

Birth, Death and Survival:
an Arendtian analysis of pre-service teacher identity on the PGCE route

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Abstract

This research focuses on the identity development of pre-service teachers on a one-year, university-based teacher education route (PGCE) in England. In the English education system, concerns have been raised about many aspects impacting pre-service teachers during their PGCE and beyond: a neoliberal, market-driven education system; high levels of performativity and accountability within the teaching profession, and the lack of attention to the process of identity formation within teacher education.

This study is significant in that it provides a rationale for pre-service teacher identity formation to be considered in its own right. By bringing an Arendtian framework to the research, it offers pre-service teachers an opportunity to think about themselves, and the influences that act upon their professional identity, in a new way. As a result of this research, it is intended that pre-service teachers will be better able to deal with the challenges that face them as beginning teachers, and that teacher education will embed identity development as an evolving process in their programmes.

This study is situated within a theoretically enriched empirical approach. The methodology was driven using Arendtian theory, specifically the use of Arendt's 'conditions' related to the concepts of birth, death, survival, worldliness, plurality and self-development. This qualitative research gathered data from three PGCE pre-service teachers as they 'became' teachers. Over the period of their PGCE year, this included an online introductory life story to gather insights into their awareness of a teacher identity, a face-to-face semi-structured interview to explore pre-service teachers' awareness of their developing teacher identity, and a critical incident interview, reflecting on the key episodes that impacted on how they viewed themselves as teachers. The data was analysed using Arendt's 'conditions', and presented as the story of three pre-service teachers.

The outcomes of this study are that pre-service teachers felt that the research methodology allowed them to become more aware of, and interrogate, their identity; the Arendtian framework was an 'identifier' that denoted the depth of emotion, the impact of events faced during their teaching experience, and how they successfully resolved these issues. Arendt's 'conditions' were interpreted slightly differently by each pre-service teacher but, combined with the critical incident timeline, acted as a driver for an emergent, dialogical and relational approach to pre-service teacher identity.

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Definitions and Abbreviations

Due to the variety in terminology used to identify individuals on teacher education routes, the terms 'pre-service teacher', 'student teacher' and 'trainee teacher' have been used extensively in the existing literature. However, for the purposes of clarity, I have chosen to use the term 'pre-service teacher', without any ideological intention, to refer to those who are undergoing their initial teacher education.

Similarly, there is a variety of terminology used to refer to the programmes of study that pre-service teachers take to become a qualified teacher, such as 'Initial Teacher Education' (ITE) or 'Initial Teacher Training' (ITT), 'teacher preparation' or 'pre-service teacher training'.

DfE	Department for Education
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate of Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status

Acknowledgements

“What I propose, therefore, is very simple: it is nothing more than to think what we are doing.”

Hannah Arendt (1958:53)

What I have been doing for the last six and a half years has not been very simple. But in that time, there are people whose support has been unwavering, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them:

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

My research investigates pre-service teacher identity on a PGCE course in England. It explores the ways in which Arendt's *Human Condition* (1998) might support pre-service teachers in perceiving their identity in a new and different way. I hope that by raising pre-service teacher awareness of their professional identity, they will be better able to deal with the challenges that face them as beginning teachers. My research uses Arendt's work to interrogate (1) the formation of pre-service teachers' professional identity over the course of the PGCE programme, and (2) the critical points at which a sense of professional identity began to emerge. It also (3) hopes to find out whether pre-service teachers think about their identity development as pre-service teachers. If so, (4) can they identify how and when their teacher identity begins to emerge and if they can identify the key influences on the emerging teacher identity?

1. The research problem

Teacher development has been a key interest of mine for many years. In my first eight years as a university teacher educator, I was predominantly school based. As the primary partnership manager, it was my job to advise and counsel pre-service teachers who experienced difficulties in their school placements. This drew my attention to some pre-service teachers finding difficulty in leaving their 'student-ness' behind as they began their school-based placement. They were unable to adapt, renegotiate or develop professional understanding, and could not see why this would pose any problems. My role was to enable students to develop a greater understanding of their perceived identity and their expected identity (by the school, university and government policy), as outlined in the vignette below (Box 1):

Holly was a lively student in university. She made known her views in lectures and seminars, and when carrying out any peer teaching sessions, she conducted herself with authority, presence and confidence but found it hard to work as part of a team.

She began her first placement, paired with another student. Within the first week, the school was unhappy and requested support from the university; they detailed a variety of reasons for this: lessons were not prepared on time, there was no paperwork, and she was relying heavily on her placement partner.

Observing Holly in discussion with her class teacher, she insisted on talking and shouting over the teacher, and was constantly casting blame on others. Meeting her alone, we talked about the placement and the course, and then she moved the discussion on to talking about her personal life. She wanted to be a student at university, having fun, without the responsibilities of a teacher. It was clear that Holly understood the professional expectations but she could not quite bring herself to follow them. These were real tensions between being a student and the professional demands of a pre-service teacher. Despite my querying whether this was the course for her, she insisted she wanted to be a teacher, and would be grateful for the opportunity for a re-sit placement.

Sadly, these tensions were only fully resolved after a challenging and repeating pattern of failed placements and re-sits. She successfully completed her final placement after yet another re-sit, but by this time it was clear that there had been some form of reconciliation or acceptance in her professional identity.

Box 1: Holly

As the vignette makes clear, transferring from university to school can be a difficult process for pre-service teachers. Holly saw it as an either/or situation, where she could either be a student or a pre-service teacher, but not both. As a result, Holly renegotiated her professional identity through a painful process of failed placements and re-sits. Her problem was how to accommodate her developing professional identity but not lose her sense of self. Palmer (2017: 25-26) argues for teachers to possess knowledge of their “inner landscape” but for some pre-service teachers, it is too difficult to reconcile their professional identity with their personal identity, as detailed in the second vignette (Box 2):

Rachel asked to meet me during her second placement; when pre-service teachers come back to university during placements, experience suggests that something has gone awry. It quickly became apparent that she did not want to be a teacher, and she wanted to leave the course. Looking at Rachel's progress on the course and in her placements, she was a highly successful pre-service teacher, had a strong academic profile and there were positive comments about her teaching and professionalism in school.

When asked about this, she gave a very superficial reason for not wanting to carry on, but gradually revealed the real reasons. She felt she had changed so much during her teacher education that she did not recognise herself. She found it difficult to socialise with her old friends, and there were tensions between her and her husband about the amount of work she was doing at home. She said she had too much to lose, and left the course.

Box 2: Rachel

Rachel's experiences resonate with what I knew from my previous position as a primary class teacher. Pre-service teachers were expected to conform to 'teacherly' expectations, in accepting strategies, techniques and 'top tips'. Seldom were they engaged in dialogical debate regarding pedagogy, professional practice or their own experiences of education. I was conscious of how living in different countries had played a significant part in what kind of teacher I was, and so, in supporting pre-service teachers in my classroom, I actively encouraged them to make use of their own experiences. This coincided with the government's implementation of the first set of Qualified Teacher Standards (Department for Employment and Education (DfEE), circular 4/98), which some colleagues saw as the gold standard of performativity for pre-service teachers, but which, for me, began to raise some problems about teacher identity. It was important in my classroom for pre-service teachers to become a 'person-who teaches', working from their life experiences and self-awareness, and using education as a way of bringing "light and life to the world" (Palmer, 2017:27).

1.1 Moving from professionalism to professional identity

I was, and remain, curious as to how pre-service teachers can find themselves when working to a set of professional standards that only measure developmental achievement. Realising that this was part of a much wider picture led me to my early doctoral studies where my research focus remained on professionalism. Higgins (2010b), on teaching as rehearsal, made reference to the ideas of Arendt, which he had discussed in an earlier chapter (2010a). Being more explicitly Arendtian in content, this latter chapter is a discussion of Arendt's *Human Condition* (1998) and combines Higgins' knowledge of Arendt's other writing to bring clarity to her concepts. This is helpful, as much of Arendt's work is not straightforward; her writing is complicated, long-winded and references the works of the Greek philosophers. Higgins deconstructs Arendt's broad concepts into six 'conditions' (birth, death, biological survival, worldliness, plurality and self-interpretation/self-development), which I believed to be applicable to pre-service teachers' professional growth. At the point of initially engaging with his work, I accepted that Higgins presents the conditions as they relate to professional growth as a linear process in the stages of development. These stages gave me a basic framework upon which to build my initial thoughts, mainly on professionalism, as detailed in the conceptual framework in Chapter Three.

