learning that we can't understand the meaning in the books and what to do with them" [MayaI13].

During her MA she learned more about the different elements that come together in coursebook development and the politics and ideologies that might be embedded in their content. She learned how to be more analytical when looking at coursebook material and this helped her to understand some of the problems she had faced with Headway:

"If I don't have the chance to come here, I don't know what's going on in the text books describing what is not relevant to my own country teaching, and why they have some topics and tell you to teach in some ways…I never knew that before I just followed the book" [MayaI13]

Instead of accepting the material, Maya learned how to view it through a more critical lens which helped her to rethink her teaching:

"If I have to teach Headway I was thinking culture is the big a biggest difference between us and so the topics cultural affairs, taboo topics ..I would change those to show our reality not Headway reality…I was thinking in our class that

some things are necessary for young people in Myanmar and these are better topics for teaching English" [MayaI13]

Therefore, Maya appeared more confident in her knowledge of material; she was no longer going to *follow* the book, but intended to take more control of what and how she taught.

During a discussion of *professional aspirations* in his interview, Khahn talked about his dissertation in which he had analysed coursebooks used in university teaching in Vietnam. He had developed this idea through learning about coursebook analysis and some of the politics linked to their production which changed his perspectives on coursebook use:

"I like looking at books because before I never paid attention to anything and these days when I select materials for my students I look quite carefully..err I evaluate different aspects.. topics.. what the activities are designed for and how the book says to teach.. the organising of lessons so if it will work " [KhahnI12]
"So the course helped .[..]?"[i]
"I think it's like a moment of Epiphany before I took everything for granted and I didn't ever really think about anything at all and now when I do anything I just think "Why do people do that" like courses and err coursebooks err like does it help if I change this bit or that bit [of the book] and is this useful for my students..some parts are kind of not relevant or err appropriate at all and I see that more I mean why teach it? …so I think designing materials is now so interesting" [KhahnI12].

Khahn therefore had gained a deeper understanding of the complexity of coursebook material, and the actors that comprise and influence their content. He had also become more analytical in view of how material may relate to his students or not and thus their impact on teaching. This inspired how he imagined a future professional-self as a materials designer (section 6.4.3.1).

As well as being more critically aware of course book materials, Khahn also talked about his current teaching situation and the problems he faced with it in relation to *challenges* and *change.* He compared the situation with teaching in Vietnam:

"it's the opposite of when I taught in Vietnam because when I taught at the university we didn't have any freedom at all and now we kind of have too much….we are given a very loose scheme of work" [KhahnI12]

Khahn studied aspects of syllabus design in his MA and he explained that this was especially useful for understanding his current situation. He now understood that syllabus, methods and material need to be inter-linked for a course to run smoothly, and so began to question the format of the courses he was teaching:

"*I think they say OK here's the scheme of work and it's kind of linked to the CEFR the skills they need but then the those skills need to be linked into a theme but because the curriculum doesn't link them properly it can be confusing for the teachers […] because what some teachers have done is they look at the syllabus and they say OK I'll just do this bit and I'll teach whatever I want…they just choose bits and pieces" [KhahnI12]*

Moreover, he saw that the learning outcomes were poorly defined and so it was not clear to teachers how to meet these:

"So sometimes the learning outcomes are vague and difficult to transform into teaching activities and that's why I'd like to see a better framework for teachers with material linked to the scheme of work" [KhahnI12]

Through thinking critically about the course, Khahn suggested that it required tighter cohesion between the syllabus, CEFR levels and materials. In this way, Khahn illustrated how he was beginning to transfer criticality to his work.

This section has shown how some participants evidenced a transition towards becoming *critical teachers*, using critical thinking skills developed through study to question rather than accept problematic aspects of their teaching. This leads to the final part which focuses on academic writing in postgraduate study.

6.3.5 Challenges and opportunities of academic writing

Academic study requires proficiency in academic writing, and as assessment draws largely on written work, developing writing skills appropriate to the conventions of a particular academic context is crucial (Maringe & Jenkins, 2015). In the case of my participants, studying in a UK university required a shift to writing in English and adapting to different conventions of academic writing. International students also have to write about concepts that may be challenging to write about in their L1, and therefore even more so in English (Maringe & Jenkins, 2015), which may impact on their confidence as users of English

(Nguyen & Dao, 2019). Indeed, some of my participants expressed frustration over this. Sami, Juan, Manar and Hakim especially talked about their problems with writing when they first came to the UK; in this part I will include extracts from Sami, Juan and Hakim.

To begin, Sami talked about his initial problems adapting to an English-speaking study context. This was linked to the theme of *professional aspirations* in his interview:

"I remember when I came here I had difficulty with English, as err I thought I could speak English well but it was a little bit hard and hard …how to write, to write assignments…it was quite challenging" [SamiI4]

Sami said he had gradually developed the key skills he needed for his written work to be accepted and pass (the EdD has written assignments before the thesis) but that this had been a stressful and challenging process:

"You know, before I didn't have the ability to manage references, the sources, to define paragraphs, but after each assignment, I felt I am progressing [..] I worry a lot at first but then I saw I am getting better" [SamiI4].

The topic was revisited during the focus group when discussing relationships to English [Q4] and Juan explained how this has presented particular challenges to him:

"I see English as an asset erm I can use to get things done…[…] obviously there are challenges of myself in terms of English I would say..err.. one of them is writing I think that's my challenge to be writing more after these EdD experiences …they require of you lots more writing and it's a different way of errm writing"
In what way? [I]
"I remember I was really confident when I came here actually, but now I see I have to write in another way and have to formulate my style err organise writing with new rules to be successful and its hard err hard to present everything in a satisfactory way" [JuanFG1]

At this point Sami agreed, adding to experiences discussed in his interview:

"Writing is difficult, even if you write in your language, so in English with new ways its really err hard" [SamiFG1]

However, developing skills to write effectively in English guided participants' interest in research. Sami talked about getting a paper published which had really encouraged him to persevere in his writing, and Hakim explained that by becoming more confident in his writing, he was now considering research to be a possible future direction:

"*This is part of my thinking, my writing is better and I learned how to do research properly and this is a good tool which I might do a lot in the future because I can do a piece of research easy enough err I didn't know how to do research before coming here and I really couldn't write it in English" [HakimI1]*

This part indicates the challenge that academic writing in English presented to some participants, but also that being able to claim identities as academic writers began to open up possibilities of becoming researchers, which will be further discussed in section 6.4.1.

6.3.6 Discussion

In this part, I examine the implications of postgraduate study experiences towards re-shaping identities. I consider how past experiences and the actors influential in these may interlink with participants' perceptions and experiences of postgraduate study and how it may inspire alternative future identities.

For international teacher-students, studying in the UK requires adaptation to a different socio-educational context. Factors such as the curriculum, the ideologies under-pinning its principles which in turn shape the course syllabi and teaching materials create particular ideals of teaching and learning (Duff, 2017) and therefore how taught sessions are enacted. For some participants, the pressure to speak out in taught sessions presented a notable challenge. As Singh and Richards (2006) point out, interactive sessions rather than lectures are often a preferred form of delivery on MA TESOL courses. Interaction in these is created through participating in activities, discussing literature and responding to questions and students become *enrolled* into the sessions through contributing and participating. ANT uses the term *purification* to describe such situations in which preferred practices are *mobilised* in actor-networks and valued over others (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.49). As described by some participants, in the

sessions they attended oral participation was the preferred practice expected of them which we can infer to have been *mobilised* by the lecturer and the questions and discussion activities introduced.

In these sessions, certain participants positioned themselves against peers who were perceived to be more proficient and therefore more legitimate English users. As Norton (2001) illustrates, some learners may be uncomfortable speaking to people who they see as more legitimate members of a community and this resonates with the stories of my participants. Maya and Arkar, for instance, both compared themselves with others who appeared more able to respond spontaneously. They identified themselves as *poor* participants because of their lack of confidence. Maya also indicated that she was even more shy with 'native-speakers'. and did not question the pre-held assumptions that 'native-speakers' are more proficient because English is their L1, even though others may have wider linguistic knowledge and resources (Holliday, 2015; Pennycook, 2018). Their experiences relate to findings of other studies (Park, 2012; Kamhi-Stein, 2011; Brutt-Griffler & Saminy, 1999; Pavlenko, 2003; Reiss, 2011) which show that teachers self-perceived lack of linguistic resources and resulting lack of self-confidence influence how they position themselves with more proficient others. As Park (2012) indicates, this can create feelings of powerlessness or incompetence and a tendency to stay on the periphery when participating in a study group rather than becoming fully *enrolled* into it.

Moreover, both Arkar and Maya feared that *not* participating created a negative impression among their peers and lecturers. It might feed the stereotype Maya referred to that Asian students preferred to be quiet, an assumption that has been shown to shape lecturer expectations of how Asian students engage in western study contexts (Holliday, 2017). However, Maya and Arkar expressed frustration and disappointment in themselves because although they wanted to speak, they feared their language would be judged by others. Their concern over use of language interwoven with identities as '*non-native'* speakers therefore over-shadowed the potentially valuable contributions that they might bring to a discussion.

Nevertheless, Aysha had found a tool in ELE which helped her to overcome her shyness in taught sessions. ELE provided access to resources which helped her to formulate her thoughts and questions before a session. The powerpoint slides and resources she could access before sessions facilitated her participation in the group, which may otherwise have been difficult for her. In effect, these invited Aysha to participate more confidently in taught sessions. Her story shows how technologies (ELE, the electronic resources) both participate in learning practices as a technological resource and *entice* participation (a form of *interessement*) by making learning material more accessible. In this way, as Sørensen (2009) argues, technologies can play a part in *enrolling* others into participating in a learning network.

What is of particular significance in participants' stories is how they reflected on their experiences to re-consider their students apparent reluctance to speak in lessons. In this way their study experiences helped them to understand issues they had faced as teachers. Muriel's story, for instance, exemplifies how coming to study in the UK helped her to more critically address the ways in which her students had avoided speaking in her lessons. Her own experiences of not wanting to speak in sessions helped her to think differently about her students and realise that they might be experiencing similar emotions. As argued by Zembylas (2003), emotions experienced in particular events shape how individuals construct their identities and relate to associated others; teacher and learner identities become shaped through their classroom interactions and the emotions interwoven with these. Muriel's recognition of her anxiety about speaking in taught sessions influenced her research which aimed to reduce similar anxieties of her students.

Therefore, while the effect of former learning experiences are known to shape teachers' current practices and the sense they make of these (Brtizman, 2003), *re-becoming* a student may be significant in shaping identities through critically reflecting on one's responses to different experiences of study from both a student and teacher perspective. This may enable teachers to better understand their students' responses to learning and adapt their teaching (and identities) to support them. This calls for activities which encourage self-reflection and sharing of emotions to be integrated into MA course content as regular activities (e.g.

reflective diaries or blogs). From these, further discussion may be directed to encourage deeper thinking of the complexity of learner participation and emotion and the different interactions that take place in lessons.

Teaching methods were also significant in the findings in relation to learner participation and interaction. Kumaravadivelu (2016) describes methods as "the operating principles shaping all other aspects of language education: curriculum, materials, testing and training" (p.73), and therefore central to the ways in which teaching is performed in different contexts. Because TESOL methods and approaches tend to be rooted in westernized practices (Holliday, 2015), international teachers from other contexts may face dilemmas when trying to relate certain methods to their local teaching (Yeh, 2011; Li & De Costa, 2018) as indicated by Arkar.

Arkar illustrated such an issue in his dilemma over using CLT; while he was excited about this as a tool to encourage student participation, he saw potential conflict with university teaching in Myanmar. There he explained the problems of managing large class sizes and this had not been discussed in the CLT sessions in his MA sessions. As Morgan (2016) argues, such content frequently promotes a 'default' teacher identity supportive of principles such as learner autonomy and learner-centredness assuming a universal acceptance across contexts. CLT also draws on SLA theories developed in western cultures of learning and teaching (Yeh, 2011; Tsui, 2007). These are likely to be based upon small group sizes, often multilingual groups in which target language use is easier to monitor, and classroom arrangements are conducive to group and pair work (Holliday, 2005). Therefore, Arkar saw difficulty in transferring CLT directly to classrooms in his local university which had its own traditions of practice. In other words, the co-existence of traditional and new practices was likely to cause issues, as shown in other studies (e.g. Liu & Xu, 2011; Tsui, 2007).

Tension between traditional and new practices can be conceptualised as a form of resistance when something new threatens to disturb the normal functioning of a network of practices (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). When particular methods become entrenched into institutional practices, they are unquestioned or *black-boxed*. As indicated by Arkar (and others), teachers follow rather than question these, adhering to given syllabus, books and lessons plans which together form

an *actor- network* of practice endorsed by the institution. By complying, teachers, as *actors* themselves, strengthen the *actor-network*. Therefore, when Arkar (6.3.2) suggests that for instance his colleagues might object to him teaching in another way, he infers that he could become a threat to the stability of the teaching routines they are accustomed to. Indeed, by introducing communicative practices, Arkar would indirectly question traditional ways of teaching and the established *actor-network* of practices they have formed.

Arkar's dilemma therefore highlights issues of transferring knowledge. When knowledge is understood as being held in the mind, it is simply transferred by the person who holds the knowledge. This is representational knowledge (Sørensen, 2009). However, knowledge is interpreted in relation to particular experiences and contexts and so there are different ways of interpreting a form of knowledge or as Sørensen (2009) argues, knowledge situated in a particular *network* of practices may not be readily adopted by another. Methods (as pedagogical knowledge) therefore cannot be transferred without considering other actors in a *network* of practices; they require alignment with the syllabus, materials and exams, and teachers who are willing to implement them. In view of his dilemma, Arkar identified small interventions to implement some communicative principles into his teaching. He formulated possibilities of introducing small activities to promote autonomy and interest and therefore encourage oral participation. In effect, he would partly adopt a more desired identity as a *communicative* teacher while avoiding conflict with colleagues.

Certainly, adopting new methods requires a rethinking of how to assemble and enact lessons. They are under-pinned by particular theories and ideologies of teaching (Crookes, 2015; Morgan, 2016) which *mobilise* certain teaching techniques, integrate certain materials and activities and maybe shift teacher and learner roles. As such methods and approaches are not single entities but can be conceptualised as networks formed by these inter-related *actors* which function together to define how lessons become performed. Although not referring specifically to language teaching, Sørensen (2009, p.176) talks about a particular learning practice as "a pattern of relations of human and non-human components" through which both participation and conflict may occur. Therefore, learning about different practices needs to involve a critical appraisal of them in

order to understand their socio-political roots intentions and implications (Crookes, 2015). This would highlight how different practices, enacted through choice of teaching method or approach, may enhance learning in some contexts yet cause conflict in others, and thus be useful to international English teachers like my participants.

Despite their potential challenges, it was evident that learning about methods and approaches was an important aspect of postgraduate study for some participants. My findings show how some participants were introduced to teaching possibilities they had not been previously aware of, such as communicative approaches which showed them how to make learning more interactive and fun. This adds to Nguyen and Gao's study (2019) which showed how postgraduate study facilitated understanding of integrating fun and learning through communicative activities. However, some of my participants also linked the methods introduced to them as potential solutions to challenges they had talked about, such as student willingness to speak and motivation. For Muriel, Maya and Arkar especially, this seem to open up new identity possibilities which were more closely aligned with those they aspired to.

As well as methods and approaches, it seemed that theoretical concepts of SLA became especially meaningful for certain participants. Some studies have found that while MA courses integrate SLA theory, it is often taught in an abstract sense, without being linked to practice (Govardhan et al., 1999; MacDonald et al., 2001). However, although Maya found theoretical concepts challenging, participants also illustrated how SLA theory had become meaningful to them because concepts were linked to practical aspects of teaching.

Notably, SLA theory became more accessible to participants when discussed in relation to methodology, teaching activities and materials. Situating theory in this way deepened awareness of how theory functioned (or not) in classroom situations and the effects created on learners. In addition, Rena and Maya (6.3.2) talked about sessions in which their lecturers had used a 'loop-input' technique (Woodward, 1986) a form of experiential training. Lecturers presented material using techniques which could be applied in a language lesson so that activities and material were experienced from the perspective of a language learner. For

instance, an academic text could be given as a jigsaw reading exercise. This would later be followed by a discussion to reflect on the effectiveness of the activity, the interaction it created and how it might enhance learning, by *mobilising* student interaction in certain ways. As well as loop-input, Maya also referred to demonstration of material, like a dictogloss, which was also beneficial. Experiencing an activity, interacting with peers and the associated material illustrated its potential and also issues which might arise in use. Arguably, if the activity or material is then linked to theory, this deepens understanding of the theoretical principles it is based upon and of the theoretical concepts itself. From the findings, this seemed to support understandings of *how* an activity functions in a lesson (as an *actor*) to produce certain forms of learning and thus create particular forms of interaction among learners and teacher (as social *actors*). Conceptualising theory through practical examples may encourage teachers to draw on theoretical knowledge to better understand practice, and therefore theory would become a regular part of lesson planning. This in turn could generate more critical reflective practice among teachers as indicated by Rena (6.3.2), of understanding *why* and *how* things work in lessons. In effect, as Ellis (2011) also suggests, SLA theory could become a tool for teachers to theorize how issues may arise in lessons. Through a process of critique of a situation, potential solutions could then be innovated which might open up further identity options.