However, I discovered that professionalism was too narrow a focus, and one that had already been much researched. Through further study, the wider influences impacting upon pre-service teachers seemed to bring the 'person-who-teaches' to the fore again. Reading about personal, socio-cultural, emotional and contextual factors (Palmer, 2017; Goleman, 1996; Corcoran and Tormey, 2010) led me to widen my research from professionalism to professional identity. Unlike Higgins' stages, these factors were not presented as developmental in a linear, staged form, nor did they occur in an expected and chronological pattern. Rather, it seemed to me they emerged at different times and in an ad hoc, unpredictable timeframe. This realisation acted as a bridge that led me from Higgins to Arendt. In seeking Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1998), I found a way of thinking about identity development that was non-linear, and which was as unpredictable and complex as pre-service teacher identity. From this, I took Arendt's understanding of time as being different to

Higgins'. In a manner that is almost simultaneous, Arendt is mindful of the present, draws from the past, while being cautiously attentive to the future. It is uncommon to find Arendt's challenging ideas linked to pre-service teacher identity, but in my experience of PGCE pre-service teachers, they too can draw from their past lives to the present, are mindful in their cautious deliberations about themselves as teachers, and are apprehensive about their future. By revisiting the categories that Higgins provides, and now placing them in an Arendtian and non-linear time frame, I have developed a framework for my research on professional identity.

2. Relevance of the study

In moving my research focus to professional identity, I have found the work of Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) useful. They highlight that pre-service teachers have an unclear sense of their professional identity. It follows that if pre-service teachers were to have a clearer understanding of their own identity, this would enable them to cope with the pressures of working as a pre-service teacher in a teacher's world. This study therefore hopes to provide them with an awareness of themselves; it also hopes to raise the place of pre-service teachers in the world, and their moral and ethical duty as teachers. However, simply asking pre-service teachers to reflect on their identity did not strike me as a way round the problem; in my institution, they are asked to reflect in many different ways on their performance as future teachers. I began to see Arendt's ideas as a refreshing way of looking at identity, that by using concepts that are not commonly used in teacher education, such innovation would invite the pre-service teachers to think differently. For these reasons, this study draws from Arendtian theory as a means of moving forward in how pre-service teachers are viewed. This links to Dyson's (2018) belief that teacher education has philosophically stood still, and would do well to see pre-service teachers differently. By focusing on the quality preparation of pre-service teachers in relation to their understanding of themselves, and their relationships with others, would give them a more realistic perspective as they become teachers in a changing world. In his earlier work, Dyson (2003) cited the changes in the English teacher education system as problematic in teacher education, believing that identity is also affected by change. The English education system

has been driven by constant government policy change in the last fifty years and its impact has been felt by teachers, teacher educators and possibly pre-service teachers. For that reason, the context of the reform in the English education system, and specifically within teacher education, is something I discuss later in this chapter. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) further suggest that educational reform can affect identity through the stress and emotion associated with change. I agree with this viewpoint, and believe that a well-defined identity would enable pre-service teachers to evaluate the impact of the government's agenda and allow them to make confident, professional decisions. As a result, I hope that pre-service teachers may feel better equipped to remain in the profession.

In addition, much of the existing literature refers to professional identity as an object. In the literature review (Chapter Two), I argue that much of the existing research on teacher identity, and specifically that which is related to pre-service teachers, is reticent in exploring the dynamics in which the pre-service teacher's identity emerges. I put forward the case that much of the literature presents professional identity as a chronological and developmental object that can be achieved by the end of a teacher education programme.

I hope that my research will inform teacher education programmes, not in terms of adding more to already busy ITE programmes but in looking at new opportunities for pre-service teachers to become aware of, and engage with, their identities. This is why the work of Hannah Arendt is important in identity work. Furthermore, as a teacher educator, I believe that we act as gatekeepers to the profession, mindful of the responsibilities pre-service teachers will take on as teachers. Hayden (2012: 246) sums this up: "For Arendt, teachers are responsible for the continuance of the child and the continuance of the world at once and serve as the bridge between them; the world that is, and the preparation of the persons for the world that will become." It is hoped that this study, in its exploration of professional identity, may allow pre-service teachers to think beyond themselves.

2.1 Thinking about our place in the world

When pre-service teachers reflect on their identities and how they came to be there, I would like to hope that they gain a wider understanding of their responsibilities as future teachers. As discussed in the last paragraph, Hayden

(2012) points out Arendt's belief that teachers play an important part in the world. Arendt's work, in identifying three fundamental activities of *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* brings together the unique individual, a shared life of social and political interaction, and a permanent sense of legacy that comes from a morally active life. Biesta (2012: 686-687) clarifies this further in explaining that *The Human Condition* focuses on "an understanding of human beings as active beings, ... not simply defined by their capacity to think and reflect but where being human has to do with what one does." In my research, I invite pre-service teachers to consider their values and beliefs from a humanistic perspective. Thinking with Arendt offers pre-service teachers the opportunity to understand their individual and unique place, and purpose, in the broader or 'common' world. Yet many of the pre-service teachers I have worked with seem oblivious to the socio-political context, or believe that it does not affect them; others are more sensitive to the political dynamics or are cautious of the ways in which government policy is implemented through practice at school level. Although this research offers pre-service teachers to undertake critical thinking about themselves, their spaces and ways of working, it does not seek to be a study in critical pedagogy. Rather, it asks them to explore and question the contexts in which they are 'becoming' teachers.

In the next section, I outline the major educational changes I have experienced as a teacher and as a teacher educator, and argue that constant change greater emphasises the need for pre-service teachers to be more aware of their own professional identity.

3. Experiencing the impact of political change on my professional identity

The educational reform in teacher education stemmed from political intervention in the primary and secondary sectors. For these reasons, I discuss the political context, even though the political strand remains deliberately understated throughout the whole of this study. The pre-service teachers in this study were working to an accountable and government imposed set of teacher competences (DfE, 2011) but it is not the place of this research to comment on the influence of the political context on pre-service teacher identity.

3.1 Political intervention

I entered the teaching profession in the mid-1980s when teachers were free to choose what to teach, how to teach it, and how to report on pupil progress. Having taken time out to undertake my Master's in 1988, the school landscape to which I returned was a completely different one to that which I had left: schools and governing bodies were in control of their own budgets; schools had been re-organised to include Key Stages; there was a National Curriculum (DfEE, 1999) with prescribed programmes of study, and series of tests, followed by the introduction of league tables.

Ball and Olmedo (2013: 89) refer to the implementation of this act as a “neoliberal and neoconservative” education policy whose role was to privilege British culture and tradition at the expense of multiculturalism, to increase the accountability of teachers, and to raise suspicions regarding their professionalism. In addition, there was frequent discrediting of schools and teachers for not living up to these standards. Many teachers that I worked with were worried that they could not achieve these high levels of performativity, and teaching has since been regarded as a highly stressful job. In addition, what became apparent to me as a returning teacher was that trust in the teaching profession and professional autonomy had disappeared. The knowledge economy had arrived; schools had become businesses, school leaders had become managers, and the products of education were seen as having a direct link to the economy (Ball and Olmedo, 2013: 25). Not only was there political intervention in the primary and secondary sectors but, as I discuss below, there has also been intervention and control in teacher education.

3.2 Political control in teacher education

As McNamara, Murray and Phillips (2017) identify, there has been a similar amount of political intervention in teacher education. In particular, they highlight 1984 as the “watershed for the ITT sector” (2017:6) with the start of substantial regulation and accountability of teacher training. Being school based at this point, I was only partially aware of these changes, which included assessment of subject knowledge and classroom competences; increased length of school-based training; the establishment and inspection of a National Curriculum for ITT, and the introduction of Qualified Teacher Status.

Having made the move into teacher education in the late 1990s, I assumed that I would be leaving educational uncertainty behind, to work in a relatively autonomous landscape. This was not the case. By the early 2000s, it was hard as a teacher educator to keep abreast of the wider range of ITE courses that were now offered by universities. The routes into teaching had become wide and varied, many of which were seen as a political intervention to lessen the role of the university. School-based programmes such as School Direct and SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) are currently still favoured by the UK government, consolidated by two white papers: *The Importance of Teaching White Paper* (DfE, 2010) and *Educational Excellence Everywhere* (DfE, 2016). This stance has been viewed as being responsible for bringing about the demise of the ‘student teacher’ and replacing it with the “emergence of the apprentice or trainee teacher” (McIntyre et al., 2017: 2).

The changes that I experienced in school have been mirrored in teacher education. The Carter Review (DfE, 2015), for example, dictated core subject content for teacher education programmes, and promoted an evidence-based approach to quality teaching and learning. Instead of embedding research activity in teacher preparation courses, teacher educators have been encouraged to promote the evidence-based trend of ‘what works’ (Biesta, 2007; Winch, 2017; McIntyre et al., 2017). These changes created the paradox of a research-led profession having much of its teacher education removed from university. Arendt’s (1998) warnings of impulsive political actions or dangerous power at political level are well suited to pre-service teachers working in a politicised context. For these reasons, I believe research such as this, on the formation of pre-service teacher identity is relevant and timely. Such political intervention has challenged my assumptions of university-based teacher education programmes, and my understanding of what it means to be a teacher educator. Questions have been asked by government and teacher educators alike as to whether the post-graduate route requires academic and theoretical components, or whether schools may be the best place to train teachers. In schools that I visited, many have been cautious about their motivation and capacity to prepare teachers. It would appear, as McIntyre et al. (2017) point out, the voice of the universities, teachers and pre-service teachers are not being heard. Teachers, and teacher educators such as myself, are working in a

time of uncertainty, and may be unclear about their professional identity. It follows that if we are experiencing uncertainty, pre-service teachers themselves may be unclear regarding their own professional identity.

In the next chapter I critically review the existing literature on professional identity, and its inability to provide what is needed with reference to pre-service teachers, before illuminating the benefits that Arendt brings to this area of study.

Chapter 2 – Literature review

In the introduction to this thesis I indicated that the literature review would focus on why there is a gap in existing literature on the formation of pre-service teacher identity. In seeking to understand professional identity, I consider how professional identity has been conceptualised in contemporary literature, before presenting a rationale of why professional identity matters. I move on to argue that pre-service teachers are different, and need to be seen, not in terms of an object-based identity, but from the perspective of a relational, emergent identity. I argue that there is scope to consider a philosophical identity, based on Arendt's *Human Condition*, and conclude the chapter with a discussion of what Arendtian thinking can offer pre-service teacher identity.

1. Towards an understanding of professional identity

In this section I briefly discuss how the structure of literature is conceptualised in much of the literature. Remembering that Arendt's *Human Condition* is based on three spheres or arenas: personal, social and political, the literature follows this format and begins with personal identity, moves on to include social and relational identity, before concluding with organisational identity, the more political branch of identity study. This is helpful in understanding the spaces and places in which pre-service teachers may navigate their identity. This section then concludes with the ways in which literature has conceptualised professional identity.

There has been much research into what Arendt would class as the 'personal sphere'. Day et al. (2006) argue that personal lives, values and beliefs play a key part in all that teachers do, while Palmer (2017) is keen to stress that all the aspects of the self are a fundamental part of a teacher's identity, particularly when linked with integrity and values. With specific attention to pre-service teachers, Zeichner (2006) believes that it is only recently that pre-service teachers' values became worthy of research. It is surprising that this feature emerged so late in current literature, given the earlier work of Dewey (1916) had considered inherent values, beliefs and the internalising of experiences to be important.

Within the social arena, Arendt places importance on the importance of others; social and relational identity is exhibited through group dynamics and interpersonal relationships. Koutouzis and Spiriadou (2017) believe social identification in pre-service teachers to be an important factor, involving a recognition of shared values and similar social behaviours. In addition to the social cohesion provided through relational identity, Stets and Burke (2000) believe that social group identity has the means to transform the behaviour and values of the individual. This is later developed by Clarke (2009) and Zink (2010), in stressing the importance of relationships with others, particularly in the process of becoming a teacher.

Arendt reminds us that it is due to the political context that understanding identity is a key part of understanding our future. Her work in the political arena includes the ways in which we work together. Within an organisation, identity is often related to the political dynamics and ethos of the organisation, and knowing one's value in the political sphere is important (Arendt, 1998). Identity may include membership of several social groups but at this level personal identity is largely forgotten, unless it is related to the qualities of its leaders. Organisational identity focuses on maintaining outward stability, even in periods of change (Stets and Burke, 2000). In this study, it is important to remember that Zeichner (2010) considers that pre-service teachers are highly influenced by organisational attitude, and that it is not always a positive experience. For example, Wenger (2008: 108) believes that "non-membership shapes our identities through our confrontation with the unfamiliar"; if we regard pre-service teachers as peripheral participants in another teacher's classroom, this may result in a lack of shared reference, poor engagement with others and lack of tacit understanding.

1.1 Theorising professional identity

Given the complex nature of identity, which Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) highlight in their longitudinal study of teacher identity, there remains an agreed lack of consensus (Erickson et al., 2011) regarding how to conceptualise it. Nor is there agreement on what might constitute a pre-service teacher's identity (Pillen et al., 2013), a much younger area of academic study.

However, in this study, finding a definition is not as important as realising the ways in which pre-service teacher identity has been theorised. Structural

conceptualisations of identity tend to view it as an 'either/or'; for example, theoretical or professional; psychological or biographical. In light of this, discussed below are some of the ways in which professional identity has been theorised – as an understanding of the self; as a socio-cultural and biographical concept; a practice-based identity; and finally, as a philosophical understanding, all of which link to the Arendtian framework used in this study.

1.1.2 The psychosocial self

Identity can be viewed from an Erikson/neo-Erikson psychological/philosophical approach, where the idea of the self is a prevailing one: Kelchtermans (2009) uses the 'self' as a focal point, whereas Beijaard (1995) uses 'self-image' and Coward et al., (2015: 197) refer to the Eriksonian definition of identity as a mental and psychic state where the individual reflects upon interdependent factors that form the self as a "coherent whole" (Zembylas, 2003: 219). Zembylas' (2003) paper on identity formation is compatible with the theme of social interaction favoured by Arendt, and by this research; it provides a bond with Erikson's psychological work on identity (1959) and in it we can see Erikson in Arendt's discussion of the development of the individual, of relationships and of society.

The use of Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory has been linked to identity development in pre-service teachers (Friesen and Besley, 2013: 24). The strength of this theory is that it unifies itself across events and time, and is unique to that person, albeit as a core identity, enabled by the addition of, and reflection on, professional experiences. It is this unique and distinct identity that Arendt favours in *The Human Condition*; in drawing from Arendtian theory, it helps to identify the distinct professional identity of each pre-service teacher. However, this Eriksonian stance is highly dependent on personal interpretation by pre-service teachers of their experiences. This may be problematic when there are limited professional experiences upon which to reflect; nor does it take into account the socio-cultural and biographical experiences that make up much of pre-service teachers' lives.

1.1.3 A socio-cultural, biographical identity

As a way forward, Furlong (2013) takes the notion of self and links it to the life history and the values system of each pre-service teacher, which Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) believe to be pivotal to identity. These aspects are fundamental to the 'person-that-teaches', which Arendt would see as positive understanding of the person's personal and social identities. Klassen, Beijaard and Kelchtermans (1999) link social, cognitive and biographical identity, and continue to stress the importance of the individual as unique and distinctive, with the self at the centre of professional identity. These views support Arendt's belief that moving from the small private, personal sphere to the wider social sphere may take time to establish and renegotiate our identity. Furthermore, Lindgren and Wåhlin (2001: 359) believe that identity is formed by the 'continuous handling of the tensions caused by adapting to norms of the social context', not only of the home background but also in relation to the variety of changing contexts in which the pre-service teachers work and study. Clandinin et al. (2009) remind us that pre-service teachers work in 'shifting social landscapes' (Clandinin et al., 2009), a situation that may be challenging for experienced teachers, let alone pre-service teachers. These theories may be beneficial in including the lived experiences and beliefs of the individual, and by promoting a Vygotskian approach to identity, the theories highlight the socio-cultural context, where the pre-service teacher makes sense of social interactions through a process of internalisation. However, these theories tend to ignore the professional and practice-based elements of teaching.

1.1.4 A practice-based identity

Highly influenced by organisational attitudes and classroom practice, developing a practice-based identity may be seen by some pre-service teachers and researchers to be the most important aspect of becoming a teacher. Coward et al. (2015) believe situated learning to be the foundation of identity development, which brings together the theory–practice nexus, and which provides a basis of 'becoming' a teacher (MacLure, 1993). In order to develop practice-based teacher identity, there are calls for pre-service teachers to be more involved in the day-to-day responsibilities of teaching much earlier in their

teacher education (Hokka and Etelapelto, 2013), and to be given more time to practise their teaching skills (Reid, 2011).

Stenberg et al. (2014) present a model, albeit with undergraduate pre-service teachers, where didactic practicalities are key to identities, aided by their morals and values, at the start of their teaching career. Their model is based on pre-service teacher beliefs about “teachers’ everyday work” (2014: 207), and includes four *positions*: (1) Values position, (2) Practice position, (3) Teacher position and (4) Context position. The Values position emphasises the moral and belief systems of the trainees and their relationship to the holistic well-being of their pupils. The Practice position is sub-divided into three strands: pedagogy, didactics and content. The Teacher position deals with how the pre-service teachers see their own personal qualities as teachers, their coping strategies and professional development. The Context position is the school community, home–school links, and working with others. This viewpoint of teachers’ work is viewed differently to the way in which Arendt conceptualises *work*; although *work* takes place in a common world, Arendt sees it as a wider space of ‘appearance’ than the narrower school community outlined above by Stenberg et al.