This notion of becoming *critical* is especially significant to language teachers whose roles often integrate social mediation as well as transmitting language and cultural knowledge (Hawkins & Norton, 2009). Becoming critical involves developing a *critical consciousness* of teaching, a concept discussed by Crookes (2015), through which teachers develop critical stances towards their profession and institutional contexts (Abdenia, 2012; Park, 2012). This was similarly apparent in Hakim's stories on how Paolo Freire's work had influenced him. The banking concept of education conceived by Freire (1970) enabled him to better understand the discomfort he had felt when positioned as a *conduit* who merely transferred knowledge to students. His experiences suggest he had faced what Britzman (1994) calls the "traditional powerlessness" of being a teacher when joining an established system. He was pushed to accept an identity of a *conduit* which was contrary to his preference of guiding and encouraging students. However, Hakim noted he had become more critical by questioning and looking

at different perspectives of a situation, for instance the challenges he had described in his past teaching. While this does not take away such challenges, as Tripp (1996) argues, a way to break from past habits is to examine them to see what could be changed. Thus, understanding how different *actors* influence a situation may inform and shape teachers' responses and potentially guide their actions towards workable solutions. Rather than taking things for granted, therefore, becoming more critical and questioning norms of practice may reveal that entrenched practices are not necessarily the most beneficial for teachers and learners but are used to ensure conformity or to align with institutional values.

The notion of 'taking things for granted' is conceptualised as *matters of fact* by Latour (2005). *Matters of fact* are accepted and even hidden (*black-boxed*) within routines which are unquestioned. Conversely, *matters of fact* can be turned into *matters of concern* by questioning and problematising, and unravelling situations to consider the actors involved and how they become powerful. This was illustrated to some extent by Hakim, but further illustrated by Maya and Khahn in relation to coursebooks and curriculum.

EFL Coursebooks have been critiqued for the nature of their content, inclusivity, the ideals of teaching they promote and the effects these may have in diverse contexts (Gray, 2016). Therefore, for some participants, learning more about the composition of coursebook material and the different *actors* involved in its formation revealed how the content and format were shaped. For instance, Maya (6.3.4) became more confident in questioning the topics which she called "Headway reality" that seemed disconnected from the realities of her students. In this sense she was beginning to take up the concept of *praxis* in linking theory to a practical teaching problem (Hawkins & Norton, 2009) and rethinking what could be more appropriate material for her students. Khahn (6.3.4) similarly talked about critical analysis in relation to coursebook material and also curriculum design. In his words, instead of taking everything for granted, he began to question the activities and exercises interwoven in coursebook material, and think more deeply about their relevance to his perceptions of learner needs and motivation. The coursebooks which had been routinely used by Maya and Khahn became *matters of concern* through questioning their content and deciding if they were really useful and appropriate.

In addition, Khahn (6.3.4) illustrated how his shift in thinking enabled him to identify the disconnections between the different *actors* (the syllabus, CEFR descriptor, materials, methods, assessment) interrelated through the curriculum of the course he taught on, and understand why teachers (bringing their own identities and interests) struggled to negotiate it. As argued by Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p.69) what or who is *enrolled* and *translated* in a curriculum impacts on both teaching and learning. This recognises an interplay of human and non-human *actors* which shape how the teachers interpret and perform a curriculum in lessons (Harris-Hart, 2009, cited in Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.69). Through questioning the curriculum design, Khahn could recognise that *actors* such as level descriptors (CEFR), syllabus, materials and learning outcomes were misaligned and therefore did not function to create a coherent course. In effect, he turned the way the curriculum was constructed into a *matter of concern.*

These sections have shown how becoming critical was an aspect of development and identity formation for some participants. Instead of accepting what was given, they began to question and in doing so asserted their beliefs and values about their teaching. Abdenia (2012) noted similar shifts in a study of teachers in Iran, referring to them as “shifts in critical autonomy” (p.710). Such shifts enable teachers to examine issues with a deeper awareness of the different influences at play and the effects they have on their teaching practices thus forming *matters of concern*. Becoming critical therefore involves exploring a situation from multiple positions and as Mol (2002) points out, asking “Is this practice good for the subjects (human or otherwise) involved in it?” (p.165). These findings illustrate how postgraduate study can develop critical teacher identities by linking knowledge to *matters of concern* in their local contexts.

Criticality is also integral to academic writing, a necessary skill for postgraduate study. In Canagarajah’s (2018) aforementioned study of PhD students, participants commented that academic writing became easier for them (than speaking) once the accepted ‘format’ was grasped. However, academic writing appears more complex than simply learning a *format*; for instance, it interweaves student perspectives, their responses to the literature read and, as Gourlay (2015) suggests, digital and other tools used in academic writing. Therefore, my

participants had to not only adapt to unfamiliar academic conventions but also develop skills to express their perspectives through their writing.

As postgraduate students, participants completed written assignments which were designed to meet the expectations set out by learning outcomes (as detailed for MA and EdD pre-thesis assignments) and to satisfy the associated marking criteria in order to 'pass'. In ANT terms, the learning outcomes and marking criteria together create an *obligatory passage point* (Latour, 2005) through which students' writing must pass in order to become accepted. In order to do so the different *actors* which make a *good* text (the conventions of structure, style, referencing and digital technologies required to produce a text as well as relevant content guided by the brief set) need to be assembled in a particular way, then they function together to produce a text which performs according to academic conventions and thus is deemed acceptable. What is of most significance for this study is that being able to pass through the *obligatory passage point* integrated into participants' respective writing assignments brought realisation that they had access to wider professional networks such as research and publication which previously they had not felt eligible for. This then inspired imagined identities as *teacher-researchers*, made feasible through the knowledge and skills gained in postgraduate study. These identities will be explored in the next section on *imagined professional-selves.*

6.4 Imagined professional-selves

Through the narratives of participants, it has been shown how past and present (postgraduate study) experiences have shaped identities and in some cases been inter-linked with each other. In this section, I illustrate how some participants portrayed imagined professional identities as part of their teacher *becoming*, especially how they imagined negotiating teaching in the contexts, the 'third space' (Llieva et al., 2015) they will return to. I thus trace links between these imagined identities, past experiences and postgraduate study. I discuss how participants imagined futures have been influenced by interplays of ideologies and associated *actors* in institutional contexts as well as concerns over their students in class. Pavlenko (2003) argues that teacher education needs to open up different identity options which enable teachers to formulate imagined selves

they may not have considered before, and I will therefore examine how postgraduate study may also have been influential.

6.4.1 Becoming teachers

It was notable that Maya, Rena and Lian, as less experienced participants, envisaged their near future as teachers. Rena for instance explained that until she had more experience, she could not construct a clear picture of her future teacher-self:

"I'm still err…getting an identity as a teacher unless I see more practices and then trying to test those I can't really tell what kind of teacher I will be" [RenaI11]

These participants therefore imagined roles in different institutions in order to gain wider experience. Rena also envisaged working in different countries and with students of varied backgrounds, while Maya and Lian talked about working in private schools and even running their own courses; For instance, Lian suggested courses that would blend communicative and exam-oriented syllabi:

"In my courses, I'd focus on the communication they need to master English err CLT and the other part they'd focus on exams so they can get a good score so I combine these.." [LianI6]

This aligned with her desires to introduce communicative teaching while keeping a focus on exam preparation recognising her students' investment in learning was linked to exam success.

More experienced participants, Sami, Yusuf and Manar, also wanted to continue teaching and to invest themselves, their knowledge and skills in engaging and motivating students. Other participants, however, imagined professional-selves as researchers or teacher educators, course-book and App designers and also test designers. I will now report on these in turn.

6.4.2 Becoming a teacher-researcher

I have already indicated how, for some participants, becoming more confident about their academic writing began to inspire future directions in research. In this

part, I will look at *becoming* a teacher-researcher in more detail as an imagined professional identity for Juan and Hakim.

Both Hakim and Juan talked about doing research in the future (linked to the theme of *professional aspirations*), by becoming teacher-researchers to investigate challenges and questions related to their teaching. Hakim envisaged research that would focus on enhancing learning for his students:

"…I think this research is for me and my department it will err reflect my students and give me an idea how to be a good teachers yes….how to help my students learn"
You'd be doing classroom- based[…]" [I]
"I think so I'm thinking of err it could be like action-research" [HakimI1]

Hakim referred to this point again in a focus group, talking about his relationship with English [Q4]:

"I think of using my knowledge here to develop my research expertise back there and I have the intention to do more and more research into my context using the knowledge I got from my EdD programme" [HakimFG1]

This shows how Hakim was beginning to formulate possible applications of knowledge and research skills to develop practices which could address some of the problems he had experienced and begun to critically question. Doing so would counter his dissatisfaction expressed when talking about past teaching, by using research to find feasible practices which would enable him to support his students.

Similarly, Juan was interested in using research to explore what he called "*more pedagogical adventures*":

"I could try things in a deeper way you know with being equipped with research skills I didn't have so I can now see [..]I'm pretty sure I could see things from a different perspective"
"Would this be classroom […]?"[I]
"It could be classroom research it might be connected to networking so I could start expanding or exploring more possibilities of research with other people and institutions because without those research skills even though you'd like to do it but you don't know how to do it I have knowledge now I can show other teachers[..] we always talk about classroom research but it could be much wider than just one class and perspective err like more influential" [JuanI2]

Therefore, instead of researching as an individual, Juan saw benefit in collaborating with other teachers on a research idea. Juan believed this could be more effective in terms of developing local pedagogies; if teachers were involved, they might be more conducive to trying out different practices. He also understood that he had developed research skills local teachers may not have and so could train them in the process. Juan reiterated his idea of collaboration in his focus group:

"I'm interested in academic writing, researching …so experiences about my profession you know what I do in lessons err I'd like to research and put them in writing and share them with other teachers so we see each other's ideas" [JuanFG1]

Becoming a teacher-researcher was inter-linked with desires to change teaching practices locally and as Juan indicated this could be more effective through a collaborative research-network of multiple teachers and classrooms to bring together varied perspectives of an issue. Although Juan's vision differed from Hakim, both wanted to focus research locally on developing teaching practices to enhance and make learning more engaging for students. This adds to literature highlighting institutional expectations and recognition as significant in becoming teacher-researchers (Xu, 2014) and suggests that researcher and teacher identities are also mediated by personal desires to develop teaching for the benefit of learners.

6.4.3 Becoming a teacher-educator

The previous part shows how research activities could be a channel for sharing knowledge with other teachers and aiding pedagogical development in local teaching networks. As De Costa and Norton (2017) suggest "language learning is enhanced by effective teacher training" (p.11) and both Hakim and Arkar talked about becoming a teacher-educator to facilitate sharing knowledge with local teachers. For both, future positions were determined by their institutions, but becoming a trainer or educator would be progressive in terms of status and influence. Hakim expressed his aspiration to become a "*real professional*" respected for his knowledge and expertise. He explained that his EdD studies

had enabled him to build this expertise which increased his confidence in becoming a teacher-educator:

"They [the ministry] might take me to a school again or I might be sent to a training centre to train teachers which I do think I have the capacity err knowledge to do now..I do actually see myself as a trainer now" [HakimI1]

Conversely, Arkar explained that he initially wanted to gain more teaching experience, but becoming a teacher-educator was a longer-term goal. This was partly stimulated by government investment into teacher-training in state institutions in Myanmar which included bringing in external consultants from English-speaking countries. While he appreciated their expertise, he also highlighted drawbacks which he talked about in relation to the interview theme of *professional aspirations* and professional development [FGQ7/8]:

"The government invite some native teacher trainers from UK and US to train teachers from primary, secondary and higher levels"
"Was that positive [..]?"[I]
"Yes but they [consultants] still have to think about the context because obviously Myanmar is very different to the States" [ArkarI14]

"I think there will be some culture conflicts so they are like training with communicative teaching so it's not very applicable in our context" [ArkarFG3]

Therefore, he suggested he had an advantage through combining local knowledge and new knowledge gained through his MA studies:

"[..] when I think I've got enough experience I just want to become teachers' educator ..err because when I do as a teacher I can only teach students in my class when I've got a job as a teacher educator I can train teachers …they can spread my knowledge to their classrooms so I think there will be lots of benefits"
"So you think your knowledge […]?"[I]
"I hope that I hope that the knowledge I learn from here will help a lot in the future it's one of my dreams" [Arkar114]

Nevertheless, Arkar was aware that for his aspiration to be realised there needed to be cooperation among other significant actors:

"I think it needs cooperation between the government and the younger generation maybe and also support from their experienced teachers…err because if you can match support from government or some supporting from experienced teachers errm the younger teacher inexperienced teacher will be

much encouraged so they will be able to do much better than previous generation" [ArkarI14]

For both Arkar and Hakim, postgraduate study played a part in developing their knowledge about teaching and building confidence in their ability to become teacher-educators in the future. Becoming a teacher-educator could fulfil desires to develop teacher-training and shape local teaching practices and as Barkhuizen (2021) indicates can be aided by inter-connecting experience of a teaching context with knowledge gained of the wider theories and discourses influencing teaching. I now continue with a focus on teaching materials and assessments linked to participant contexts and the imagined identities these inspired.

6.4.4 Becoming materials designers and assessment writers

Materials, technologies and assessment influence how teachers enact lessons and how learners engage with them. Sørensen (2009, p.18) argues that these material objects are not only present but are active participants in teaching and learning networks. They stimulate different responses from teachers and learners and thus create particular effects when introduced into lessons. Khahn, Muriel and Bulan talked about their interest in developing materials and assessments to enhance learning as part of their *professional aspirations*. In this part, I first show Khahn's interest in becoming a coursebook designer and Muriel's ideas of App development, before focusing on Khahn's and Bulan's interest in developing assessment design.

6.4.4.1 Materials designers

Khahn was especially interested in materials-development to better meet the interests and needs of university students in Vietnam. He was inspired through an MA module which led him to focus his dissertation on an analysis of a general English coursebook used in the Vietnamese university he had taught in:

"Err I like teaching but sometimes I'd like a little bit of a change and that is why I chose the modules like Testing and Course and Materials design [..] I quite like designing materials ..that's one of the things I also like to do and teaching helps me a lot as I get to know if this activity is good for this purpose.." [KhahnI11]

"For my dissertation I looked at err the design of the book used in Vietnam and it was very interesting to think of all the aspects, what isn't working" [KhahnI11]

Khahn believed the students' lack of motivation was partly linked to an exam-oriented syllabus:

"[..] the students in Vietnam don't need English so it's a tool for them to do something else and after that they just throw it away and they are not interested at all…but maybe we can change that if they see English is err ..a kind of communication tool something they can use not just learn about" [KhahnI11].

He explained how he would teach differently if he went back to Vietnam:

"If I go back I won't teach like before, I'll focus on what they need like for the exam but I'll experiment with other bits of language to get them interested and use topics they like…err this is what the book should be like some parts focusing on grammar and also activities communicating learning by speaking about interesting topics giving them more interesting practical language making blogs or something..like hey you can really use this!" [KhahnI11]

Khahn's ideal coursebook would therefore mirror the more communicative practices he wanted to integrate into lessons to encourage students to use language communicatively, while still providing material that would prepare students for the mandatory exams.

Like Khahn, Muriel expressed concerns over student motivation, but she was interested in using Apps as motivational tools. It has been shown in previous sections (6.2.2/6.2.3) how frustrated she had become with the university teaching in Saudi Arabia, but through her research in the UK she believed her Apps could help build more interactive sessions:

"I was amazed by the App I used so instead of ..I was focusing on reading skills you give them a passage to read […] so they read and answer some comprehension questions and then "OK who can answer the questions?" and everyone is afraid even though they find the answer..err with the App we put the questions in the App and it was like 100% every student participated"
"Why [..]?"[I]
"When it's time to discuss you can see people trying you know..encouraged because they saw their answers right in the App so they say "I'm right, I'm going to answer" [MurielI15]

While Muriel was unsure about continuing teaching, she imagined becoming more focused on App-development to further address student motivation:

"If I go back and develop anything there it would be on err tasks like my research task-based mobile learning …so you take the tasks that are in the book and try to tweak them in a way that relates to students and put activities in the App" [MurielI15]

These two examples show how imagined identities were linked to concerns over student motivation in past experiences and were also made feasible through knowledge gained in postgraduate study.

6.4.4.2 Assessment writers

Linked to his idea of developing a coursebook tailored for Vietnamese university students, Khahn also talked about his ideas of re-aligning assessments to integrate a focus on communicative language use which would therefore complement his coursebook. He explained that he better understood the process of test-writing through his studies:

"I think err developing tests and stuff and so that's something I'd like because before I thought that designing tests was an easy task you know but now I look at tests and there's err quite a lot of intellectual capacity and lots of things going on in the process of designing a test"[KhahnI11]

Khahn talked about a test used in his university in the UK which contrasted with the institutional tests (as well as TOIEC) used in Vietnam:

"[…]we have the TELL test here and the format is quite different and the speaking is interactive like more fun than IELTS speaking err I think the test is more on communication and real language use than just reading texts and answering questions like not just getting a score" [KhahnI11]

This inspired him to consider how tests could align with type of coursebook he wanted to design which would integrate communicative skills as well as linguistic knowledge:

"They [students] need to know that learning a language is well, it's all the skills and you use those skills for everything out there". [KhahnI11]

In essence, Khahn wanted to write tests which would highlight the practical uses of English to students and encourage students to see English as a tool to use beyond exams.

While this was an inspiring vision of testing, Bulan suggested another way she could develop assessment practices in Indonesia. While studying for her PhD, she joined language classes which she explained as an *opportunity* in her development that enabled her to observe other teachers:

"I learned a lot about how people conduct classes, how people learned in classes err so I attended Arabic and German class and I saw other ways of teaching foreign language' [BulanI5]

As part of this, Bulan was introduced to portfolio tasks as a form of assessment:

"So this is what I saw in these two foreign language classes they use portfolio..err so students are doing something that is more processed-based rather than results based ..so back there at home from the elementary school and higher education levels everything is results based so this kind of thing needs changing"
You mean [….]?[I]
"So this kind of assessment influenced how students learned so it's not just about you.. err get 80 or 90 points like you don't really acquire the language that way and some students are so low level they struggle and portfolio may be good for them" [BulanI5]

Experiencing portfolio assessment herself, convinced Bulan that integrating a process approach to assessment practices could enhance her students' learning, but she recognised that she needed to convince teachers and course directors:

"I want them [course directors, supervisors, teachers] to know that teaching English is not the same as all other subjects so the assessment is different so I want to introduce new ways like this err this is the way to do language assessments" [BulanI5]

Bulan thus realised that in order to introduce portfolios, she needed to persuade colleagues of their benefit and to create a shift in assessment practices.

Through this focus on imagined professional-selves we have seen how some participants envisaged identities as developing teachers as well as becoming teacher-researchers, educators, materials and test writers. These imagined

identities seemed shaped by reflections on past experiences, linked to the roles and functions they performed as teachers (Barkhuizen & Mendieta, 2020) and resulting desires to enhance learning. It was notable that some (Hakim, Sami, Arkar and Bulan) feared remaining in the same position, which would limit the extent to which they could apply and deepen knowledge gained through postgraduate study. Despite this threat, Bulan demonstrated her optimism that she was in a more influential position:

"I still have to go back to my institution for 10 years so I see me as an English teacher who runs from this class to another …but I want to speak up to change a little bit the way we teach English I see myself as stronger[..]" [BulanI5]

Speaking up as such requires confidence and it seemed that overall time spent in postgraduate study in the UK had helped participants to become more confident in their professional knowledge and to envisage how this might become interwoven with their future professional identities.

6.4.5 Discussion

The findings, overall, have supported understandings that language teacher identities are influenced by an interplay of social and material actors (Toohey et al., 2015) and that these influences may be linked to past as well as present experiences, and the social and material interactions interwoven with these (Barkhuizen, 2016). Identities are also imagined in relation to the future (Pavlenko, 2003; Barkhuizen, 2016) and this section will discuss the reported findings of the imagined professional identities of participants in relation to the literature as well as drawing on ANT.

Becoming a teacher-researcher involves traversing between teaching and researcher fields. Research as something that "university professors do" (Borg, 2017, p.127), is a perception that has fuelled some teachers' understandings of their roles as teaching not research professionals (Borg, 2013). Indeed, my participants had limited involvement in doing research before beginning their postgraduate studies perhaps through common factors cited by Block (2000) as limited time, skills or compensation for doing research. However, becoming a teacher-researcher can be an important aspect of identity formation; gaining

recognition for one's work and being seen as a contributor to knowledge on a local or wider scale shapes how teachers self-identify with themselves and their teaching contexts (Burns, 2017).

My findings indicate some links between postgraduate study and teacher-researcher identities imagined. Participants' development of academic writing and associated research skills lowered a potential barrier to doing research, and opened up opportunities to access wider research *networks*, for instance by publishing articles. It also inspired ideas of local research activity to develop teaching practices and the confidence to do research which participants had not had prior to their studies. This resonates with Edwards and Burns (2016) study in which research activity had a direct effect on their participants' self-confidence in affirming professional identities. Both Hakim and Juan envisaged classroom-based or action-research. As suggested by Burns (2010), this would enable them to try techniques, materials or activities and analyse and reflect on the effects on learners. It could also focus on issues, such as those Hakim highlighted in his stories of past experiences, to address questions about teaching and experiment with solutions (Burns, 2010). In essence, action-research could enable participants to examine how, for instance, using innovative or new techniques or materials could create different interactions among the *actors* involved; between *social actors* (students and teacher) as well as with *material actors* (coursebook, technologies, classroom objects such as the whiteboard). Thus, teaching practices may become *translated* if new ideas and innovations are then adopted.

Hakim imagined his research as an individual process, whereas Juan had an alternative vision of a network of research activity involving multiple teachers. It has been noted that teachers may be more confident doing action-research with the support of a partner (Burns & Westmacott, 2018), but Juan had a bolder vision of bringing together perspectives from multiple classrooms in his context. This research would inter-link cycles of an action-research intervention, but be conducted in different classrooms, and thus gather various interpretations of the effects observed. This could highlight how multiple enactments of a common idea are possible (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.158) and therefore provide a more nuanced view of the issue or question being addressed. It would also enable Juan to share his knowledge with other teachers thus *enrolling* more teachers into

research activity networks and encouraging them to become teacher-researchers.

The professional knowledge and skills gained through postgraduate study was also significant in building some participants' confidence towards becoming teacher-educators. Teacher-educators are often expected to provide solutions to teacher's professional problems (Gao, 2017) and to do so Hakim and Arkar (6.4.3) recognised the value of both communal knowledge and knowledge gained from their studies. Their experiences in local institutional networks provided awareness of the influences of different *actors*, such as the supervisors, text-books and teacher's guides discussed in section 6.2, and therefore how these might impact on teachers. Moreover, Hakim saw how he might apply his knowledge (e.g. Freire's concepts, 6.3.3.2) to shape future teaching practices, moving away from the banking concept he believed was damaging to teachers and students.

Becoming a teacher-educator may shape future norms of teaching by working with novice teachers to develop pedagogies suited to their classrooms (Barkhuizen, 2021). For instance, rather than try to change the familiar practices of experienced teachers, Arkar wanted to introduce CLT techniques to novice teachers to shape the practices they adopt. Informed by his experience of teaching in Myanmar, he envisaged a gradual infiltration of communicative approaches into teaching to re-shape entrenched (*black-boxed*) teaching 'norms'. Arkar understood the potential resistance to CLT by other *actors*, such as experienced teachers. Realities are made through practices performed in different situations, such as Arkar's teaching context, and ANT considers these practices to have a 'political life' (Mulcahy, 2011, p. 228). Adopted practices influence the ways in which power and knowledge is distributed (Moser, 2008, cited in Mulcahy, 2011, p. 228) and so introducing change, as Arkar had explained, has implications for the circulation of knowledge and shifts of power among teachers, supervisors and other *actors*. Therefore, rather than create conflict Arkar envisaged gradually implementing aspects of communicative practice.

Arkar wanted to introduce communicative practices to encourage learner participation and willingness to speak. Communicative teaching practices *mobilise* classroom materials, tools and technologies in ways which invite certain forms of participation in lesson enactments. According to Sørensen (2009, p.170), these material objects create links between teacher and students, acting as a shared resource among them. Indeed, examples of this have been explored previously (6.2.5) showing how the use of games and tools such as whiteboards create different interactions among students and initiate alternative ways of learning and participation. However, such changes require an *enrolment* of influential *actors* (e.g. those involved in curriculum and syllabus decisions). As Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p.113) point out it is only through such collaboration that changes in *actor-networks* become sustainable and that new concepts, practices and technologies that at first appear divergent may be *translated* into the "new norms".

Postgraduate study also promoted critical questioning of materials such as coursebooks, their content and pedagogy. The ideal coursebook that Khahn described (6.4.4) was a response to the discord between traditional teaching in Vietnam and problems with student motivation. Gray (2016) highlights the need for coursebook material to be relevant to the realities of learners, and Khahn's imagined coursebook aimed to engage students (and teachers) by including topics and cultural content which were more accessible. This could promote English as a tool useful beyond just passing exams, but as relevant to social or future career *networks* students may become involved with, and thus towards other forms of capital (Darvin & Norton, 2015). By thinking more critically about coursebook material as a *matter of concern*, Khahn envisioned a coursebook that extended practices of using English into other spaces.

EFL teaching materials have also become increasingly digitalised in recent years (Toohey et al., 2015) and as Toohey et al. (2015) point out, technologies are used particularly to foster learner engagement. As with coursebooks, technologies may also be introduced into learning contexts without due consideration of the ways in which already established materials are integrated into teaching and learning (Sørensen, 2009, p.190). This is significant for Muriel's research on Apps (6.4.4) for universities in Saudi Arabia where, according to her (and Manar's) stories,

teachers followed an exam-oriented syllabus with books prescribed by the institution. Introducing a new material could be disruptive, but Muriel found a way of integrating her App to support the given textbook rather than replace it. Her App provided exercises and activities linked to the same texts as the book thus facilitating a deeper engagement with these. Her research showed that the App introduced something novel into lessons, changing dynamics and interactions as students would participate more willingly, interact with the texts and exercises and respond to the teacher rather than remain silent. In addition, as Sørensen (2009) argues, it is important to have insight into how traditional materials shape teaching practices in order for introduced technologies to contribute further (p.191), and Muriel's prior knowledge of the syllabus and experience of using the given books enabled her to show sensitivity in design and implementation. This could lead her to further development of apps and fulfil her desire to express creativity. In effect, her experiences illustrate Sørensen's (2009) argument that technology, as an *actor* in learning *networks*, creates different forms of learning, knowledge and participation while attending to the particularities of educational practices.

Although participants' teaching experiences were in different contexts, some shared a common concern over exam-oriented syllabi. This has been illustrated in section 6.2.3 which showed how the presence of exams could be a significant *actor* by directing teaching and restricting identities teachers adopted. Exams can be understood as *obligatory passage points* (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010) which require students to answer questions aligned with a syllabus in order to pass through. In some participants' contexts, students would therefore pass by memorising language without having to use English communicatively. This meant that English was just a way of gathering points to pass through a system. In view of this, Khahn envisaged becoming an exam-writer (6.4.4) to produce exams that would instead test communicative use of language (e.g. through introducing interactive speaking tests similar to those he encountered in his UK university) and therefore aimed to assess students' language use as well as knowledge about language. His ideals resonate with points raised by Hu (2005, p.671) who critiques exams in the Chinese system for their lack of emphasis on communicative competences, and argues that testing sentence-level grammar does not produce effective users of English. It also links to Sørensen's (2009)

argument that “tests are easy measures to compare representational knowledge, but this does not mean that tests are relevant measures” (p.134). In effect, Khahn recognised that tests as well as learning materials should enhance the communicative value of learning English.

Bulan (6.4.4) formulated another alternative to exams by envisaging integrating process-based assessment into her institutional assessment practices. It was notable that Bulan had been involved in portfolio assessment as a student while studying for her PhD and therefore viewed this from a student and teacher perspective. Portfolios potentially offer a more learner-oriented form of assessment which through the tasks given *translate* student knowledge and learning activities into a collection of evidence of their learning into a coherent whole (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.121). The process of gathering evidence of learning is guided by the tasks given by the tutor which act as a channel of students’ work to be assessed:

> “Portfolios can act as mobilizers of diverse creative student expression, as everyday receptacles for activity, as demonstrations that state mandated standards have been met” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p.121).

Bulan believed portfolio assessment would enable her to design tasks which would be more accessible to learners while still aligned with the syllabus. In this way, learners may be encouraged to engage with the task and feedback rather than simply receiving a test score. Based on her experiences, Bulan believed portfolios may more successfully *enrol* learners into learning activities.

This part has therefore shown how imagined professional selves as teacher-researcher or educator, material and test writer were conceived by some participants and linked to past experiences and postgraduate study. As in Nguyen and Dao’s (2019) research, confidence gained through postgraduate study helped my participants to consider different identity possibilities and formulate these around ideals of enhancing learning (Hawkins & Norton, 2009). My findings emphasise how particular aspects of knowledge contributed to their conception of future professional identities which may otherwise have seemed less accessible. The imagined identities discussed also indicated the attention

participants attributed to material *actors* (coursebooks, apps, exams) and their potential functions in participants' future teaching lives. However, these were imagined with a critical awareness of their potential to disrupt established relations of power in local contexts (Hawkins & Norton, 2009).

6.4.6 Summary

This chapter has provided insight into the different ways in which social and material *actors* have been influential on the teacher identities of participants through their experiences of *becoming* teachers. The different experiences of my participants, as told through their narratives, illustrate the diverse teaching worlds nested within the wider TESOL profession. As Canagarajah (2018) points out, members in different social networks often belong to particular "ideological persuasions" which created identity struggles and frustration for some participants. ANT as a conceptual tool, was useful in considering the influences of *both* social and material actors in shaping teacher identities and interpreting the ways in which relations between different actors may create certain impacts. For instance, the stories of participants' past experiences illustrated the interplays of different actors in the institutions they taught in. Some extracts showed how supervisors, teacher's manuals, coursebooks, exam and syllabus texts functioned together to ensure teachers conformed to preferred institutional norms and practices. This was significant in terms of identity as desired identities appeared in conflict with those that institutional practices endorsed. Participants therefore expressed frustration because they could not teach in ways which they believed would encourage their students. However, the findings also show how some participants benefited from workshops which introduced them to practices that they could use to engage and motivate their learners and benefit from the new identity options this opened up. These stories highlighted the ways in which material objects function to entice students into learning in novel ways, shifting interactions between teacher, learners and the material resources used.

The findings also emphasise the impact of *re-becoming* a student and the potentially powerful link between reflecting on one's own challenges and emotions when in learning situations as an international teacher-student and using these experiences to re-think the motivation and engagement issues of

students. This could be exploited further in postgraduate study as a tool to deepen understandings of learner motivation and explore context-linked solutions. Moreover, the participants came from diverse backgrounds, and therefore it was interesting to see the links they made with particular aspects of postgraduate study (as MA and PhD students). In some cases, interpretations of knowledge could be traced to past experiences and the *actors* who had been influential on their teaching before joining study programmes. Therefore, certain theories (e.g. Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy; SLA concepts) and pedagogical activities had particular resonance with individuals and supported a deeper awareness of how syllabus, materials and methodologies impacted upon them. This highlighted ways in which theoretical concepts became meaningful for certain participants and emphasised the significance of promoting theory as a tool that teachers can use to develop their practices, and to deepen understandings of their institutional *actor-networks* and question rather than accept what is taken for granted in these.

The findings link aspects of past and postgraduate study experiences to the imagined professional identities some participants aspired to and emphasises (to some extent) how these were becoming feasible through postgraduate study, and were frequently related to participant desires to develop and in some cases change teaching and learning situations that had challenged them in the past. Therefore, as Block (2017) argues, teacher identities can be conceived as a continual narrated process and the findings show some indication that imagined futures are inter-twined with past and present teaching and learning experiences of these narratives (Barkhuizen, 2017).

In the final chapter, I bring together the main implications of the findings and the directions for further investigation they point to, and the limitations of this study. I also discuss my use of ANT with an analysis of narratives, and its benefits and limitations as a theoretical tool to understand the ways in which social and material actors may shape teacher identities over time.

7.0 Conclusion

As argued in the literature review, teacher identity is a complex construct, which, as Barkhuizen's (2017) composite conceptualisation of identity suggests, is composed of multiple dimensions linking in different ways to the diverse contextual realities of teachers' work. Identities therefore become shaped by influences in the societies teachers work in, their institutions and in their classrooms as they negotiate their teaching practices (De Costa & Norton, 2017), as well as through research and professional development (Gray & Morton, 2018). Accordingly, my findings have shown how identities of English teachers from different contexts have been shaped and re-shaped through their teaching and professional development experiences in their local contexts. They then show how identities have become further influenced through postgraduate study in the UK. My findings have thus added insight into the ways in which both *social and material actors* inter-linked with their teaching and professional development experiences (and associated *actor-networks*) have been significant in participants' identity formation over time, as framed by my research questions. As Zembylas (2003) suggests, narrative research enables an exploration of identity which emphasises how personal narratives develop "in response to situations, practices and available resources" (p.107). As such, in my study the storied experiences participants shared in interviews and focus groups provided insight into *what* and *who* has directed the teacher identities available, adopted or resisted.

This final chapter summarises the contributions my study brings to language teacher identity research. It specifically evidences how social and material *actors* can be influential in processes of *becoming* international English teachers through past teaching experiences and postgraduate study in the UK, and the imagined professional-selves that may be formulated through these. In addition, the chapter highlights limitations of my study as well as recommendations for further research which have become apparent through conducting and reflecting on the research process.

To begin, I discuss how my study contributes to the growing field of research on language teacher identity, directing attention to material as well as social *actors*

as being influential in the identity formation of international teachers of English. From this, I also propose potential directions of research which could build on my findings, recognising especially that these are based on a small number of teachers. Next, I reflect on my use of ANT as a conceptual tool and suggest how it may be usefully applied in further studies of teacher identity. The third part links to the methodology of my study, specifically focusing on my use of mind-maps and Padlet forms as novel data gathering and/or analysis tools and the particular dimensions they brought to my study. Through my experience of and reflection on using these tools, I will also suggest ways in which they might be used in postgraduate TESOL programmes and adapted in ways to promote critical reflection and sharing of experiences among teacher-students. Finally, I explain limitations of my study, leading to recommendations for further research on language teacher identity.