The benefits of following a practice-based identity are that it may help reduce “praxis shock” (Edwards and Nuttall, 2015) where mismatched expectations, lack of support, and organisational influences are all important factors as to whether beginner teachers experience a negative reality of teaching (Flores and Day, 2006). However, the concern is that this form of identity is highly dependent on the mechanics of teaching, and promotes a neoliberal stance, while rejecting the biographical and socio-cultural aspects of pre-service teachers’ lives.

1.1.5 The role of ‘becoming’ in identity formation

More contemporary perspectives of professional identity believe it to have moved from a modern, unitary and self-defining identity presented as a fixed, static ‘object’ to a ‘process’ of ‘becoming’ that involves a sense of self, social interdependence and an acceptance of ‘becoming’ as a never-ending process. This position sits well in Arendtian thinking, where there are endless possibilities for *deaths*, rebirths and new beginnings in individuals. With this in mind, teacher identity can be recognised as stable-unstable (Day et al., 2006), and the

commonly cited threads of teacher identity involve the constant, ongoing self, contextually situated, based on multiple identities and achieved through active construction (Beijaard et al., 2004). The post-structural approach (Marsh, 2002) also raises questions about ‘becoming’, as a changing, unstable and non-linear process. Knowing themselves as pre-service teachers in the process of “living rather than knowing” (St. Pierre, 2013: 152) is a powerful tool. This self-awareness may help pre-service teachers understand how to reduce tensions that could arise between their personal, professional and organisational identities. Zembylas (2003) stresses that it is the analysis of the self *and* the experience that together form the discourse of the experiences. Furthermore, Edwards (2015) recognises that pre-service teachers are constantly renegotiating a set of identities that will always be in the making. This stance counters the current neoliberal, performativity agenda where pre-service teachers are expected to achieve their identity against a set of professional competences. Having considered some of the ways in which professional identity has been theorised, I turn to the importance of professional identity.

2. Why does professional identity matter?

Professional identity has been presented through multiple lenses. It has been used as a tool to understand the professional self in the workplace (MacLure, 1993; Evetts, 2012; Wenger, 1998); as a narrative to tell the story of ‘becoming’ a teacher (Sfard and Prusak, 2005; Watson, 2009); to explore the cultural and social discourses in place (Scollon, 1996; Goodson and Sikes, 2001; Alsup, 2005; Zink, 2010), and to examine the contextual factors and political strategy (Flores and Day, 2006; Day et al., 2006).

In this study, Arendt’s ideas of *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* serve as broad strands to explore influences exerted upon pre-service teacher identity. It is vital that pre-service teachers have an awareness of these influences, in order to cope with the early years of teaching, and that schools and teacher education can provide them with ways to deal with educational change and interaction in the wider professional community. Identity awareness may enable pre-service teachers to deal with the workload in ways that are personal to them and that fit around their working and personal lives. By so doing, this may help them remain longer in the profession.

2.1 Interweaving the personal and professional identities

Teaching and teacher identity is dependent on the interweaving of the person and the professional; they cannot be separated (Lamote and Engels, 2010), and as Palmer (2017: 24) succinctly points out, “we teach who we are.”

Following this thinking, Rose (1996) asserts that it is important for pre-service teachers to be accepted for all that they have lived through if there is to be an understanding of ‘becoming’ teachers. In addition, Britzman (2000) calls for pre-service teachers to know themselves, particularly with regard to emotional and personal dimensions.

2.2 Adapting to change

Pre-service teachers may be cautious of any change to their professional identity. Understanding and accepting identity as a fluctuating state is a key part of identity work, particularly with pre-service teachers. As Mentis et al. (2016) explain, developing an identity also involves pre-service teachers being able to deal with challenge and change. Similarly, Weiner and Torres (2016) found that an understanding of the shifting nature of identity was beneficial to pre-service teachers when seeking employment, and at times when their existing identity may be challenged, a view supported by Waggoner (2018). These new beginnings in identity bring about, in Arendtian thinking, a person who was never there before, an individual who has never seen themselves in such a way. It is hoped by adopting a more flexible and adaptable approach, pre-service teachers may see change as a “resource rather than as a threat” (Legrottaglie and Ligorio, 2017).

2.3 Affording teacher education a new perspective

Bringing professional identity into teacher education may give greater purpose to the sector. Clandinin et al. (2009), from a Canadian perspective, argue that the lack of agreement about the purpose of teacher education affects teacher educators, teachers and pre-service teachers. This can be seen in the way that pre-service teacher identity remains largely ignored at policy level in England. The professional standards for teachers (DfE, 2011) make no explicit reference to teacher identity, and so one could assume that the concept of professional

identity is not classed as important or relevant. However, Legrottaglie and Ligorio (2017) believe that identity discourse is fundamental to the well-being of all involved in education.

In 1997, Bullough et al. had earlier argued that identity discourse needed a place in education as a way of embodying the perspectives of pre-service teachers. In support of this argument, Wilkins (2017) suggests that teacher education is not sufficiently able to meet the needs of career changers, nor does it value the previous lives of pre-service teachers. By placing professional identity at the heart of teacher education, it could refresh and re-purpose it from the perspective of those in the midst of it.

In attempting to embed identity within initial teacher education, the usual arguments prevail: that teacher education in England is already overloaded with government priorities and that its curricular content is now dictated and inspected. However, a new perspective could be achieved by the sector considering a wider understanding of education and thus steering a new course that could bridge the school/university divide. Lewis (2013: 1029) views Arendt's work as a bridge between researchers and educators, which spans the university and school-based identities that Zeichner (2010) calls for, and which were discussed in the introduction to this thesis.

3. The gaps in current research on pre-service teachers

As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, the existing literature on teacher identity **is slow** to recognise the pre-service teacher as being different; as not yet teachers; as beginners who are learning to teach.

Instead, much of the existing literature focuses on beginner teachers, newly qualified teachers (Morrison, 2013; Correa et al., 2015) or subject specialist teachers or pre-service teachers (Joseph, 2011), all of whom have successfully made the transition into the profession. An example of this is the work of Edwards and Edwards (2017), who accept the complexity of developing a teacher identity, but their paper draws from the experiences of a recently graduated science teacher rather than during their teacher education. In addition, Smith (2007) examines the pre-dispositions of teacher identity but specifically with beginner science teachers, while Knight and Moore (2012) outline the support needed to guide male beginner teacher identity. Some

aspects of the literature may have relevance but are not central to the research in this study.

In the literature that *is* focused on pre-service teachers, there is a common tendency to focus on one aspect of identity. For example, the work of Reid (2011) and Coward et al. (2015) focuses on practice-based elements of teacher education programmes, while Mayer (1999) focuses on a skills-based identity; this is a frequent pattern, with emphasis on a narrow dimension of identity while largely ignoring the other identities that may be in evidence to a greater or lesser extent. Izadinia (2013), in her comprehensive analysis of literature on pre-service teachers, believes that literature on pre-service teachers can be categorised into research mainly on one of four groups: learning communities, context, prior experiences and reflective activities.

Reviewing the literature on teacher identity suggests that a more holistic understanding of pre-service teacher identity is needed, accompanied by a recognition that they need to be considered in a different way to teachers or recently qualified teachers.

3.1 Becoming a pre-service teacher is different

Pre-service teachers see themselves differently to the ways in which teachers see themselves. Lamote and Engels (2010) claim that pre-service teachers identify with three stages of awareness during their teacher education. Firstly, they centre on themselves, with high levels of self-awareness; secondly, they move away from themselves towards task-oriented practice, and finally onto an awareness of their impact as teachers. It is the latter aspect that fascinates Arendt, who sees the value of political actions such as teaching.

In addition, they may have experienced an 'apprenticeship' as learners of teaching in their own schooling, but Watson (2006) and Chong et al. (2011) suggest that these early experiences may cause pre-service teachers to hold onto an untested and imagined sense of teacher identity. Furthermore, they have little or no professional practice upon which to build; Wenger (1998) argues that there cannot be a sense of professional identity in the personal–professional nexus when professional experience is absent. This is explained by Spendlove et al. (2012) who explain that codes of professional conduct are not understood by pre-service teachers in the early days of their teacher education, but rather, they draw, Arendtian-like, from their individual ethics and

morals as a means of bridging the personal and professional identity. As a result, teacher educators may need to build this knowledge into their understanding of pre-service teachers and take time to support them as beginners in learning and practising professional growth.

Pre-service teachers exist in a state of transition during their PGCE. Unlike qualified teachers, pre-service teachers occupy a position that never fully belongs to them. As Coward et al. (2015) suggest, their identity is complex and dichotomous in that they are both the learner (of teaching) and the teacher (who is learning). Their identity development is an ongoing process that makes it difficult to understand who they are. In a state of constant development and change, it may be difficult for pre-service teachers to truly know where they are – rather like “jumping over our own shadows” (Arendt, 1998: 10).