7.1 Contributions to Language Teacher Identity Research

My study has focused on teacher identity formation over time, examining the inter-linking dimensions of past, present and future (indicated by my research questions) through past histories, postgraduate study and imagined futures. While the significance of social interaction and social *actors* involved in identity formation have been researched in previous studies of identity formation (e.g. Gray & Morton, 2018; Varghese et al., 2005; Liu & Xu, 2011), my study also explores the *potential* of non-human objects present in teaching contexts to perform particular functions and also become influential *actors* through their interrelations with others. It therefore contributes to and complements insights from the relatively small number of studies (to date) which have considered the role of material objects in language teaching and learning (e.g. Porter & Tanghe, 2016; Sørensen, 2009; 2013; Toohey et al., 2015) and focuses on teacher identity specifically. While Mulcahy's (2011) ANT study also focuses on teacher identity, this was not based on language teacher identity. My study, thus, offers insight into the inter-play of human and non-human *actors* influencing language teacher identity formation and evidences how different actors have been influential over time in the narratives of a particular group of teachers.

My findings highlight how material actors present in teaching situations can impact on teachers through the functions they perform which influence what teachers do and how. The tables in Appendix XVI provide a summary of my findings reported and discussed in chapter 6 and illustrate how different social and material actors have been influential in relation to my participants' identity formation. In response to my research questions, they highlight how identities have been shaped by different actors in past experiences and postgraduate study, indicating links between these. They also show how certain participants imagined future professional identities and how some of these were influenced by postgraduate study.

My participants' past experiences provided insights into their identity negotiation in the institutions they had worked in. Some previous studies of teacher identity have focused on the influences of social actors such as fellow teachers and mentors in teaching communities of practice (e.g. He & Lin, 2013; Liu & Xu, 2011; Tsui, 2007). While my study also shows how such social actors were influential, it provides examples of how material actors could be influential also and emphasises their interrelatedness with each other. For instance, my findings (in 6.2.1; 6.2.2; 6.2.3) show examples of how coursebooks, syllabus, exams, supervisors, preferred methodologies together created *actor-networks* functioning to uphold institutional expectations of teachers and direct their practices. This adds support to how institutional *actor-networks* have been depicted in the literature (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Fenwick et al., 2011) in terms of establishing 'norms' of teaching practices and ensuring teachers adhere to these to maintain institutional stability and power. These 'norms' have also been discussed in poststructural terms of normative discourses which dictate how teachers should act (Britzman, 1994). As Fenwick and Edwards (2010) argue, an ANT perspective contributes further by depicting how institutional *actor-networks* portray ways in which normative discourses are circulated through the functions of *actors* working to uphold stability and conformity (e.g. through given coursebooks, teachers' guides and supervisors shown in my study).

The interplays of these different actors illustrated in my findings therefore support Toohey's (2017, p.15) suggestion that teacher identities may be entangled with classroom resources, institutional policies and discourses about teaching and

learning. The experiences as told by my participants highlighted some of the challenges they had faced in their institutions, the actors involved and the impact these had on their identities (e.g. Hakim, Sami & Juan, 6.2.1; Muriel & Manar, 6.2.2). Their stories showed how their identities became shaped through their teaching practices and attempts to negotiate with the social and material *actors* involved (such as supervisors, students, coursebooks, teachers' guides, technologies and exams) which functioned to uphold institutional policies and preferred ways of practice. They also provided insight into how actors can both *act on* and *be acted upon* by others (e.g. Juan's supervisors 6.2.1), in order to strengthen and stabilise the functioning of institutional networks.

Through the interplays of the *actors* influential in their institutions, participants were directed towards performing particular identities which were sometimes misaligned with those they aspired to. Thus, my study contributes further to previous research which indicates friction between expected and desired identities (Liu & Xu, 2011; Pennington & Richards, 2016; Tsui, 2007; Shahri, 2018) by highlighting the ways in which different actors were involved in persuading teachers towards identities which aligned with institutional preferences. By using ANT as a conceptual tool, it also became more notable in my findings how various participants referred to material objects in ways which indicated how they were interwoven with the challenges they talked about (e.g. "*the manual tells you what to teach*", Hakim I1; "*You're bound by the syllabus*", MurielI15; "*the book is telling you what to do all the time", MayaI13*). This further indicates the significance of material alongside social actors, thus strengthening Hadfield's (2017) point that material objects may direct identity options, sometimes in restrictive ways.

However, also in relation to participants' past experiences, my findings exemplify (to some extent) how material resources such as language learning games can open up identity possibilities when introduced into teaching practices. Hadfield (2017) discusses how such materials can enable teachers to express creative and innovation aspects of themselves, and my findings illustrate this, through Yusuf's experiences (6.2.5). According to Yusuf, games had a considerable impact on his teaching approach, and therefore helped him to create fun in his lessons and adopt an identity *facilitating* learning. This shows, as Sørensen &

Meyer (2007) argue, how games may not only create particular dynamics in lessons, but different interactions among language learners and teacher as they engage in communicative exchanges. Nevertheless, I recognise that while communicative activities were referred to by different participants in relation to CLT, only Yusuf talked extensively about the impact of games on his teaching, thus further investigation is needed to strengthen this finding.

During teacher-training, games are often discussed in relation to CLT, but actually comparing different forms of interaction and engagement that may occur with different groups of learners could deepen understandings of how games *function* to entice language use (as a form of *interessement*) building on Jessen and Jessen's (2014) concept of games as *actor-networks*. In effect, using an ANT perspective (as in my study) helps us to consider how games (and other material resources) participate in the functioning of a lesson, and better understand how games entice and engage learners and change how teachers position themselves and are positioned through the effects a game produces. From a future research perspective, concepts such as *interessement and enrolment* could therefore facilitate deeper understandings of what materials *do* in lessons, the interactions they create and how different material resources may open up teacher identity possibilities.

Material resources also include objects sometimes taken for granted in classrooms, such as whiteboards and computers (Porter & Tanghe, 2016; Sørensen, 2009; Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). My findings (6.2.5.2) together with previous studies (e.g. Porter & Tanghe, 2016; Sørensen, 2009) suggest that objects such as a whiteboard can be *mobilised* in different ways to produce new forms of interaction among teacher and students. Thus, inviting teachers to consider "What can the whiteboard *do* in my lesson?", could raise awareness of its role in creating learner rather than teacher-focused interactions and its potential as a democratic space to perform different functions. This may enable teachers (as exemplified by Manar in my findings) to adopt more desirable identities. These points need further exploration (as my findings only relate to one teacher) but suggest a potentially useful direction to gain deeper insight into links between the ways in which classroom tools become *mobilised* and influence teacher identities.

The literature review has shown how teacher past histories influence identities enacted in teaching and development activities (e.g. Britzman, 2003; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Tsui, 2007; Shahri, 2018). In my study, based on some participants' narratives, *actors* inter-linked with past experiences remained influential in the teacher identities they brought to postgraduate study. This was indicated by their responses to aspects of postgraduate study, for instance theoretical and pedagogical knowledge introduced on their programmes and how some participants related this to challenges they had faced in the past, such as student motivation and participation in lessons (6.3.2; 6.3.3).

My findings therefore emphasise how forms of knowledge became more meaningful when related to classroom practices and related methods and materials. For instance, theoretical concepts of SLA theories were translated into meaningful knowledge when discussed in relation to course book material or demonstrated through classroom activities (e.g. Maya and Rena 6.3.2; 6.3.3) and thus principles of CLT (and potential problems) were better understood when experienced by some participants. In a previous study (Nguyen & Dao, 2019) postgraduate study was shown to facilitate gains in knowledge in relation to teaching methods. However, my findings show more specific examples of how theoretical knowledge was made meaningful and understandable to individual participants through the ways in which it was presented. These points therefore resonate with Mulcahy's (2011) argument that theoretical and pedagogical knowledge should be seen as integral to rather than outside teachers' practices. However, it was not feasible in this study to show if or how teachers applied knowledge after postgraduate study.

As indicated in previous studies (Abdenia, 2012; Zacharius, 2010; Brutt-Griffler & Saminy, 1999; Pavlenko, 2003; Shahri, 2018) learning about critical pedagogy was shown to influence identity formation. Some participants (Maya, Khahn & Hakim, 6.3.4) became more critical about their teaching and especially towards issues which they had previously taken for granted. Tripp (1994) argues that teachers' work and identities are "at least partly determined by the social and material conditions of our professional existence" (p.71). In accordance with this, *becoming* critical for these participants involved questioning and gaining different perspectives of a situation and of understanding *who* or *what* was influential. This

in turn seemed to impact on how they understood some of the challenges in their work, and shaped the future identities discussed.

My findings also show how re-becoming a student in postgraduate study brought challenges of participation in taught sessions. By becoming teacher-students, participants were involved in situations which, for some (Maya, Muriel, Arkar; 6.3.1), deepened their self-awareness of their own reticence and the emotions this produced. Using the ANT concept of *purification* highlights how oral participation is especially valued in UK university teaching, yet it was apparent that although aware of these expectations, some participants resisted speaking out in discussion. This was partly influenced by perceptions of being 'non-native' speaker teachers and adds a further perspective to studies which have focused on how international teacher-students position themselves and are positioned in academic study communities (Morita, 2004; Park, 2012). In particular, my study highlights how participants' experiences stimulated critical reflection on their own teaching, specifically their understandings of student oral participation.

In addition to links with my participants' past experiences, postgraduate study also influenced how some participants imagined their future identities. My intention was therefore to look for links between past, present and future identity formation (as framed by my research questions). However, although the narratives of my participants provided a wealth of data which depicted their identity formation over time, I was not able to relay all of the detail they provided within the scope of this thesis. Therefore, I feel I have provided *some* evidence of such links, but not detailed accounts. Hakim, Muriel, Arkar and Khahn's stories (in section 6.4), for instance, showed some evidence of how past experiences shaped their responses to aspects of postgraduate study and the future professional-selves they imagined. As discussed, their stories depicted how different aspects of theory and pedagogical knowledge had resonated in particular ways with their past experiences of *becoming* teachers. The knowledge and research skills gained also made certain future professional identities more accessible to them. For instance, my findings show how Khahn developed deeper understandings of coursebook material, syllabus design, testing and which enabled him to begin to formulate how he might address some of his concerns over student motivation by becoming a materials and test designer for

Vietnamese university students. Muriel also wanted to apply knowledge gained through her studies and her experiences of *re-becoming* a student to address issues of student participation by becoming an App designer. Similarly, Arkar and Hakim both envisaged future identities as teacher-researchers and educators to become more influential in addressing some of the issues they had discussed in relation to their teaching contexts. For these participants, it appeared that such identities were made more feasible through postgraduate study. Therefore, while previous teacher identity studies in postgraduate study contexts (Nguyen & Dao, 2019; Zacharius, 2010) have discussed imagined futures, they have focused less how these may be linked to past and present experiences. My study provides some insight into this and suggests value in pursuing further examination in future research.

7.2 Actor-network Theory

In studies of identity, ANT facilitates consideration of the role of material objects in identity formation (Mulcahy, 2011) and how these may be entangled in the social practices of individuals. As Mulcahy (2011) argues, processes of *becoming* teachers involve more than learning particular skills and acquiring core knowledge; rather *becoming* is a continual process, inter-weaving personal and professional selves, shaped by teachers' practices and the social and material actors involved in these. Through the stories of my participants, my study shows how teacher identities were sometimes imposed through institutional practices, and how some participants (e.g. Hakim, Sami) resented these or adopted them unwillingly in order to conform. ANT was especially useful as a conceptual tool to show how material objects (books, syllabus texts, tests) were interwoven into institutional practices and interacted in ways intended to direct how teachers performed their roles. ANT helped to highlight how these *actors* functioned to promote conforming identities which, as argued by Michael (1996), contribute to stability and durability in a network of practices. As indicated in my findings, ANT helps to show how such practices become normalized and taken for granted (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). ANT was also particularly useful in my study to conceptualise how postgraduate study helped some participants (e.g. Hakim, Arkar, Khahn; 6.3.4) to become critical of practices they had taken for granted and challenge identities they were expected to conform with, to create *matters of*

concern and use their gained knowledge to formulate alternatives. Therefore, my findings have illustrated how ANT may be useful in identity studies to examine how social and material actors perform interrelated functions in *actor-networks* integrated into institutional contexts and how teachers interact with these or resist them. ANT may therefore offer an alternative theoretical lens (e.g. to CoP theory) to further understandings of teacher identity formation through its recognition of heterogeneity in the interplays of *actors* shaping identities.

Using ANT in my study also raised points which supported previous studies (Jessen & Jessen, 2014; Sørensen, 2009; Sørensen & Meyer, 2007; Toohey & Dagenais, 2015) focusing on how games and technologies can produce particular effects in teaching and learning. I found ANT to be particularly useful in relation to participants' experiences involving material and technological resources, and in examining how these resources made certain identities accessible (e.g. by Yusuf, Manar and Muriel adopting identities which enabled them to become more facilitative, fun, and creative).
Significantly, the App Muriel designed (6.4.3.1) exemplifies how technology helped her to address an issue in her teaching and negotiate a solution which did not disrupt the roles of other *actors* such as the given coursebook and syllabus. Her experiences especially emphasise the need to consider other *actors* influential in a given teaching context before introducing new material. This aligns with Sørensen's (2009) points regarding the need to understand how materials create particular forms of learning and thus how changes in learning material can have "wide-reaching consequences" (2009, p.136). As Michael (1996, p.154) argues, technologies can shape human practices, and therefore the agency of materials as *actors* seems especially important for teachers to understand in terms of developing teaching practices (which could be linked to more desirable identity options) in the contexts they may return to after postgraduate study.

To build on these points in future research, ANT could also be useful in analysing how teacher identities become shaped in online environments, a thought spurred by the global pandemic of the past year through which many teachers, including myself, were suddenly required to move into online environments. I too have had to teach my modules, train teachers and observe lessons online, and this has led me to consider the ways in which I (and those I have trained) have interacted in

an online environment. For instance, familiar teaching tools and resources sometimes became redundant, and others were adopted, and I have seen how these have changed the dynamics of sessions and the ways in which teacher and learners interact. Therefore, I have wondered how online classrooms and the *actors* involved with these shape identities in particular ways. For instance, cameras play an important role in online classes, and I understand from comments made by colleagues that some teachers never see the faces of those whose cameras are turned off. How are teacher identities shaped by such situations? How does the camera function to create particular interactions? Therefore, ANT may be useful to examine how different resources and technologies may both make available and restrict the identities available to teachers. Such studies could contribute additional perspectives to existing studies of online teaching (e.g. Kiddle & Prince, 2019; Dvir & Shatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). They could also adopt a focus on past-present and imagined futures (as in this thesis) to examine identity shifts from past face-to-face situations into online teaching and thereon. As such, I propose ANT as a potentially useful tool to investigate the ways in which certain identities may be made more accessible in online situations, if these identities are valued by teacher, and if they are the same or different to those adopted (or resisted) in face-to- face teaching.

7.3 Reflection on data collection and analysis.

I now turn to my reflections of my use of mind-maps and Padlet forms in gathering and analysing data. While mind-mapping (see 5.4.4/5.5.3) as a data gathering or analysis tool has been usefully applied in areas of qualitative research (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2019), it has not been used much in studies linked to TESOL, based on my reading. In my study, mind-maps provide an alternative way of inviting participants to express experiences, giving them autonomy to direct discussions, and of visually representing the data collected.

Following the interviews, some participants commented informally about the use of mind-maps as a pre-interview reflective activity, expressing how the process of producing maps had helped them to reflect on their experiences and perceptions of teaching and learning. As also indicated by Wheeldon (2010), my

participants said that they helped them remember details during the interview and thus to tell their stories. Some participants also valued the autonomy the mind-map gave them during the interview, as they felt they could talk more fluidly about their experiences and focus on areas of most importance to them in the interview. This informal feedback (recorded in notes) was encouraging and supports the potential value of using mind-maps in data gathering as a way of promoting reflection and more authentic telling of experiences, especially relevant in narrative research. It has also inspired my ideas for using mind-maps as a tool for reflective discussion in the classes I teach, which I will discuss in section 7.4.

My use of mind-maps (and Padlet forms) in data analysis also offered an alternative way to represent the data I transcribed. The visual nature of the mind-maps facilitated reference to interview data at different points of the analysis process, and the maps could also be added to at different times. I found this helped me to frequently review the interview data and see points in relation to each other together on one page. This enabled me to maintain a clear picture of what was discussed in each interview. Padlet forms worked in similar ways to the mind-maps, providing a visual, flexible resource in the data analysis process. They proved particularly useful in bringing together points from focus group discussions in a visual format.