4. Critiquing identity as an object

Much of the existing literature objectifies identity. Waggoner (2018) makes an assertion that people try to define their identity via objects and possessions. If we take identity to be an ‘object’, it is one that is achieved over time, is static, and has recognised stages of development. Waggoner (2018) believes that seeking identity in this way, through the gathering and acquisition of objects, creates a form of isolation, which Arendt is keen to avoid. This reflects an earlier argument by Akkerman and Meijer (2011: 308), whose work on teacher identity rejected the more traditional markers of identity as an accumulation of “assets.”

Furthermore, roles may be used to objectify identity. Murphy and Pinnegar (2011) point out that identity is often given, assumed or enacted within a professional role. It can accumulate over the teacher’s career, be made up of constituent parts, and be regarded as a fixed or completed product. For example, teachers may be categorised as a ‘type’ of teacher (authoritarian, subject expert, behaviour specialist), they may demonstrate stages of development (such as beginner teacher, senior teacher), and they may possess acquired levels of subject knowledge (subject leadership and responsibilities). In teacher education, pre-service teachers can be given the title of ‘trainees’ or ‘students’, each with different role intentions inferred in the title. The literature also identifies identity as a thing to be achieved, and in some cases, identity has a specific end-point. The Teachers’ Standards (DfE, 2011) are a clear

example of this; only by collecting ‘evidence’ of their achievement can pre-service teachers be called teachers, which questions what they have been doing in the classroom during their teacher education, if not teaching.

Pre-service teachers may begin their teacher education with an object-based understanding of identity. As Anspal et al. (2012) explain, pre-service teachers bring established role models to their teacher education, enhanced by tales of their experiences as pupils in schools. Furlong (2013: 79) believes that such schemas idealise the teacher they wish to be, and that their beliefs may remain fixed and rigid. These schemas may look back to a different time and place, and be almost archetypal in their form. But although archetypes may refer to an objectified view of identity, they may still play a pertinent part. For example, Tanriverdi et al. (2009) employed Jung’s archetypes to explore pre-service teachers’ attitudes to classroom practice, which gave the researcher and the pre-service teachers a language with which to identify themselves.

Like Jung’s archetypes, Erikson’s psychosocial theory (1959) explores the way that emerging skills at each life stage are needed to achieve integration into society (Newman and Newman, 2007: 214). In teacher education, these may be seen in the form of teaching skills and knowledge, which are then assimilated by pre-service teachers into their understanding of school life (Beijaard et al., 2004; Coward et al., 2015). Although this research does not wish to emphasise object-based identity, it accepts that role models and static viewpoints may be a useful starting point with pre-service teachers. But as Waggoner (2018:11) points out, “Once identity is truly divorced ... from object dependence, then an individual can better grapple with their own existence and their place within a community or universal context.”

4.1 Moving towards a post-structuralist, relational identity

As discussed earlier in this chapter, a post-structuralist approach to identity views it as an emergent and continuous process of development that occurs in relation to our social interactions. As Martin and Pirbhai-Illich (2016: 361) suggest, those coming to teacher education bring with them knowledge of the self as a social construct, and that such knowledge can be interpreted in a dialogic-relational way. This ‘relational’ self can be located within Arendt’s concept of *plurality*, which Dewandre (2017: 3) sees as the “exclusive path to our identity.” It seeks recognition and can be achieved, according to Sluss and

Ashforth (2007), through the integration of personal and role-based identities, bringing together the individual and interpersonal levels of self. Benwell and Stokoe's (2011) work on discourse identity stresses the need to 'navigate' between this sense of uniqueness, and the need to belong to a collective group.

The importance of relational others is key in the formation of pre-service teachers' identity; Tamboukou (2010: 170) identifies that the fundamental role of the other is to expose "the fragile uniqueness of the self in its constitutive relation with others," while Zembylas (2003: 233) cites Bakhtin's notion of "plurilogicality" where identity is conferred through recognition by others, but warns that lack of recognition may result in low self-esteem and psychological damage. Atkinson (2004) and Furlong (2013: 80) believe that pre-service teachers need opportunities for reflection provided by significant others. The role of teacher educators and pre-service teachers is to ensure that these relations are ones in which difference can be valued, shared and understood. This is summed up by Kozleski, (2011: 251), who asserts the importance of "an imagined place where narratives and counter narratives converge in ways that make it possible to disrupt and change the transcendent narrative." This is suggestive of a move towards negotiating new ways of thinking and working.

As briefly mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the work of Hannah Arendt may offer a different perspective to pre-service professional identity, and it is to that which we now turn.

5. Introducing a philosophical professional identity

In this section I start with an introduction of what Arendt can bring to education, and why her work is relevant to contemporary issues in education, before moving on to outline the context and the main concepts of *The Human Condition*. I then discuss the ways in which *The Human Condition* has been used to theorise teacher identity before exploring why a philosophical identity is relevant to pre-service teachers.

5.1 Arendt and education

At a time when the teaching profession is not overly positive, Arendt's thinking provides us with a way out of the current situation, through thinking. In *The Human Condition* she provides us with ways of looking to the future, but with

reference to the past. She uses the past as a retrospective account of human life to consider the conditions in which humans flourish. This takes the form of a fragmented narrative (Buckler, 2007) where the past is valued, not by longing for life as it once was, but as a new way of thinking about the future. This resonates with concerns in teacher education; English governmental policy contemplates educational futures based only on knowledge of the past, which, as Osberg (2018) suggests, only serves to maintain the current difficulties and tensions that exist. Fine and Smith (2003) assert an Arendtian idea that “that which was good in the past” becomes an uncritical and unsatisfactory way of looking to the future. This ties in with Osberg’s (2018) emphasis on the importance of learning from education of the past, while imagining and creating educational futures that cannot yet be anticipated.

According to Honig (1988: 79), Arendt anticipates that there can be other ways of “thinking, willing, and judging.” Arendt’s ‘fragmented’ drawing from the past enables her to find a less predictable way of looking at ourselves and society. It suspends time, providing a new perspective on history, which can now be viewed critically and differently, given our place in the world at that moment.

Osberg and Biesta (2018) argue that education has received too much of the wrong kind of attention. They suggest that the market-driven education that is recognisable in England has been fashioned to serve a machinistic purpose, with set outcomes; they go on to argue that education should be an emergent identity in its own right, and that it “brings with it the purpose it serves” (2018: 2). Their argument mirrors the context of teacher education; in a similar machinistic way, it creates teachers fashioned for a purpose, and not in their own right. The combination of a constrained teacher education programme, plus imposed policy-based learning about the self, leads to a machine-based identity. In this way, teacher education may be seen as a tool for the socio-cultural processing of pre-service teachers. In so doing these teachers are denied their professional identity. Arendt’s *Human Condition* provides a way of looking at pre-service teachers that is innovative and unique and which rejects the machination of teacher education. In employing such a perspective in this study, it allows for the individuality of the pre-service teacher to emerge, and for consideration as to what makes them human and unique. In addition, it affords space for emergent and non-linear identity development to occur.

In encompassing interpersonal and intrapersonal characteristics, Arendt offers pre-service teachers an identity within a social context that embraces a human need for humanity and social integration. Arendt's *Human Condition* (1998) provides this research with a philosophical and theoretical basis for making sense of pre-service teachers and their perceptions of identity. By thinking differently with Arendtian concepts, i.e. "outside the framework of the established tradition" (Benhabib, 1990: 188), it is hoped in this research that pre-service teachers may rethink the space and time between their past and the future, offering a space of 'not-yet' (d'Agnese, 2018).

Yet, we cannot ignore Arendt's main work on education; *The Crisis in Education* (1961) raises questions about the purpose of education, the importance of the teacher in educating the child, and the role of the teacher in the world. Although it explores wider political issues, it could be argued that these are not yet applicable to pre-service teachers in this study, who are just at the point of 'becoming' teachers, and who may not have considered their place in the world. It is for this reason that this research does not dwell on this work but instead chooses to focus on Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1998). It conveys the transitional relationship between past, present and future, explores people and places, personal and social dynamics, and the sense of place that relates to politics, the organisation and the community.

5.2 The Human Condition

The very context of *The Human Condition* helps to contextualise Arendt's thinking. The prologue makes reference to the space exploration that was taking place around her in 1957 and was evidence that the world in which she lived was undergoing dramatic change. With an awareness of mass society (d'Entreves, 2014), Arendt was hopeful of the ways in which shared knowledge could enable people to learn from mistakes committed in other places; in this she was referring to her own background as a Jew, fleeing the terror and genocide of the holocaust. She wrote *The Human Condition* as a result, as a "reconsideration of the human condition from the vantage point of our newest experiences and our most recent fears" (Arendt, 1998: 5).

This echoes the period of constant change in which teachers and teacher educators live and work. In teacher education, there are consistently new experiences and ultimately new fears due to the speed of change and the

transient nature of educational policy. This is reflected in the way more recent reports (DfE, 2015) have quickly become policy documents (Educational Excellence Everywhere, 2016). It is Spector (2016: 90) who suggests that we should look to Arendt, and her views on education, to consider the “mis-educational circumstances” that teacher educators are facing because of political intervention.

5.2.1 Fundamental human activities

Arendt focuses on the three human activities of *Labour*, *Work* and *Action*. *Labour* is related to the human life cycle that starts with *natality* or new beginnings, leading ultimately to decay and death. Arendt charges *labour* with the survival of the individual, and of the species. In the case of this research, it is to do with the *survival* of the pre-service teacher, and of teaching. However, her emphasis on *natality* implies that the relationship with mortality is not far away; this knowledge is the burden that humans must contend with throughout their lives. *Labour* is thus considered at the level of basic survival in the individual, and viewed with urgency, futility and desperation. To Arendt, *birth* is considered as an active ‘insertion’ into the world; with this “conceptual moment” (Champlin, 2013: 151) comes the unexpected, the unique and the surprising contribution of the individual. As soon as we insert ourselves we are never the same, nor is the social world that we enter. This, Betz (1992: 393) believes, allows humans to “act in new ways, can bring the new into being” through reform and innovation.

Work, according to Arendt (1998: 98), is the extension of *labour*, through *action*. It is where workers create things of greater durability to benefit the world. But like so much of Arendt’s thinking, the activity of *work* can have concrete and abstract meanings at the same time: *work* is expressive of *natality* and the freedom to enact new beginnings, while also demonstrating the human desire for permanence. *Work* builds “the world in which humans live” (Mönig, 2012: 238), giving humans “a kind of permanence, a home” that also uses *worldliness* and thinking as a way of existing alongside others, in a common and shared space (Nixon, 2001: 232). This relates to the common space in which pre-service teachers work with teachers.

Arendt’s *worldliness* is a way of becoming in the world, which Smith (2007: 37-38) believes occurs through the skilled disclosure of oneself to the world,

through the sharing of ideas, opinions and actions. This disclosure brings about a space for “self-realization, freedom, co-creation” (Boym, 2009: 124).

Arendt places *action* as the highest and most important activity in striving to achieve the *vita activa*. She prioritises the “experiential character of life” (Keladu, 2015: 69) and in so doing asserts that political and social activities create history. This sense of legacy and permanence is important to Arendt in a world that is so transient. *Action* does not take place in isolation but requires people with different perspectives to work together; each individual has their own unique contribution to make to the collective discussion. Arendt talks of the space of appearance and appearing in collaboration with others rather than *performing for* others. This could be argued as a necessity for pre-service teachers, relating to d’Agnese’s (2018: 11) difference between “ ‘actual conditions’ and ‘a sense of [unrealized] possibilities,’ ” the latter which offers choice, unpredictability and potential for growth.

Arendt is optimistic in deriving meaning and purpose stemming from the ways in which we work together. This is underpinned by her concept of *plurality*, which is based on humans who “live and move and act in this world, can experience meaningfulness only because they can talk with and make sense to each other and to themselves” (1998: 4). Hayden (2012) believes that in Arendt we may recognise the plurality, not only in our lives, but also in how we can work together through action. Nevertheless, Arendt is mindful of the difficulties in working together: “agreement from plural persons is hard to achieve, and never safe from the disruptive initiatives of other actors” (Canovan, 1998: xix). Although Arendt remains cautious with respect to ideas of plurality and pluralistic power, she accepts that working to agreed purposes can also bring about predictability at times of uncertainty. The plurality of being in the world and working together in “dynamic engagement” (Hayden, 2012: 245) offers empowerment, agency and transformation. Biesta (2012: 690) calls this way of working a “citizenship of strangers” that “articulates an interest in the common world.”

5.3 *The Human Condition* and its application to research

It is helpful to review the ways that *The Human Condition* has been applied to teacher identity. For example, Higgins (2011) refers to *The Human Condition* to

identify a 'neo-praxis philosophy' - a practice-based tradition that emphasises teachers' shared experiences of the present; Furman (2017) and Higgins (2010a) use Arendt's ideas as reflective tools in considering the practical and ethical roles of the teacher, while Hoveid and Hoveid (2008) use Arendtian thinking to enable teachers to explore a sense of self through acts and speech. In their work on teacher education, Dyson (2003, 2010) and Lund et al. (2012) make reference to Arendt as offering opportunities for transformation of pre-service teacher programmes.

I now turn to look at the application of *The Human Condition* to the professional identity of pre-service teachers. There is very little literature on *The Human Condition* that focuses on pre-service teacher identity during their teacher education. It offers the opportunity to understand professional identity in different ways.

5.4 An individual journey of emergence

The Human Condition is based on relationships with others in three main arenas: the personal life; the social sphere; and the public and political arena. In this research, pre-service teachers will be bringing their personal experiences with them to their teacher education, and will be mediating their ideas in the social sphere that is formed from the university and the early placement experiences, before making an 'appearance' with their "unique personal identities" (Arendt, 1998: 179) in the very public and somewhat political teaching community. But in making these appearances, they will be working and developing with others within the school or the organisation. Despite the importance of working together, Arendt asserts that through *action* we are all the same but different. Working from this perspective, we begin to see the importance of the individual pre-service teacher.

The Human Condition allows pre-service teachers to think differently about themselves. It uses a "language to make the familiar strange" (Strom and Martin, 2017: xii), where concepts like 'birth', 'death' and 'survival' are not commonly expected terms. 'Natality' provides a route for emergence. What emerges is the story that they tell by being born anew, in an existential Arendtian fashion, as pre-service teachers. Each pre-service teacher is unique, experiencing in their own fashion the mortality and natality that Arendt claims are never far from the other. Their rebirth as pre-service teachers allows them

freedom to make fresh decisions, be forgiven and begin anew (Arendt, 1998: 240).

In this natality, they are seeking their authentic professional identity. They may ponder this from their own “vantage points” (Arendt, 1998: 5) but, in anticipating what kind of teacher they are, or they want to be, they cannot fully anticipate that which lies ahead. This results in constant “dynamic adjustments that take into consideration the comforts, agreements and acceptable tensions of life” (Thompson, 2015: 603). Drawing from moments in time (that include past, present and possible future), pre-service teachers pursue a sense of human flourishing, of well-being, of eudaimonia. In so doing, they are authoring their own individual identity.

In the individual journey, recognition by others is a necessary component. It is to others that stories are told and performed, and in so doing makes the inner thoughts and passions “deprivatized and deindividualized ... into a shape to fit them for public appearance” (Arendt, 1998: 50). The transformative process of storytelling, like Spark’s “transfiguration of the commonplace” (1961), re-presents the narratives that are held in pre-service teachers’ heads: stories that have not previously been externalised become recognised by the community, and by so doing they become real and enacted (Arendt, 1998: 24). In this process, pre-service teachers can be likened to Arendt’s Greek heroes, who “had not merely enacted the story of [their] life but at the same time also ‘made’ it” (Arendt, 1998: 193-4); through their storytelling they re-enact and relive their experiences as part of the research process. These stories bind the public and private sides of the pre-service teacher, and help them become accepted within the political school community. Arendt’s use of storytelling links to the heart of what teachers do; teachers tell stories of knowledge, its application and its impact.

6. Summary

Professional identity exists in different levels or structures, and has been conceptualised and theorised in a range of ways that include a psychosocial perspective, a socio-biographical viewpoint and a philosophical position. It is an important aspect of research in helping pre-service teachers to understand

themselves in the process of becoming teachers, and to enable them to be adaptable and flexible in their outlook, particularly in the current educational landscape. Much of the literature does not accept and acknowledge that pre-service teachers are not yet teachers, but individuals in a process of transition. There is a tendency in the literature to present identity in the literature as object or achievement based, but a more contemporary positioning of identity as emergent and relational invites Arendtian concepts, and thus provides for this study an innovative way of seeing pre-service teachers, as individuals, as 'becoming' teachers, and as having a place in society.

As a result of this review, the aims of the research, as identified in the introductory chapter, have been developed to become the research questions for this thesis:

1. How can an Arendtian framework enable pre-service teachers to perceive and interrogate their professional identity?
2. How can *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* be used to identify influences acting upon professional identity of pre-service teachers?
3. In what ways do pre-service teachers use Arendtian thinking to verbalise the process of becoming teachers?

Chapter 3 – Conceptual framework

This conceptual framework outlines the ways in which I have linked my thinking of professional identity, pre-service teachers and *The Human Condition*. I discuss how Arendt's *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* form the three broad inter-related influences, and their relevance to the study of professional identity. By reviewing the literature and using the feedback from a pilot study (discussed in the methodology), I have been able to identify influences that may be relevant to pre-service teachers as they travel through their teacher education. As a result, these broad influences have been further broken down to include smaller categories of influence (personal, training and development, and professional and organisational) that may be useful as an analytical tool.