Therefore, I am in agreement with Wheeldon and Arhlberg (2019) that using mind-maps offers an alternative (or additional) step to more usual coding of data conducted in qualitative studies. As suggested by Wheeldon and Arhlberg (2019), their benefit may depend on the aims of a study or the personal preferences of the researcher; a more visually-oriented individual for example may find a mind-map helpful in the analysis process. It may be interesting to compare data analysis carried out by coding and mind-mapping to see if they produce similar interpretations; there has been some comparison evident in the literature (Burgess-Allen & Owen-Smith, 2010) in which differences were relatively small and also linked to the specific ways in which mind-maps were used. This adds credibility to using mind-maps as an analytical tool and suggests there is scope to investigate this further. Overall, from my experiences using mind-maps (and Padlet) I suggest that while coding is likely to remain a more widely used tool in data analysis, mind-maps (and Padlet) offer alternative or additional ways to

gather and analyse data especially for researchers who prefer a more visually-oriented approach.

7.4 Practical considerations for teacher development through postgraduate study

During the interviews and focus group discussions, I learned a lot about different teaching contexts that my participants had worked in. My participants' stories showed different perspectives of *becoming* teachers and how "good teachers" (Barkhuizen & Mendieta, 2020) were conceived in different institutions prompting me to reflect further on my own teaching background and the values and assumptions shaping the identities I take to the postgraduate sessions I teach. This has highlighted (to me) the value of sharing knowledge and experiences, for both teacher-students and for those tutoring them. Such value has been discussed in the literature (e.g. Farrell, 2015; Barkhuizen, 2021) but there may be scope in some MA programmes (including those I teach on) to create more opportunity to facilitate knowledge sharing by devising activities to encourage teacher-students to talk about themselves.

In my study, the process of *re-becoming* a student in postgraduate study was shown to be significant in shaping certain participant identities. Some of my participants made links themselves between the challenges and emotions they had experienced by *re-becoming* students and their perceptions of those they had taught (see Appendix XVI(b)). Such reflective activity seems to be a resource that is under-used in the programmes I have taught on, but which could become a meaningful form of critical reflection. This could involve reflective tasks (e.g. in the form of (video) diaries, reflective story boards) which could then be discussed in class to stimulate deeper consideration of how individuals feel in particular learning situations (for instance, when asked to speak in seminars) and to relate this to their teaching practices and theory. Mind-maps (or Padlets) could also be used in a similar way as a reflective activity, to encourage teachers to focus on particular aspects of their experiences and construct a mind-map to gather thoughts and emotions linked to these. They could then collaborate in discussion, asking questions about each-others' mind-map and sharing ideas, as well as

making connections with theoretical concepts under-pinning language teaching and learning.

Another point emerging from reflections on my findings is illustrating links between theory and practice by having teacher-students experience and reflect on activities and materials linked to particular teaching methods and approaches. This could be by the use of loop-input activities (shown to be beneficial in my findings) or simulations in which teacher-students act as language learners to try out activities. For instance, teacher-students may play a language learning game, and then engage in a critical discussion of how individuals had responded to its rules and materials, the emotions they felt during the process and the language actually produced. For postgraduate teacher-students especially, these discussions then provide a basis from which further links to theories under-pinning materials design and teaching methodologies can be explored. These discussions could also interweave views on how teacher identities may shift, become adopted or resisted through introducing new materials into lessons in different contexts.

The points discussed in this section present some thoughts on activities which may enhance teacher self-reflection on processes of *becoming* and emphasise the value of learning about and reflecting on the experiences of other teacher-students as well. These reflections evolved from my findings which indicate some of the ways in which postgraduate study may shape identities, inter-linking with past and future imagined identities. While previous research has linked identity formation with time in relation to MA TESOL programmes (e.g. Barkhuizen, 2016; Nguyen & Dao, 2019, Shahri, 2018) my study brings further perspectives of the social and material actors shown to be influential in the narratives of teachers of diverse professional backgrounds engaged in study in the UK as my overview in Appendix XVI illustrates.

7.5 Limitations and associated recommendations

The processes of data gathering, analysis and interpretation integral to the production of this thesis involved a series of decisions which directed my study and shaped the findings. Writing up the thesis involved reflection on different

aspects of the study from which some limitations became apparent. I now discuss these limitations which related to the scope of the thesis, and decisions on what to include, the numbers of participants, and the length of the data collection period. I also note my reliance on participant views of the situations and experiences discussed, and therefore represented teacher perspectives but not those of others involved.

My participants brought an array of storied experiences to the interviews and focus group discussions, and these translated into a wealth of data. They included stories of their past experiences of learning English, and the influences of former teachers and parents which were also significant in them *becoming* teachers. However, as explained in section 5.5.4, I had to limit what I included in my findings and, in relation to their past histories, I chose to focus on past teaching experiences. Nevertheless, findings not included here could be revisited and reported on in the future, or could guide further studies towards a case study approach providing more detail on fewer participants over time. In essence, having more participants in my study affected what could be shown about certain individuals.

As indicated previously, my findings showed some evidence of links across past, present and future with regard to teacher identities but, adding to my previous point, I realise that having fewer participants in the study would have facilitated a more detailed analysis of individual *becomings* across time. Even though having a diverse mix of participants was fruitful in my study, examining in more depth how past histories may be translated into present responses and future-imaginings would provide further insight into identity formation, a point I will keep in mind for future research. Linked to this is the fact that I collected data over a relatively short period and a more longitudinal study could have shown, for instance, how teacher *becomings* unfolded after periods of postgraduate study. This would also facilitate an examination of professional-selves actually realised in relation to those imagined during postgraduate study.

A final thought comes from my personal reflections on the interviews and focus groups and the fact that my findings were based upon participants' recollections and views of different situations. Although not feasible for this study, I feel that

being able to spend time in teachers' contexts as an observer would help me to gain a more comprehensive picture of their teaching lives. Some ANT studies have included observation, an element of ethnographic approaches to research (e.g. Sørensen, 2009; Aberton, 2012; Toohey & Dagenais, 2015) to observe how different actors influence learning and teaching. This would also facilitate inclusion of the views of other social actors, such as the supervisors and coordinators some of my participants talked about, and observations of the functions of material actors, which could further enhance understandings of teacher identity formation in these contexts.

Studies of teacher identity in ELT are important because they reveal the complex nature of teaching and its "cognitive, social, ideological, emotional and historical" dimensions (Barkhuizen, 2017, p.4). Deepening understandings of the interplay of actors involved in these dimensions is beneficial for teachers, teacher educators and researchers: for teachers, this is in terms of better understanding how to negotiate more desired identities in their contexts; for teacher educators, in terms of guiding and providing more informed pedagogical support for teachers; for researchers in helping to forge links between theory and practice and work with teachers in developing their practices. This study has therefore contributed to existing research, but also generated thoughts on directions future research on teacher identity formation might take. In this sense, research is never complete but evolving as an assemblage (or network) and with the potential to extend its relations and form new linkages (Fenwick et al., 2011).

APPENDICES

Appendix I

Examples of e-mail sent to potential participants

……
University A

Subject line: **Seeking International students to participate in doctoral research project**

Hello

I am a part-time EdD (TESOL) student at the University of Exeter and I am in the second year of the 'thesis' stage. I am looking for ***postgraduate international students (on MEd, EdD or PhD programmes, or similar),*** with some experience of teaching English, who may be interested in participating in my study.

My thesis focuses on possible links between beliefs and identities of teachers of English who use English as a second or other language, and the professional development activities such teachers engage in.
I am particularly interested in how professional development experiences in the UK (for instance through study or training programmes) are perceived by teachers from different countries. I am also interested in how these experiences impact on teachers and influence the future professional directions teachers follow.

Participation would include the following:

- **One or two focus group meetings (there would be about 5 people in a focus group) lasting no more than an hour each.**
- **An individual interview also lasting no more than an hour.**

I will negotiate the times and dates of these meetings with you, and will arrange rooms for these to take place on St Luke's Campus. It is expected that these will be in February 2017.

If you think you might be interested in being part of the study, please contact me by mail.

I will then send you more details of the study to think about before you decide 

Thank you very much

Good wishes

Josie Leonard
EdD (TESOL)

University B

Subject line: **Seeking International students to participate in doctoral research project**

Hello

I am a Lecturer in TESOL at xxxxx, and I am contacting you because I am looking for participants for a research study I am doing for my doctoral thesis. Some contact details were passed on to me by colleagues here and I hope you don't mind my getting in touch ☺.

My thesis focuses on possible links between beliefs and identities of teachers of English who use English as a second or other language, and the professional development activities such teachers engage in.
I am particularly interested in how professional development experiences in the UK (for instance through study or training programmes) are perceived by teachers from different countries. I am also interested in how these experiences impact on teachers and influence the future professional directions teachers follow.

I am looking for volunteers to participate in my study, and wonder if you might be interested in being involved. Participants should have had some experience teaching English, (e.g. in a university or similar environment).
Participation would include the following:

- **One or two focus group meetings (there would be about 5 people in a focus group) lasting no more than an hour each.**
- **An individual interview also lasting no more than an hour.**

I will negotiate the times and dates of these meetings with you, and will arrange rooms for these to take place within the University. I appreciate you are all busy and will arrange times which best fit in with your own study and other commitments.

If you think you might be interested in being part of the study, please drop me a line by return mail. I will then send you more background and details of the study before you decide ☺. I am based in Adelphi 105 if you wish to meet me face to face.

Thank you very much

Good wishes

Josie Leonard
Lecturer in TESOL
Adelphi 105

Appendix II

Information to Participants

TITLE: Professional Development and the (re) shaping and (re) imagining of teacher 'selves'.

The researcher: I am a Lecturer in TESOL at the University of XXXXX and am studying for a Doctor in Education (TESOL) at the University of Exeter.

What is the research about?

I have been working in the field of ELT for the past 20 years, as both a teacher and teacher trainer. During this time, I have spent periods of time abroad working in different countries and with teachers from varied and diverse backgrounds. I am interested in how teachers of English develop as professional practitioners and how interactions with people and things such as policies, materials, discourses, impact on their beliefs and identities.

Why am I being invited to participate?

The research focuses on teachers of English from other contexts who are engaged in some kind of professional development activity in the UK. These activities could be as a visiting scholar, for a training programme or for formal postgraduate study. I believe you have this background.

What will we talk about?

During the research, I will invite you to talk about your past experiences of teaching and learning English and your reactions to alternative views of TESOL which you may have encountered. I will also invite you to talk about challenges you have faced or think you will face and possible ways of dealing with these. The study links events across past, present and future, so we will all discuss your 'ideals'- what kind of teaching professional would you like to become and where.

What kind of meetings will I be involved in?

Participation in the research will involve 1 (or 2) x focus group meetings and 1 x interview Each meeting will last around 45- 60 minutes and will be arranged at times convenient for you.

Focus groups: These will be conducted in small groups [5 people] with the researcher. I (the researcher) will arrange convenient times with each group and inform all the participants of the room to go to in the university in advance. I will choose a room that is quiet so that we will not be disturbed during our discussions. There will be one or two meetings for each group and each meeting will take up to an hour. If a third meeting is needed, I will discuss this with the group. For these meetings, you will be given a list of questions and discussion points at least two days before, so that you can see what kind of topics will be discussed. You do not need to answer all the questions if you do not want to. I am available to meet and talk about the process and answer any questions at any stage of the research.

Interviews: I will invite individuals to participate in interviews. I will arrange convenient times with individuals and also reserve a private space to conduct these. The interview will last between 45-60 minutes. The aim of the interview is to discuss your teaching

and learning experiences in more depth on a one-to-one basis. You do not need to answer all of my questions if you prefer not to. A week before the interview, I will give you a list of themes or statements related to teaching English and I will ask you to produce a mind-map or similar diagram of your thoughts before the interview. We will base the interview on the points most important to you. I *may* ask you to participate in a second interview, and this will follow the same procedure.

How will data be recorded and stored?

I will record focus group and interview meetings on a voice recorder. Recordings will be transferred immediately after the session and removed from the recorder.
Your data will be treated confidentially, and as indicated on the consent forms, I will ensure as far as possible that your identity is not revealed. I will store all recordings on a secure password protected storage device and will keep back-ups in a secure place on the University system. I will always refer to you by a 'pseudonym' (a name chosen just for the purposes of this research) and never by your real name. In addition, I will not state the name of the institution you work for. Any documents (e.g. drafts) will be disposed of as confidential waste during the writing up stages of the research.

Important point:

If you agree to take part in the study, it is very important that you agree not to reveal the identity of other participants (e.g. in the focus groups meetings) nor discuss the information shared outside of the group. This will help to ensure that everyone involved remains anonymous.

What will you do with the data?

The data will be used to write my thesis, and I may use it for conference presentations and publications (e.g. academic journals). I will make sure that your identity is not revealed in any of these. You can have access to all of these publications.

What are the disadvantages of taking part?

Obviously, participation will take up your time (at least 4 hours in total for focus groups and interviews). I appreciate you are busy and will adhere to timing for each session. You may not wish to talk about some of the topics for different reasons. This is fine- please just tell me. You should not feel under pressure or obligation to discuss issues you would prefer not to.
Finally, I will ensure confidentiality and anonymity as much as possible, using the measures described. I will also request other participants do not to reveal your identity. However, I recognise it is always difficult to absolutely guarantee confidentiality.

How can I contact you?
Please get in touch if you have any questions or concerns over your participation in the research. Please remember that your participation is totally voluntary ☺

Josie Leonard
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Appendix III

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH PROJECT TITLE: Professional Development and the (re) shaping and (re) imagining of teacher 'selves'.

Researcher: Josie Leonard

Overview of the research:

This research focuses on professional development experiences of teachers of English from other countries. The overall aim of the research is to investigate how past experiences in different teaching environments have influenced teachers' beliefs about teaching. It then investigates how these experiences influence teachers' responses to professional development activities in a British university context. These professional development activities could be scholarly visits, training programmes or formal postgraduate study. The study thus focuses on the ways in which professional identities of teachers are influenced and changed over time; it also examines how future aspirations (hopes / goals) of being a teacher are formed.

The participants in the study are teachers of English with at least a year of experience teaching in universities in their home country (e.g. foundation or preparatory English courses).

The research will involve participating in interviews and focus groups and

Interviews: I will invite individuals to participate in interviews. I will arrange convenient times with individuals and also reserve a private space to conduct these. The interview will last between 45-60 minutes. The aim of the interviews is to discuss your teaching and learning experiences on a one-to-one basis. You do not need to answer all of my questions if you prefer not to.

Focus groups: These will be conducted in small groups [4/5 people] with the researcher and at convenient times for all. There will be one or two meetings for each group and each meeting will take up to 60 minutes. If further meetings are needed, I will discuss this with the group. For these meetings, you will be given a list of questions and discussion points a week before, so that you can see what kind of topics will be discussed. You do not need to answer all the questions if you do not want to.

More detailed information is available on the Information Sheet provided.
Data protection notice:

The information you provide will be for research purposes only and your data will be processed according to current data protection legislation (rules). All focus groups and interviews will be recorded using a voice recorder. I will transfer the recordings from the recorder immediately after the interview and store them securely as password protected files. I will be the only person with access to these files. Your identity will be

protected by the use of 'pseudonyms' (names assigned to you for this project) in all transcriptions and documents produced as part of this research. Your work place will also be anonymised, if mentioned explicitly during our conversations.

Important: As some of the discussions will be in groups I ask you not to reveal the identities of participants in your group to others, or repeat in detail any shared information outside of the group

Your agreement to participate indicates your agreement to this statement and intention to respect this requirement

The research is for my Doctoral thesis, but I may use the data for conference presentations and journal or other academic publications. I will ensure that your identity is not revealed through any of these activities.

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....(Signature of participant)

……..(Printed name of participant)

(Date) ……

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact me:

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Adelphi Building 105
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One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Appendix IV

Ethics approval

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

St Luke's Campus
Heavitree Road
Exeter UK EX1 2LU

http://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/education/

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

Title of Project: 'Professional Development and the (re) shaping and (re) imagining of teacher 'selves''

Researcher(s) name: Josephine Leonard

Supervisor(s): Dr Gabriela Meier; Dr Deborah Osberg

This project has been approved for the period

From: 14th November 2016
To: 30th September 2019

Ethics Committee approval reference: D/16/17/11

Signature: Date: 14th November 2016
(Dr Philip Durrant, Chair, Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee)

Appendix V

Profiles of Participants

Hakim

Hakim is from Saudi Arabia and has seventeen years of teaching experience. He began learning English at school from the age of thirteen and continued to study in the school system until he went to university. He remembers that despite studying for six years he still could not express himself well in English. Hakim completed a Bachelor's degree in Translation (English/ Arabic) and then studied for a Master's in English Literature. He decided to be an English teacher because of the demand for teachers at that time and was employed in a high school. He did not have any teacher training as then teachers were employed on the basis of having a relevant degree, therefore, he remembers some difficulties in his early months of teaching as he lacked basic teaching skills. On his own initiative, he sought help from a senior colleague who paired him with a mentor. He decided to apply for doctoral study in the UK as he felt something was missing from his knowledge about teaching. He obtained a sponsorship from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia which enabled him to study for an EdD and bring his family to the UK. He was in his third year of study at the time of interview.