The final section introduces the six conditions of *birth*, *death*, *survival*, *worldliness*, *plurality* and *self-development* that pre-service teachers have been able to use to identify themselves as 'becoming teachers'.

1. Research perspective

At the core of this research I place the individual pre-service teachers and their stories. Exploration of the socio-cultural, political and historical influences on pre-service teacher identity, from a social constructivist viewpoint, privileges strong relational agents (Mallon, 2014) and allows for the personal, private and emotional interactions of the pre-service teachers' lives to be taken into account. Although there are some critical aspects of teacher education located within this study, it is with the aim to provide a new way of understanding the development of pre-service teacher identity, rather than becoming a study in critical pedagogy. In my research, the emphasis is on the *process* of 'becoming' teachers. Arendt's *Human Condition* (1998) forms the basis of my conceptual framework and has been a dominant influence on my thinking, from research design to data analysis. Each pre-service teacher has been living their own life that results in having their own story to tell. It is expected that their unique range of influences and experiences will be revealed in the telling of their stories.

2. *Labour, Work and Action* as broad influences on professional identity

I have chosen to employ Arendt's *Labour, Work and Action* as broad influences acting upon professional identity. I see the three activities of *Labour, Work and Action* as inter-related and in doing so, I agree with Søreide's (2006: 527) assertion that "negotiation between multiple identities is a necessary part of the construction of teacher identity." In addition, I have found Fessler and Christensen's (1992) model of teacher identity to be a useful one, in that it adds an organisational dimension to the inter-related elements of personal, organisational and career cycle. While accepting the inter-relational features of identity, there may be occasions when consideration is given to the *differences* between *Labour, Work and Action*. By this I do not mean that we should not consider them as fully separate or discrete influences but that we may better understand Arendt's thinking when we consider the three activities in relation to the other, which Mönig (2002: 237) iterates as "distinctions between the private, the social and the public, as well as between the present, past, and future."

Arendt (1998) herself discusses *Labour, Work and Action* separately but always with a sense of the ways in which they are connected. She identifies the ways in which *Labour, Work and Action* manifest themselves into our daily lives through identification of human conditions. We begin with *labour*, and through this we achieve the human condition *life*; in extending our life beyond simple acts of survival, we aim to work to build a common world, and through this we achieve the human condition of *worldliness*. It is only by working with others in a more public world that we can be judged to be taking *action*, and through this we achieve the human condition *plurality*. Arendt makes a hierarchy of them, placing *action* at the top, as the most significant expression of humanity, because of its permanence (1998: 232): "The process of a single action can quite literally endure throughout time ...". However, in this study I make no judgement regarding the hierarchy asserted by Arendt; instead, I emphasise the 'ebb and flow' in and out of each activity and each condition. Below, I give a brief explanation of their relevance to pre-service teacher identity.

2.1 The relevance of *Labour and life*.

Labour provides a backdrop for identity formation. It represents the 'birth' of the pre-service teachers, and their insertion into the teaching world. During this time, I believe it would be natural for them to revisit their previous 'lives' including their history, their culture, their politics. As they continue in the new world of teacher education, and the more public community of the school, they may decide which influences to carry forward, and which to leave behind, whether temporarily or permanently. The beginning of teacher education may seem to be a biological struggle; some pre-service teachers may experience an urgency about 'surviving' on their first placement in school. Joseph (2011) asserts that some pre-service teachers never emerge from this state, and as early career teachers continue the struggle to survive. For those who do 'survive', the activity of this phase yields confidence and an understanding of daily routines that enable pre-service teachers to see beyond sheer 'existence'.

For these reasons, *Labour* is associated with the personal aspects of the pre-service teacher's life. Like Stooksberry et al. (2009), I was curious to examine what predispositions and attitudes pre-service teachers bring to their teacher education programme. Some of the research into pre-service teachers' professional values focuses largely on professional practice, and this led me to consider ways in which pre-service teachers' reconstruction of experience would affect internally held beliefs. This supports the work of Hoyle and Wallace (2009), who remain firm in the idea of a professional teacher who holds a personal and perhaps traditional set of values and beliefs, even when these views may be seen to be running against policy decisions of the time. However, this study goes beyond that, to consider the impact of their socio-political and cultural histories.

2.2 The relevance of *Work and worldliness*

Pre-service teachers inhabit temporary worlds that are their school placements. Boym (2009: 107), in referring to Arendt's common world, believes such shared spaces have their own "architecture and scenography that relies on luminosity and shadowplay, on plurality and differences." This 'common world' that pre-service teachers find themselves in has an unfamiliar landscape, and may be

one which they find difficulty in deciphering. In attempting to negotiate their place in the world, they need to move beyond themselves, reflect on who they are, and anticipate who they can be. This involves a need to work with others, as well as a need to be recognised by them. In this common space, where Arendt believes that roles are enacted, she distinguishes between the “doer of deeds” and the spectator who becomes the historical storyteller, revealing the actions of the ‘doer’ (Mahrtdt, 2012: 256). The teacher enacts the role of the ‘spectator’, and the pre-service teacher that of the ‘doer’ who is ultimately judged by the teacher. However, for the pre-service teacher, the difficulty arises in trying to appear worldly without losing sense of self (Goultschin, 2014).

In this research, *Work* identifies any relevant training and development before or during the PGCE course. *Work* relates to the development of the individual, which makes them fit for the social and public spheres. These training and development activities may take many forms; and the advent of digital means this may happen at a time and place that pre-service teachers deem most suitable.

My research is designed to offer pre-service teachers an opportunity to contemplate their worldliness; the combining of professional thinking about the school and university communities with their private and individual selves may illuminate their identity as it evolves. The interviews involved in the research afford the pre-service teachers the opportunity to speak of their *worldliness*, in the hope that they gain an impression of their identity beyond their day-to-day teaching, and recognise the promise of a legacy in the children that they have taught, and the colleagues that they have worked with.

2.3 The relevance of *Action* and *plurality*

Educational communities are made up of individuals, with differing political and educational perspectives, who aim to work together for the common good of their pupils. This pluralistic experience results in “a constant unfolding of one’s relationship to oneself, one’s environment and other people” (Hayden, 2012: 242). In addition to working together, Honig (1988: 82) suggests that they experience rebirths, some small, some larger and some that are part of a “discontinuous self.” These re-starts may invite pre-service teachers to look critically at the changes that may be occurring in their identity.

In relating this to my research, *Action* refers to the professional and organisational aspects of the pre-service teachers' experiences before and during their teacher education. Positioned within a highly politicised education system, my study is looking for ways in which pre-service teachers have been affected by local and national agenda. Given that the pre-service teachers in this study will spend time in at least two schools, I am interested to discover the impact of the organisation and its politics, if any.

It is intended that there are clear areas of overlap between the influences, as I believe that, from the reading I have undertaken, there are never wholly isolated or distinct influences acting upon professional identity at any one point. It is expected that, as the research progresses, pre-service teachers will generate additional influences that can be added to the conceptual framework. It may be seen that these influences are acting upon pre-service teachers, but ultimately it is how pre-service teachers respond that decides whether they are actors or authors of their own identity. In the next section I move on to explore the detail relating to personal influences, training and development influences and professional and organisational influences that I might expect to find in my fieldwork with pre-service teachers.

3. Personal influences

Lindgren and Wåhlin (2001: 360) emphasise the importance of understanding the life history of the individual, with specific regard to “inward and outward” construction of identity, but place greater emphasis on the “temporal and spatial contexts too” (2001: 361). This includes personal beliefs, emotional experiences and social skills.

3.1 Personal beliefs

Exploring the dispositions of teacher candidates at the early stages of teacher education may be helpful in considering the moral and ethical dilemmas pre-service teachers face in their personal and professional identities, as suggested by Stooksberry et al. (2009) and Erskine (2009). Hanimaki (2011) agrees that the development of a teacher's own ethical character and stance is paramount to their professional understanding and development. Carr (2000) and Gardner (1993) believe that there is a 'moral' link to teaching as a

profession, although Gardner has been reticent in fully committing 'moral intelligence' to his revised multiple intelligences (Smith, 2008), seeing it more as a sense of 'personal agency' than an intelligence.

Being afforded the opportunity to challenge and negotiate beliefs that they feel are pertinent to them as individuals has been recognised in Rodgers and Scott's (2008) framework on teacher-self positions. Their work positions pre-service teachers as adopting the active role of the author, rather than the passive role of "being authored." Rogers and Scott go further, to suggest that the core identity can be enhanced through the addition of other identities, such as values and belief systems, that are favoured by pre-service teachers (2008: 739).