Juan

Juan is a teacher from Ecuador, who has been teaching for fifteen years. He did not learn English at school until the age of fifteen when English became compulsory in the state system. He only studied English for two years at school and did not feel it was important until later. Juan did his military service and through this gained practice 'teaching' by organising talks and instructing others. He decided that he enjoyed teaching and because he did not have a clear career plan was inspired to apply for a grant to study for an English degree at a military university in Quito. The first year focused on developing language skills and in the final year, he did some teaching practice with his peers. He then had to do another two years of training in schools to get a teaching certificate. He got a job in the same university teaching English to undergraduate students and also exam preparation classes (e.g. TOEFL, Cambridge exams). However, he realised his oral skills were still not very strong and when an opportunity arose to lead a 'distance' programme' he decided to apply as it gave him the flexibility to move to a more touristic area. Hence, he split his time between running the distance learning programmes and being a tourist guide/ interpreter in the jungle, which gave him the opportunities to practise his English with foreigners. After two years he returned to teach in the university, with more confidence in his oral and aural skills. In 2004, he applied for a scholarship to do an MA in the UK, and spent 2 years in the UK before returning to his job in Ecuador. However, he felt 'something was missing' in his professional development and this led him to apply for a scholarship for doctoral study in the UK, which began in 2016.

Yusuf

Yusuf is from Oman, where he has taught English for seventeen years. He began learning English in his fourth year at school, when he was 9 years old. Yusuf learned basic English and recollects that his teachers were well-trained and effective, but lessons were not 'fun'. However, his father provided him with reading material to encourage him to learn, and he continued studying through secondary school to university level. He found there was a big 'gap' between English taught at school and university and so he had to study hard. His degree was in English language, but he was able to join a teacher education course in his final year, which included teaching practice in schools. When he

graduated, he began teaching in schools and has taught all levels from elementary to secondary school, and currently teaches exam preparation and basic academic English to young adults in a college. Yusuf did his MA in ELT in Oman in 2008 and first visited the UK through a Connecting Classrooms initiative in 2009. He also spent two years in Germany as an English-speaking supervisor for a language programme and at the same time studied German. He decided to do his PhD in the UK and gained a scholarship from the Ministry of Education to fund this. He was in the third year of his PhD at time of interview.

Sami

Sami is from Saudi Arabia and has been teaching English for eleven years. He learned English through school and university, beginning at the age of twelve. He enjoyed English at school, and he decided to be an English teacher mainly because of job opportunities and security (similar to Hakim), and after graduating began working in elementary schools. He recalls that he did not have any formal teacher training and relied on colleagues to help him at first, and also attended training courses at his own expense. After eight years, Sami obtained a scholarship to do an MA in TESOL in the UK, and spent two years studying for this. He then returned to Saudi Arabia and worked in schools again for three years. He decided to apply for a scholarship from the Ministry of Education for doctoral study as he wants to teach in universities rather than schools. He was in the third year of his EdD in TESOL at time of interview.

Bulan

Bulan is a teacher from Indonesia where she has been teaching in higher education since 2004. She learned English at school from the age of ten, and remembers not being very strong in the subject at first, but after a while began to enjoy English. She decided she wanted to use English in her future career and hence applied to do a degree in English language at university. Her degree included a year of teacher training, with sessions on practical skills and also some teaching practice. She therefore graduated with a teaching certificate and began working in a university language centre, teaching English to students preparing for the university entrance exam. After four years, Bulan gained a scholarship from the Australian government to do an MA in Applied linguistics and TESOL in Australia and she spent nearly two years there studying and improving her own language skills. Her MA qualification helped her to get a more secure job upon her return to Indonesia, and she became a lecturer in a polytechnic in 2009 in a newly formed English department. Her work involved teaching English for specific purposes as well as general academic English to students from different disciplines, but especially broadcasting students. After another five years, Bulan decided she wanted to develop further and applied to do a PhD in the UK in 2014, backed by a scholarship from the Ministry of Research in Higher Education in Indonesia.

Lian

Lian is a Chinese teacher of English, who has taught in private schools for just two years. She learned English at school from the age of nine and, motivated by her good grades, decided to do a degree in English at university. She had the opportunity to study overseas for one year and spent a year in the US on an exchange programme, improving her spoken English and learning about American culture. Her degree included teacher training in the final year and as well as seminars on teaching methodologies and practices, she did some supervised teaching practice in schools. She therefore graduated as a qualified teacher but preferred to work in private schools and she prepares students for the TOEFL exam. The programmes she teaches are intensive and quite expensive, so students expect to get good results which places pressure on her.

In 2016, she decided to do an MA in TESOL (with a teaching practice module) in the UK to further her development.

Manar

Manar is from Saudi Arabia and has eighteen years of teaching experience. She learned English at school from the age of nine. Manar did her degree in English Language and Literature, and she spent part of her final year doing supervised teaching practice in schools. As she was quite young at the time, she remembers being especially nervous during these sessions and she did not really enjoy teaching at first. She began teaching in private schools, and then in international schools which provided experience of teaching students from different backgrounds. In 2002, Manar had the opportunity to go to the US through a Fulbright sponsorship, and she taught Arabic to adult learners for a year. When she returned to Saudi Arabia, Manar continued to work in private schools for another three years before gaining a scholarship through the Ministry of Education to do an MA in TESOL and Applied Linguistics in the UK. This then enabled her to apply for teaching posts in higher education and she worked in a university teaching English to foundation year students for nine years before applying for a scholarship from the Ministry of Education to do a PhD in the UK. She was in her first year of study when we met.

Aysha

Aysha is from Algeria with two years of teaching experience. She learned English at school from the age of nine and opted to do her degree in English. Her degree course included both linguistics and language teaching theory and practice, and in her final year, she spent five months in a school, observing and doing supervised teaching practice. When she graduated she continued to work in the school teaching English to young teenagers, whose behaviour was often challenging for a novice teacher. She therefore decided to continue with her studies and, began an MA in English literature which was her passion. At her graduation ceremony, she learned of a new scholarship which the government was offering to study in the UK. She decided to apply and successfully gained funds to spend three years in the UK. She began her time in the UK studying on a pre-sessional English programme in order to improve her IELTS score and when she had achieved a '7' she successfully enrolled onto an MEd in TESOL in 2016.

Chun

Chun is also from China and has taught English for seventeen years. She learned English at school from the age of nine and chose to do her degree in English language at a university specialising in teacher education. She therefore spent some time in schools doing teaching practice in her final year. She has taught in the same university for sixteen years, teaching English to both preparatory and degree level students. In 2012, she had the opportunity to work in the US, sponsored by her employer and the Confucius institute of an American university. This opportunity enabled her to spend a year in the US teaching Chinese to children, and she gaining experience teaching students from different backgrounds, as well as developing her language skills. When she returned to China, she continued teaching English in the same university, and also teaching American visiting scholars Chinese. Her university sponsors teachers to spend time in the UK as visiting scholars and through this she came to the UK with her son for one year, engaging in research and auditing classes on postgraduate and undergraduate TESOL programmes.

Hua

Hua is a teacher from China who taught English for five years before working for an English Language newspaper, designing and editing English language learning materials for teenagers. Hua began learning English at school from the age of nine and through her initial experiences studying English, discovered that she had a passion for language learning. Indeed, she can speak Japanese and Italian as well as English and wants to promote language learning in China Hua did her degree in English Language and Literature and graduated with a teaching certificate. She taught in a high school in China for five years, and became interested in materials development for teenagers. When she saw jobs advertised for materials writers with a well-known English language newspaper Hua decided that while she wanted to remain in the field of ELT, she would like to explore other opportunities. Hence, she went back to university to study for an MA in Journalism which later helped her to get a job with the newspaper. Her teaching background obviously helped her in her new role and after two years she joined the editorial team. The newspaper also sponsored her to study for an MA in TESOL and Applied Linguistics in the UK.

Rena

Rena is from Greece and has had just two years of part-time teaching experience in a language school. She learned English at school from the age of eight and also attended a private language school where she had weekly lessons and took the Michigan and Cambridge examinations, reaching a 'proficiency' level after several years. However, she took her degree in International Politics, an area of interest to her at the time. When she graduated, Rena did not really have a clear career plan and took a job as a secretary in a private language school. When a teacher was ill, she offered to cover the class of young learners and this began her interest in teaching. Because she had such a high level of English and had a good rapport with the students, the School Director offered her more teaching work and gradually teaching took over part of her workload. However, Rena realised she lacked knowledge about teaching and decided to apply for an MA in TESOL and Applied Linguistics in the UK. Her MA does not include teaching practice, but Rena has gained experience teaching one-to-one by giving private lessons to Greek staff and students in the university, helping them with different language issues.

Khahn

Khahn is a teacher from Vietnam with four years of teaching experience. He studied English at school from the age of nine, but was traumatised by the competitive nature of study. Therefore, his mother enrolled him at a private language school which he attended between the ages of ten and sixteen. He continued studying English throughout his formal education, and did his degree in English Language, and trained to be a teacher at university. Hence, in the final year, his degree included practical lesson planning and periods of supervised teaching practice in high schools. He did not enjoy teaching in the state school system, describing it as 'restrictive' so after graduating, he taught in a university delivering TOEFL exam preparation classes for two years. He wanted to further his expertise, and hence enrolled on an MA TESOL and Applied Linguistics course in the UK. Upon completion of his course, he gained employment with an EAP Services provider in the same university, where he had been teaching academic and general English on pre-sessional courses for nearly two years at the time of data collection.

Maya

Maya is from Myanmar and has just two years of teaching experience. She learned English at school from the age of nine, and motivated by her high grades, continued with a degree in English Language which included a teaching certificate. The degree offered

a mix of theory and practical teaching, and she participated in supervised teaching practice in schools as part of her final year. When she graduated, Maya worked initially as a teaching assistant and then as a teacher in a private language school mainly teaching young learners. She also did some home-tutoring of school children and in-company teaching with business professionals. However, she felt that she needed to deepen her knowledge of ELT and decided to do an MA in TESOL and Applied Linguistics. She got a scholarship from the government to study in the UK and spent a year studying pre-sessional English in order to improve her IELTS score, and then moved onto her MA programme. There was no practical module attached to the MA and so she also attended 'free English' classes taught by undergraduate TESOL students as a 'participant observer', which raised her awareness of different teaching approaches and techniques. While in the UK, she has also worked part-time in a restaurant, which she found useful towards developing her language and communication skills.

Arkar

Arkar is also from Myanmar and has four years of teaching experience. He learned English at school and then opted to continue his studies later on up to university entrance level. He decided to do a degree in English Literature, but an influential teacher persuaded him to change to Applied Linguistics and also train to be a teacher of English, as these were especially in demand in Myanmar. His degree course was mainly theoretical at first, but included supervised teaching practice in schools in the final year. When he graduated, Arkar organised private lessons with local children and university students and taught 'freelance' for a year. However, he decided to aim for better job security and began teaching in a state university. Here he taught English to preparatory students and TOEFL exam preparation classes to students wanting to apply for university courses. After three years, he applied for a scholarship to study in the UK. Like Maya, Arkar spent a year studying pre-sessional English, and then enrolled on an MA TESOL and Applied Linguistics course.

Muriel

Muriel is from Saudi Arabia and has four years of experience teaching English. She studied English at school from the age of nine, and enjoyed English more than other subjects. Hence, Muriel did her degree in English and Applied Linguistics and trained to be a teacher while at university. When she graduated, she began teaching English in a university language centre to foundation and degree level students. However, she became increasingly frustrated with the intensive system of the English programmes and after four years decided to apply for a scholarship to study in the UK. She studied on an MA TESOL and Applied Linguistics programme for a year, and through this became interested in using technology in language teaching. This inspired her to remain in the UK and continue her studies with a PhD. She was in the third year of her PhD at time of interview.

Appendix VI

Interview Questions

Themes for interview discussions.

Before your interview, please think about the following questions in relation to your experiences as a learner and teacher of English. Think about how different people and things have influenced and impacted on you as a teacher. Please be ready to expand on anything you feel is important.

As you think about the themes, please create *a mind-map or similar diagram* to note down your ideas (on A3 paper if possible).
You can choose to focus more on certain themes if you wish according to your background and experiences ☺

Encouragement: What [or who] encouraged you to become an English teacher? What [or who] encourages you most in your work now?

Beliefs: What or who has influenced your beliefs about teaching [positively and negatively] since you began your teaching career?

Challenges: Reflecting on your teaching career so far, what things have you found challenging or restrictive? How have you dealt with these challenges or restrictions?

Opportunities: Think about any professional development activities you have been involved in. Do you think these were useful or not?

Classroom practice: What is most important to you as a teacher in your context?
-Which factors help you to be an effective practitioner?
-Which factors limit this effectiveness?

Change: Can you think of any changes that would improve teaching and learning experiences in your context? How easy or difficult would it be to make these changes?

Professional aspirations: Think about your future professional aspirations.
-What are your ideals about developing teaching and learning in your context?
-How do you imagine yourself and your role in the future?
-What kind of support do you need to work towards these ideals? Where might this support come from?

Please feel free to add other points that you think are important.

Please bring your mind-map to your interview. We will discuss your ideas during the interview.

Appendix VII

Focus Group Questions

Questions for focus group discussions.
These questions will be asked over 1(or 2) meeting(s) (expected to last for up to 60 minutes each).

1.Please discuss your experiences learning English when you were at school and university.

-What was positive about these experiences?
-Was there anything that was not so positive?

2. What or who first motivated you to become a teacher of English?

3. When you began your teacher education course, what were your ideals about teaching?

-What kind of beliefs did you have about being a good learner?
-What were your beliefs about being a good teacher of English?

4. Do you think your 'relationship' with English has changed since you started teaching? If so, how has it changed?

……..

5. Can you tell us about any experiences that have positively influenced your beliefs about teaching English?

6. Can you tell us about any experiences that have negatively influenced your beliefs about teaching English?

7. What kind of professional development activities are available to teachers in your context? [These could be different things, for instance formal qualifications or they could be less formal workshops & or visits to conference)

-*What kind of expectations or policies does your institution have about professional development for teachers? How do these affect you?*

8. Have you engaged in any professional development activities since you first became qualified to teach? If so, please describe these experiences. How have they influenced your teaching?

Before we close the discussion, is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix VIII Example of Participant mindmap

Appendix IX:

Extract of transcript [from Interview 5]

Start Time	End Time	Transcript	Speaker
00:00:09.5	00:00:09.6	So this is Feb 7th 2017...I think!	I
00:00:09.5	00:00:09.6	It is!	B
00:00:09.5	00:00:21.5	OK [*laugh]* Would you like to start just by giving me a bit of background about yourself? Where you're from, What you're doing?	I
00:00:21.5	00:00:26.2	OK...I'm X ermm should I talk about my age?	B
00:00:26.2	00:00:28.4	Laughs..you don't need to mention your age...!	I
00:00:28.4	00:01:20.5	Well, I don't mind...I'm X and I'm from Indonesia I'm here doing my MPhil/ PhD I started my journey erm I started teaching English in Higher Education in Indonesia in 2004 ...at that time I started in a Language Centre in the University and erm I got a scholarship from the Australian government to continue and at that time I was in erm in Indonesia, you will be entitled to be a lecturer even if you already step in a private or a government university but at that time I was just like er a contract person	B
00:01:20.5	00:01:20.6	Ok yes,	I
00:01:20.5	00:01:52.4	Do you call it a contract person? Contract based teaching staff or something like that ...so I got the scholarship and I went to Australia for one year for my master's degree in Applied Linguistic and I did TESOL but I didn't do something related to teaching… but more policy and then ...and so it's not something related to teaching and so that's why I told you I'm not really confident because I don't have formal teaching certificate or training or something like that	B
00:01:52.4	00:01:52.5	Yes	I
00:01:52.4	00:02:28.9	So after I finish my master's I go back to Indonesia and then I was accepted as a state lecturer in a polytechnic in 2009 errm so since then I taught English in a polytechnic which is a diploma 3 programme and they just built a new department which is English department so I was there teaching and also learning about broadcasting because they want to make a new department which will combine English and broadcasting as additional skills	B
00:02:28.9	00:02:29.0	Yes, excellent ....wow!	I
00:02:28.9	00:02:32.3	Thank you!	B
00:02:32.3	00:02:34.9	[l*aughs*] That sounds very exciting	I
00:02:34.9	00:02:37.2	Challenging!	B
00:02:37.2	00:02:42.3	Challenging! Yes.....so how long have you been here in the UK for?	I
00:02:42.3	00:02:50.4	Ermmm I arrive here in September 2014 and so I'm here for about 2 years 6 err 5 months	B

00:02:50.4	00:02:50.5	Quite a long time?	I
00:02:50.4	00:02:55.0	Yes ..it is	B
00:02:55.0	00:03:00.0	Yes quite a big difference	I
00:03:00.0	00:03:05.7	But I still feel like the same person from the day one.....I can be except that I think I am more adjusted to the weather	B
00:03:05.7	00:03:16.8	Oh good erm that must be a big challenge when you come here especially from Indonesia	I
00:03:16.8	00:03:37.5	Yes and in Indonesia I don't really have contact with the real English speakers except my supervisors and some people...I remember I came here with the expectation that I would develop myself academically and also as an English user because that's what they expected of me as a lecturer.. as English lecturer back there but I think oh it's not what I expected ..OK	B
00:03:37.5	00:03:42.3	Ahh you're probably changing more than you think	I
00:03:42.3	00:03:45.8	Yes I think...at the end of the day..	B
00:03:45.8	00:03:54.3	Yes definitely...OK so let's talk through some of the themes and you've made a beautiful mind map err where would you like to start?	I
00:03:54.3	00:03:59.4	I would like to talk about the beliefs ....erm	B
00:03:59.4	00:03:59.5	OK let's start there	I
00:03:59.4	00:04:02.5	Because what we are going to do is basically what we believe	B
00:04:02.5	00:04:02.6	Exactly ... OK so let's talk about your beliefs and what influences your beliefs	I
00:04:15.5	00:06:00.2	Well, actually you see…I never had any aspiration to be a teacher or an English teacher ...it comes up from I hate English [*laughs]* well not I hate English...I… I hate the situation that made me change from liking something to something else so it was a big challenge for me to show to the English lecturer who was a teacher at that time in our high school who said...'You are not good in English' and I wanted to show her I can do something. I can be better but at that time I never think that I will be an English teacher but then times go on and I keep more...kept interacting with more English materials and then I began to like..think well erm I want to do something that deals with English daily and here I am, and so without no purpose of being a lecturer or teacher I become an English teacher because I was engaged in that and I want to continue doing it so that's the way....but I believe that I errm.. nobody can say that you are not a good English teacher or that you are a bad English teacher the thing is it depends on how you interact with the students and material, it's not about the training that you attend or what..it's more about how you get connected to what you are doing that's what I feel and that's what I believe...to be or not to be ![l*aughs*]	B
00:06:00.2	00:06:20.7	Yes..That sounds very interesting and ermm when you think about perhaps ermm when you're teaching, when you're with students ....Do you think of other people who you thought were good at teaching English at all?	I

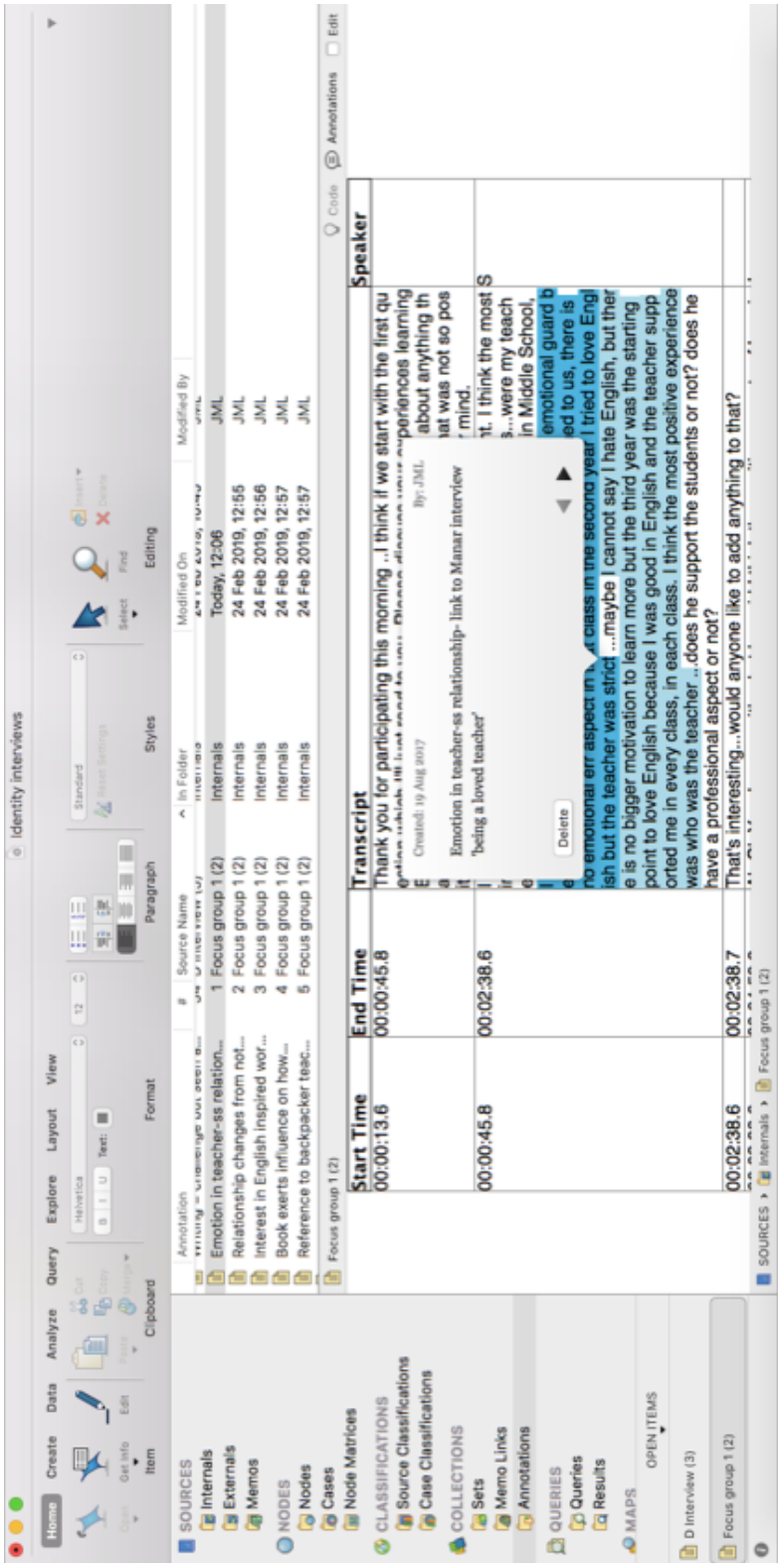
00:06:20.7	00:06:30.0	Yes I would like to say like teachers influenced me in positive and negative way of how to be a teacher of ...yes...	B
00:06:30.0	00:06:30.1	Can you give some examples?	I
00:06:30.0	00:07:31.2	OK as I had just mentioned to you earlier it was a negative one… but when I get more assertive to show to my teacher that I can do better ..the more I like her ...the more I wanted to be like her ...because she can turn a student who disliked something and become liking something even though the way she did is a bit negative but it's a kind of influencing me …and another one was my lecturer in erm when I was an undergraduate err one person is very disciplined and anything we are learning and the other person is very open about life and her engagement with the English speakers erm wherever she went but this kind of influence from this lecturers and teachers influenced me as well yes	B
00:07:31.2	00:07:33.0	So you picked up on all these kind of experiences and stored them?	I
00:07:33.0	00:07:35.9	Yes	B
00:07:35.9	00:07:38.8	Yes I think many people do that don't they?	I
00:07:38.8	00:08:04.5	Yes so that's why I believe like err even though you attend… you attended a formal teaching… teacher training or something like that … but if you are just there to learn and to listen about how to do it you don't feel it erm it won't make you progress into what you want	B
00:08:04.5	00:08:13.6	Yes that's right ...you have to have that motivation to do something yes.....	I
00:08:13.6	00:08:13.7	And do you enjoy teaching do you think?	I
00:08:13.6	00:08:34.8	I did when I think back …I remember it was so hard erm we used to teach so many classes during a week ...when I was there standing in front of a student and the student says something to me ....or writes something...that makes me feel happy so, yes it is	B
00:08:34.8	00:08:39.4	That was your kind of motivation erm your energy ?	I
00:08:39.4	00:08:42.3	Yes my energy that keeps me going....	B

I =interviewer **[…] short pause approx.. 0-2 seconds** **[laugh] emotion expressed**

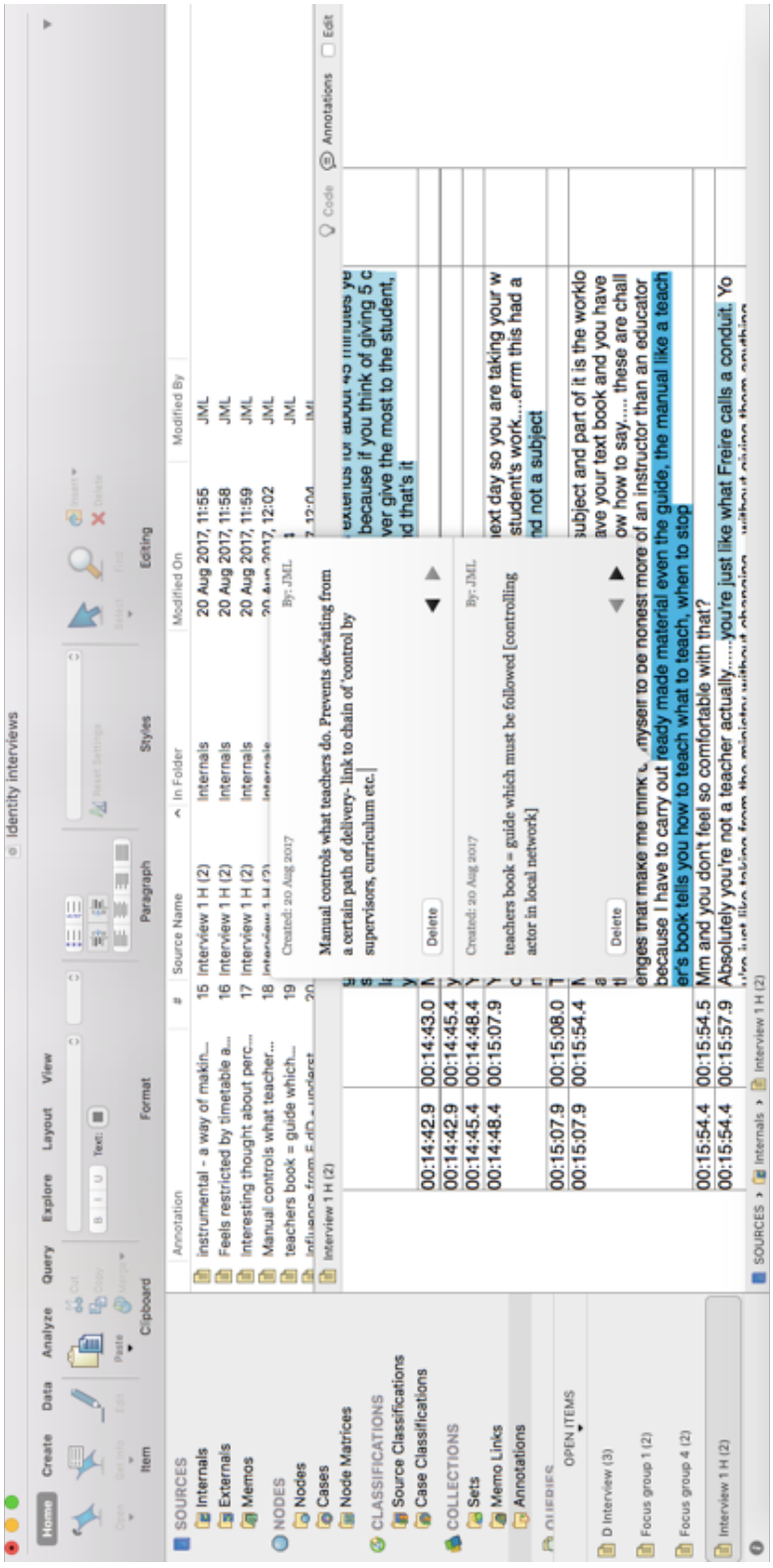
Appendix X

Examples of annotations in NVivo

1. Sami FG1



2. Hakim Interview 1



Appendix XI

Example of memo

Khahn Interview 12
February 2017.

Past experiences: What factors have played a part in shaping participants' identities in past teaching experiences?

Learning background

Began 'not liking' English - Mum 'forced' him to learn and maybe this created resentment (related point in FG4)
Influenced by teacher who spoke 'beautiful English' (accent, fluency) and this made him want to develop same skills. Teachers links to ss in different ways (moral stories, personality) but is a big influence – Khahn describes him as 'cool'. He begins to see how teachers can influence ss lives [e.g. 16.21]
Had part-time job at university (working as an assistant on with students wanting to go study in UK) Interaction with British boss – 'amazing' accent encouraged him to invest more in English.
(more on encouragement from teachers in FG4)

Says that system in Vietnam formed early beliefs – but the system is still quite firm and goal-oriented [8.04]
Went to school for 'gifted' learners- interesting point about who can enter this network and how 'gifted' is identified (?). He was older here [high school]and seemed to be less motivated by exams but by English as a language and culture.
Teacher in school for 'gifted' seemed to take an interactive and critical approach to teaching- encouraging questioning of words which Khahn initially took forward into teaching [e.g. contrasting collocations between UK/ US English]. Interesting reference to 'sounding intelligent' [cultural link] but then realising teaching is not about the teacher but the ss

Teaching practices

System in Vietnam is controlled by tests - hence focus on R/L/W but not spoken language
Restricts teachers in state system to 'manage class' and not to be innovative. Khahn also had personal identity struggle between what he wanted to teach and what ss really needed in that system [7.06 and later18.49]
Hence, in university teaching found he was controlled by syllabus, books and time- not able to 'become' the engaging teacher he wants to be. Had to focus on TOIEC exam preparation and use prescribed material.
Points to standardised system and what this implies [8.04]
Conversely in UK syllabus is 'random' and there is not enough guidance; he would like to have more direction within his work in the UK- network lacks a Director - syllabus lacks coherence with materials and learning objectives. [10.45]

But Khahn acknowledges that students also motivate him: 'mutual motivation' with students - rapport is very important in classroom situations for him [5.44]

Now questions 'what knowledge is useful?' Responsibility for preparing ss for life and academic study= signifies shift in belief (Recognises that learner needs need to be more central).
Learning in UK is more linked to environment - ss are interacting with materials and people all the time which impact on learning. He says he is more able to bring 'everyday' English into lessons.
Uses humour more - less strict more 'on a level' and relaxed with ss.- contrasts with Vietnam where ss-T relations are more formal [ss more compliant and just take notes]

*Gives examples of some activities he has used and ss responses to these [e.g. ss initial enthusiasm for being given autonomy on reading waning over time 24.55]

View on English:

Initially focused on grammar and vocabulary but then after interactions with other speakers became more focused on spoken English and his own accent
Technology [internet] helped him to invest in his English skills
Teacher in school for 'gifted' encouraged exploration of words and knowledge- e.g. lexis. Now draws on this in his teaching 'morphology'. But expects his ss to have same 'love' and 'interest' [Khahn comes across as having high expectations of learners!] [15.16]

Local Development

Teaching Practicuum was too restrictive and detached from 'real' life - teachers had to produce detailed plans and Khahn resisted this and did not engage. Demo lessons were also restrictive showing one possible instead of multiple possible ways. Resented early development activities [25.38]

Khahn contrasts 'ideal' world portrayed in TP with what really happens in classrooms 'each lesson was a struggle'.
Supervisor guidance seemed poor and Khahn found supervisor comments were vague and subjective. [sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad 29.55].
Observation: Dean visited classes and then 'read' out mistakes he had seen in a workshop.
Then a teacher gave a 'demo' lesson. Khahn found this gave a narrow perspective on teaching [34.11]. Observations are usually 'on-the-spot' with no warning

In current post, Khahn has found little PD- teachers are 'not interested' in sharing. Links this to type of contract and time. His ideal would be to have workshops to bring teachers together and share ideas- he feels he could learn from peers'expertise. [38.54] Different teachers could lead each workshop according to their specific knowledge [= ideal of PD in current workplace]. Value of sharing started in MA and now in workplace sees a lack of sharing - interacting with others and learning about influences in their teaching brings new perspectives to role and to self-development. Therefore, current work place lacks teacher interaction and development opportunities [39.18] (no incentive by Director)

2. **Present postgraduate study: How have participants' current identities been shaped through postgraduate study in the UK?**

MA - much more aware of context and diversity and how theories and methodologies interact and influence learners differently. MA gave different perspectives of a problem and therefore criticality– encouraged more flexibility in thinking about problems [44.03]
Theory has influenced: classroom management (questioning techniques such as pairing ss together – issue of strong vs weak ss [44.50] -thinking of different possibilities around CR problems)
Awareness of ss needs and wants: Ss need a break sometimes and he is much more aware of his responses to ss and of learner motivation and engagement (*also link to loop input in MA?).
*gives examples of games used on smartphones.

Khahn links teaching to critical thinking: English is a part of the world, not separate from it. Teaching English should include critical thinking and critical pedagogy - English is integrated in issues, environments and change [46.02]

His critical thinking= thinks education is about profit.

Understanding T-SS interaction (factors such as age, emotion, influence of beliefs about teachers) - finds it difficult to balance sometimes

MA was especially useful:
Awareness and focus on curriculum theory- now understands the need to change curriculum in work context [UK and Vietnam]
Curriculum cannot link directly to all ss but can link in different ways to most. T and SS benefit from clear and relevant curriculum. Sees poor links between syllabus, learning outcomes and materials which he would not have understood before studying MA [46.41]
Course & materials design.
He learned how to evaluate course-books [1.02.31]. Notes moment of 'Epiphany' when he no longer takes everything for granted = has become more critical through his studies [1.02.31]

He discusses at different point how SLA theory useful in understanding classroom - how to manage strong and weak ss (input) and how to challenge ss (noticing, pushed output etc.). Interesting point about 'streaming' students also in relation to being able to 'push ss' and provide comprehensible input = theory influencing practice [52.44]

Khahn points out that teaching in Vietnam is highly controlled, ss are less willing to engage [influence of society] and therefore some aspects of methodology would not be useful. Cannot force ss to talk. Also restricted by large class and goal of exams - ss reluctant to take risks outside of 'needs' for exams

3- Imagined identities: What kind of identities do participants imagine for their futures?

In what ways (if any) has postgraduate study been influential in shaping the imagined future identities of participants?

Modules on Testing and Course and Materials Design were especially influential [58.4]. Discusses practical value- linking theory to practical application. Refers to a test produced in the University [TELL] which he sees as more interactive and useful to ss [analysed on Testing module]. [59.02]

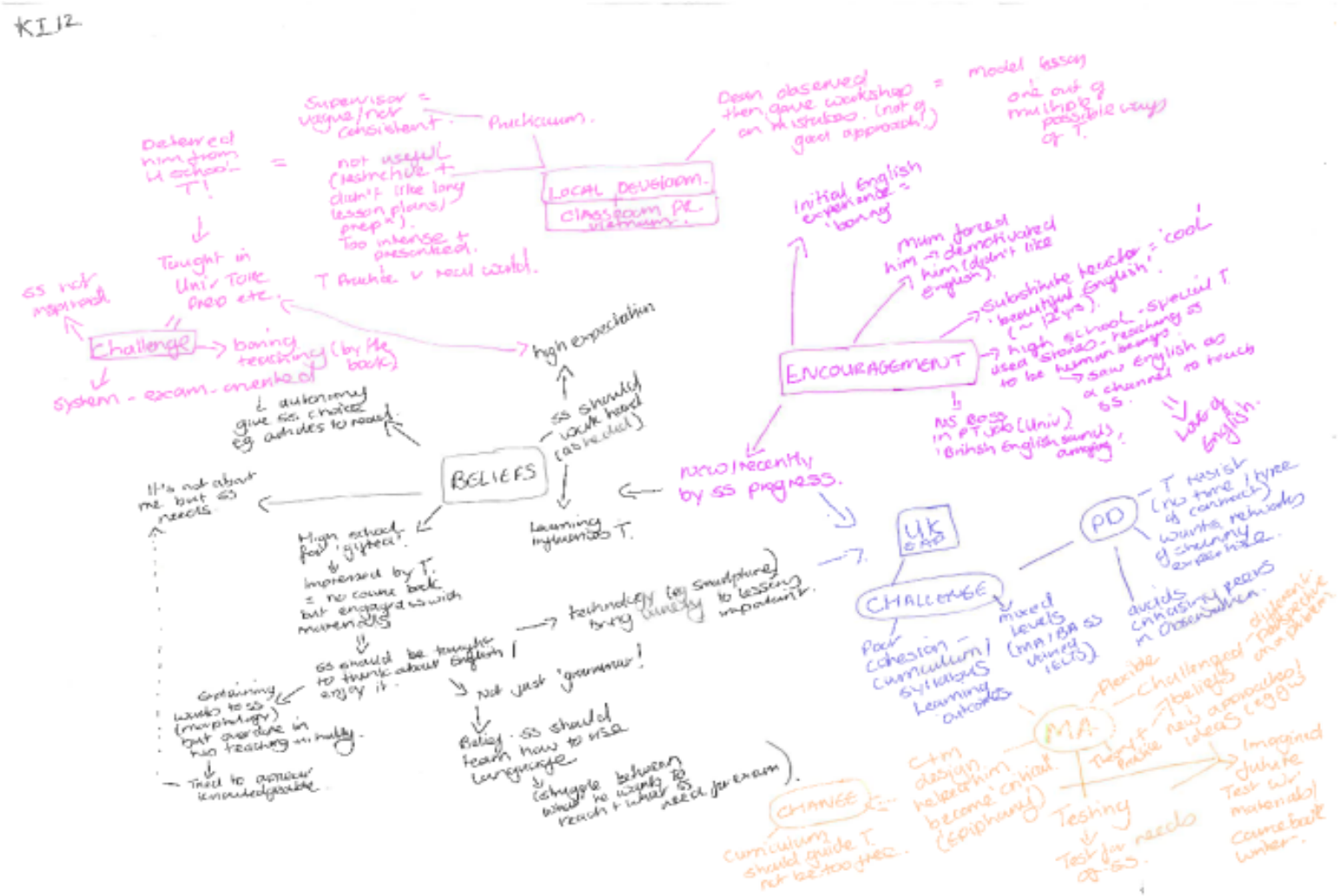
He is more critically aware of material like coursebooks and how they impact on learning in terms of content and design . He did his dissertation on analysis of a book used in Vietnam [1.001] – this has given him confidence in redesigning a book for use in Vietnam [1.02] – links back to critical thinking and not taking everything for granted.
Link to knowledge of communicative teaching and testing speaking – section on past shows he was concerned about limited testing in Vietnam and students not being able to use language; also lack of motivation in students. He has possibly found answers to help this
I
In future: identity as materials designer/ test writer. Interested in designing new course book and test for ss in Vietnam based more on communicative skills which ss could use [59.02] [1.01] [mentions also in FG4].
Link to beliefs in importance of ss needs – this has changed since he first started teaching. Now values learner autonomy, critical thinking and recognises that topics [e.g. course-book] are important in motivating ss. [e.g. ss choosing articles to discuss, video clips] – also mentioned in FG4

Notes on interview:

Khahn was very engaged with the interview topics and I did not need to ask for extra information – he talked freely and brought a lot of interesting points to the discussion. He appeared relaxed [possibly because we met during his MA course and I covered a few lessons for another tutor for his group] and the conversation was open and collegial [from my perspective]. He also let his sense of humour emerge at frequent points- so there was also laughter during the discussion!
Khahn came across as a passionate but quite demanding teacher. He is also demanding of himself [both as a learner and teacher] and critical of his own work. He also appeared frustrated by his current post [the poorly constructed syllabus, lack of PD] yet clearly enjoyed the smaller classes and more relaxed interaction with ss in comparison to Vietnam. He was positive about his MA experience and how he could use knowledge gained to further develop teaching and learning in Vietnam as well as in his current role [in the UK].
The discussion ‘jumped’ back and forth among themes as he made different links between his experiences and the themes indicated.

Appendix XII

Example extract of researcher mindmap of interview data



Appendix XIII:

Example of PADLET for Focus Group data analysis

Overview of data analysis and interpretation processes

Research Questions	Over-arching temporal themes	Data Collection based on	Participant constructed interpretation of themes or questions	Co-construction between participants and interviewer	Researcher interpretation process [The arrow depicts that data was revisited so analysis was not a strictly linear process]						
What (f)actors have played a part in shaping participants' professional identities as English teachers through their past teaching experiences? What (f)actors have shaped participants' current professional identities as English teachers engaged in postgraduate study in the UK? What kind of identities do participants imagine for their futures? In what ways (if any) has postgraduate study been influential in shaping participants imagined future professional identities?	Past teaching experiences Present Postgraduate study Imagined future identities	Interview themes	Participant mind-maps based on interview themes given	Individual interviews [and transcripts]	Transcribing	Re-reading and annotating on transcripts	Mind-maps of each interview [the stories told in the interview]	Memo in NVivo Adding detail to mind-map & links to transcript	Notes Creating groupings of related stories under past/present/ future themes	Further Notes Sub-grouping Implications of Social and material actors from pp stories – [for identities] Relationships between & influences among actors Links to ANT concepts	Implications for identities Links to past/ future identities- review to confirm links over time past-present-future]
		Eight focus group questions used as prompts	Thinking about FG questions in preparation for group discussion	Focus group discussions [and transcripts]	Transcribing	Re-reading and annotating on transcripts	Memo in NVivo summarising focus group discussion [participants' responses to questions] & links to transcript	Padlet boards for each question Bringing together perspectives from different focus groups			

Appendix XV

Chatham House Rules

"When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed".

https://www.chathamhouse.org/chatham-house-rule

Appendix XVI(a): Summary of findings reported on participants' past experiences and influential actors on identity formation

Sub-groupings: Influences from past experiences (with related section)	Interrelated material and social actors	Evidence in participant stories (shown in findings)	ANT concepts used in interpretation of influences on teacher identity
Having limited autonomy over what/ how to teach, conforming with given syllabus (section 6.2.1)	-Strict (exam-oriented) syllabus and its associated course books -Teacher manuals; -Supervisors or coordinators -Associated teaching methodology [implied]	Maya I13, Hakim I1, Sami I4 & FG1, Hakim I1, Sami FG1 Juan I2, HakimI1 HakimI1	Enrolment Translation Stabilisation Symmetry (act on and be acted upon)
Standardisation and pressure to conform (section 6.2.2)	-Coursebooks -Syllabus (related to time pressure)- linked to exams	Manar 17, Muriel I15, Khahn I12	Enrolment Translation Stabilisation Mobilisation
Exam-orientation: the presence of exams (6.2.3)	-Exam-oriented syllabus – Teaching methods used (and not used) because of the syllabus -Presence of exams -Surprise quizzes (& supervisor control) -Exams- student performance used to evaluate teachers	Arkar I14, Khahn I12 Muriel I15 Hua I10, Hakim FG1	Enrolment Translation Mobilisation Stabilisation Obligatory passage point
Colleagues: guidance and role models (6.2.4)	-Fellow teachers, mentors -Undesirable teacher role models	Lian I6 Maya I13 Sami I4 HakimI1 BulanI5 Rena I10	Stabilisation of actor-networks– not disrupting 'norms' of institutional teaching practices
Teaching materials, tools, & spaces: effects on teacher identity (6.2.5)	-Language learning games -Space – playground as classroom -Whiteboards -Visuals/ digital technology	Yusuf I3 Yusuf I3 Manar I7	Interessement Translation Enrolment (de) stabilisation Mobilisation

Appendix XVI(b): Influences on identity formation through postgraduate study showing links to past experiences (and associated actor-networks)

Sub-groupings: Postgraduate study and influences on identity (with related section)	**Actor-networks indicated as influential**	**Links to past experience**	**Evidence in participant stories**	**ANT concepts used in interpretation of influences on teacher identity**
Seminar participation: challenges and responses (6.3.1)	-Seminars understood as actor-networks of lecturers, fellow students, material for discussion and activities -Native-speakerism ideologies and assumptions may be part of these (e.g. participants' pre-formed understandings of being a non-native speaker) -Electronic learning environment –technologies, Powerpoint slides, seminar materials, related forms of knowledge	-Fear of speaking- relations developed between participant learning and teaching experiences and with their students' reticence to speak and participate in lessons. -Reflection on previous assumptions has renewed empathy with the emotions and struggles participants' own students might have learning English	Muriel I15 Maya I13 Arkar I14 Aysha I8	Purification Mobilisation Enrolment Interessment
Introduction to different teaching methods/ approaches (6.3.2)	-Communicative Language Teaching: a teaching approach which may be understood as an actor-network of theoretical principles, ideologies, coursebooks, materials, teaching techniques	-Issues of student motivation (students' reticence to speak) -Large classes – dilemma of how to use CLT -Preference of traditional methods linked to institutional norms and established actor-networks of practices	Muriel I15/ FG3 Maya 113 Arkar I14, FG3 Rena I11	Black-boxed Stabilisation of actor-networks Mobilisation

		Opportunity to introduce *elements* of CLT into local teaching		
Introduction to theoretical knowledge (6.3.3)	-Second language acquisition theories interwoven into MA - content [links to 'western' knowledge] -Links between SLA theory and other actors- coursebooks (& their exercises or activities), classroom activities, teaching methods and how theory becomes performed through these -Paolo Freire's Banking concept: interweaving notions of conduit, teachers as depositors, students as receivers of knowledge = actors performing particular functions which may be controlled by institution/ society	Link to Maya's desire to create fun, interactive teaching Understanding of language learning processes of self and students; connection between identities as teacher and learner Links to institutional actor-networks directing teachers in Hakim's context (syllabus, coursebooks, supervisors, exams etc.) – recognition of how the banking concept is enacted in schools in Saudi Arabia	Maya I13 Hua I10, FG3 Hakim I1, FG1 & 2	Mobilisation
Influences of critical thinking skills and practices (6.3.4)	-Critical thinking (as a blend of theory and skills) and then requirements of postgraduate study, interwoven into writing, discussion, reading of literature, academic conventions, learning outcomes of assessment. - -Questioning what is taken granted – being able to identify different actors	Re-thinking own perspectives and considering others' views related to teaching - questioning before accepting Questioning coursebook material in terms of it being appropriate	Hakim 1I, FG1 Maya I13 Maya I13 Khahn I12	Matters of fact vs matter of concern Enrolment Translation

	involved in teaching e.g. in coursebook material -Understanding how syllabus, material, methods, CEFR, learning outcomes are inter-linking actors in course design	Questioning why a course was difficult to teach, and noticing misalignment among key actors	KhahnI12	

Appendix XVI(c): Imagined professional selves: Identities that participants aspired to in the future and links to postgraduate study and past experiences

Sub-groupings: Imagined professional-selves as future *becomings*	**Participants**	**Links to PG study**	**Links to past experiences**	**ANT concepts used in interpretation of influences on teacher identity**
Teachers – some participants talked about their future continuing as teachers (6.4.1)	***Less-experienced teachers*** Rena I10 (working overseas) Lian I6 (private schools/own courses) Maya I13 (private schools/ own courses) ***Experienced teachers*** Yusuf I3 Sami I4 Manar I7	Rena I10 Learning about different methods/ approaches (6.3.2)– opened up new identity possibilities Maya I13 learning about CLT in PG study to create learner engagement (6.3.2) Sami I4 said he was considering moving into universities due to his frustration with school teaching	Maya I13 Concern over student motivation and ability to speak in English (6.3.2) and reflection on re-becoming a student in relation to her own students (6.3.1)	
Teacher -researcher (6.4.2)	Hakim I1/ FG1 Juan I2/ FG1	-Desire to change teaching practices in home contexts - learning how to do research [& action-research] - knowledge gained through EdD - vision of sharing research knowledge and skills (Juan)	Hakim -dissatisfaction with past teaching experiences and being directed what/how to teach – restricted his access to becoming an educator with a helping, supporting identity (aligned with Freire's banking concept) (6.2.1; 6.3.3.2; 6.3.4)	Translation Enrolment (de)stabilisation of established ways of doing things to build new 'norms' of practices
Teacher-educator (6.4.3)	Hakim I1 Arkar I14/ FG3		Links to Hakim's discussions about Paolo	Mobilisation Interessement

		Reference to knowledge gained in PG study in MA & EdD studies	Freire Banking concept and his identity as a conduit (6.2.1; 6.3.3.2; 6.3.4) Arkar's interest in and concern about introducing CLT in his home context with reference to foreign consultants (6.3.2)	Enrolment Translation
Materials designers (6.4.4)	Khahn I11 Muriel 115	-MA module on course & materials design dissertation study on coursebook material Understanding the different actors shaping a coursebook -Khahn talked about designing an ideal coursebook PhD research developing an App to work with reading syllabus/ book used in her school in Saudi Arabia Links to her reflection on re-becoming a student (6.3.1)	Motivation issues; desire to help students use English communicatively -not just being exam-oriented – Exam-oriented teaching suppressed Khahn's desired creative identity (6.3.2) Concern over motivation and encouraging students to speak in her classes & desire to become a creative and fun teacher (6.2.2)	Mobilisation Coursebooks as matters of concern Avoiding disruption of actor-networks
Assessment-writers (6.4.5)	Khahn I11 Bulan 15	MA module on testing & Introduction to a more communicative test format through the university TELL exams (Test of English language learning) Portfolio assessment experienced through taking a German module	Student motivation issues; desire to help students use English communicatively (6.3.2) Concern over exam-oriented teaching (6.4.3.2)	Obligatory passage point Translation Enrolment

Glossary of Terms

Actor: a human or non-human entity which becomes enrolled into a network to perform particular functions. Actos are always related to others.

Actor-network: Formed through interactions of heterogeneous actors which together function to maintain stability and strengthen the functions of the network. Actor-networks are held together through the relations between different actors and the ways in which these conform with the purpose of more influential actors.

Black-boxed: This metaphorically refers to networks which no longer need scrutiny, or are taken for granted- their workings are 'hidden' and all that matters are inputs and outputs.

Enrolment: Actors and actants are enrolled to participate in a network; they are placed in desirable positions to help hold the network together and strengthen it.

Interessement: This captures how entities are enticed into agreement and participation into performing a particular action.

Matters of fact vs matters of concern: Matters of fact are things that are taken for granted. Their composition may be hidden or considered unimportant. **Matters of concern** are matters of fact that become questioned or examined to see how they have been composed or can be renegotiated.

Obligatory passage point: Upon enrolment, actors may be oriented towards particular points, which they must pass through (by necessary alignment) in order to realize a particular identity.

Purification: A process through which particular attributes or actions are valued and others excluded; teaching and learning is shaped by processes of purification.

Symmetry: Actor-network theory gives equal recognition to human and non-human objects; both are considered to have the potential to exert power and be influential in networks.

Translation: to bring change by redefining another's identity or interests through enrolling particular actors into a network and creating new relations.

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