Beliefs, values and predispositions may be useful indicators of future decision-making but only if pre-service teachers have an awareness, or are made aware by their teacher education programme, as to how these affect their teaching and professional practice (Stooksberry et al., 2009; Morales-Vives et al., 2012). Pre-service teachers may come to teacher education with personal beliefs about teaching, which Lortie (1975) calls the 'apprenticeship of observation'. Although Furlong (2013: 79) believes that such schemas remain fixed and rigid, in direct contrast, Gibboney-Wall (2016) asserts that pre-service teachers' beliefs change throughout their teacher education, moving away from simplistic role models to an understanding of how complex a job it actually is. Furthermore, Chong et al. (2011) and Estola (2003) believe that the values and beliefs held by pre-service teachers play an important part in trainee completion rate, and that it is also related to the time that they remain in the profession.

3.2 Emotional experiences

Becoming a pre-service teacher is not simply one of cognitive or professional development; there is also an emotional aspect as they adapt to the challenges of their future career. Zembylas, cited in Song (2016), finds an emotional quality to pre-service teachers who have do not yet have the protection afforded to them by a professional identity; he believes this makes them vulnerable emotionally during teacher education programmes and into their early years of teaching. In addition, Loughran (2006) highlights the discomfort involved in fitting into professional placements, where in order to be successful,

pre-service teachers have to decipher the “hidden emotional rules” of each school placement (Yuan and Lee, 2016); this includes accepting the position of a peripheral participant in a teacher’s class, suppressing frustration about their own views of teaching, and having to follow the class management and teaching style set by the teacher and culture of the school. For pre-service teachers, failure to do so may impact on the success of their school placement and in the longer term, their identity development.

To protect pre-service teachers, Malm (2009), working from a Swedish context, suggests that teacher education needs to encompass moral and ethical dimensions in their programmes, a view supported by Morales-Vives et al. (2012). After all, trying to make sense of the self and the experiences of teacher education, and relate them to future expectations as a teacher, becomes a complex and confusing process (Karlsson, 2013).

3.3 Social skills

In reviewing the literature, I found that it suggests that pre-service teachers need to be equipped with social skills in three areas: establishing social relationships; engaging with professional dialogue, and challenging the status quo.

Clarke (2009) and Zink (2010) stress the importance of relationships with others in the process of becoming a teacher. However, Goepel (2012) reminds us that developing social trust can take time, a luxury that pre-service teachers may not have during a brief school placement. Elias et al. (1997) use ‘social-emotional competence’ as a term for building, developing and sustaining effective social relationships. They assert that teachers who are active and socially responsive present themselves as possessing characteristics of a resilient identity. By making use of their social and emotional skills, they are equipped to understand their individual responses, which Søreide (2006) suggests can be applied to promote a good social atmosphere in the classroom.

There is no doubt that the social environment is a key influence on how teachers learn and develop (Postholm, 2012), but others believe that it is through professional dialogue that learning truly occurs. Ee and Chang (2010) believe teacher education programmes, in partnership with schools, should emphasise the collaborative aspects of teaching to develop these personal and

professional relationships. In collaboration with other professionals and supported by senior managers and leaders, professional dialogue can form a meaningful social community that acts as preparation for the constant decision-making that teaching requires from pre-service teachers. Strategies such as the 'learning rounds' offered by Thomson (2008) involve a school improvement process of enquiry where the observed and the observers collaborate in rich dialogue to discuss paths of school improvement, rather than judging an individual teacher. This enquiry approach can be embedded into teacher education, where teachers, tutors and pre-service teachers together observe a range of lessons and engage in professional dialogue regarding the learning focus of the sessions. Similarly, stimulated recall (Calderhead, 1981, and Lyle, 2003) is a technique used to prompt reflection on performance. With teachers, it acts as a coaching and mentoring tool; through guided prompting and challenging dialogue, teachers reflect on their thought processes and decision-making (Charalambous et al., 2018; Rosaen et al., 2008).

In addition, Erickson et al. (2011) assert that teacher education programmes and school placements should provide opportunities for challenging social contexts. Dyson (2003: 7) refers to Arendt as a reminder that future teachers need to stand back and think about teaching in a time of "continual and pervasive change," linking to Flores and Day (2006), and Day et al.'s (2006) assertion that emotional understanding supports social relationships and the ability to respond, change and challenge a variety of social contexts. This could be a positive role for teacher education to take.

4. Training and development influences

At the initial stages of the research design, training and development was placed within professional influences, in the belief that learning for pre-service teachers would happen in the professional community. As with the vignettes from the introduction, I believe that development in any category feeds into all aspects of our professional identity, and that development of teacher identity does not happen in isolation. For this reason, this set of influences may include self-realisation, choice of ITE route, relationships and authority.

Training and development involves a realisation of how we see ourselves evolving, or the actions we need to take to achieve a certain goal. This may also include an increased awareness of the barriers we may encounter. For

example, Shaughnessy and Boerst (2017) believe that pre-service teachers bring with them 'habits of thinking' which reflect the influences that they have lived through. However, they stress the need to acknowledge and build upon, unlearn or replace these habits with new skills. It is hoped that this will be achieved through a developmental process. Moreover, Williams (2010) suggests that career changers coming into teaching need to reconcile their identities to create their new professional identity. This could involve the use of transferable skills applied to a school or university context.

The choice of teacher education route as the developmental step towards becoming a teacher is an interesting one. Although some pre-service teachers hold a long-term desire to teach, which Wilkins (2017) identifies as a common factor in career changers, others begin teacher education as a reaction to personal and social circumstances. Motivation to become a teacher, and the choice of ITE route, may prove to be relevant factors in pre-service teacher identity.

In addition, developing within a school context relies on support from mentors and colleagues. Amin and Roberts (2008) place value in a recognisable other demonstrating professional practice, while Izadinia (2013) cites the positives of good mentoring within an organisation, from showing empathy and empowering pre-service teachers, as well as providing emotional, academic and professional support, which she relates to longevity in the profession. The impact, both positive and negative, that mentors and school staff can have on pre-service teachers has been well documented, but Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) warn that support given to pre-service teachers is of variable effect. This would suggest that the timing and the level of intervention should be matched to the training and development needs of the pre-service teacher. My experience suggests that the selection of mentor teacher needs to be made with due care and consideration. Not all class teachers are good mentors, and there may also be power relationships at work within the classroom: McNay (2004) asserts that mentor-teachers may be reluctant to acknowledge the presence of power in the pre-service teacher/mentor teacher relationship, which can result in difficult and damaging consequences.

5. Professional influences

In the pilot and in the literature, this was the most commonly discussed set of influences. These may be the influences that appear the most relevant to pre-service teachers, who have just begun their teacher education. Included in this section are the factors relating to the choice of teacher education route, the influence of school placements, and the views held of teachers and teaching.

5.1 Choice of initial teacher education route

Schaefer's research in Canada (2013) identifies that the diverse routes into teaching are based on different philosophies and culturally based versions of teaching, and there is no reason to doubt that the same point would be valid in England with its equally diverse range of routes into teaching. The choice of teacher education route, with its changing socio-cultural connections between identity and practice, may impact upon the pre-service teacher, as highlighted in the vignettes in the introductory chapter. Chong et al. (2011) believe that this is closely related to the expectations they hold about teaching, and the length of time they are likely to remain in the profession. For example, a school-based teacher education programme may result in a different formation of pre-service identity to that of someone undertaking a more theoretical component in their university teacher education.

Furthermore, some pre-service teachers may feel that their beginning professional identity, based on historical and lived experiences, does not align with the political and socio-cultural expectations of their teacher education programme. As a result, pre-service teachers may have to adopt a "strategic compliance" (Flores and Day, 2006: 29) to survive on their teacher education route, finding ways in which to live their identity through compromise, with an undercurrent of tensions swimming in their identity.

5.2 The effect of school placements on pre-service teacher identity

There has been much research into pre-service teachers as they begin their school-based placements. Stenberg et al. (2014) discuss the practicalities of school routine as key to the identities of pre-service teachers, who are reliant on their morals and values, while Wilkins (2017: 185) believes that pre-service

teachers adapt their professional identity to their socio-cultural context. The cultural stance of the school, and of the teacher education institution, may promote or challenge the values and perspectives held by the pre-service teachers, but as Flores and Day (2006) find, their lack of practical experience and skills in teaching may relegate them to the position of beginners, with very little status. Some pre-service teachers may remain within large organisations, such as multi-academy trusts or school clusters, for all their school-based learning; there is evidence (Weiner and Torres, 2016) to suggest that the in-house model of teacher training, particularly on school-based routes, prevents pre-service teachers from developing flexible and multiple identities that evolve and change as they move to work in different school contexts.

As pre-service teachers begin their teaching placements, identity is partly given, and partly achieved by context (Coldron and Smith, 1999). Coward et al. (2015) believe situated learning, such as school placements, to be the foundation of identity development; this brings together the theory–practice nexus, which provides a basis of ‘becoming’ a teacher (MacLure, 1993), as well as drawing together the multi-campus based identities that Henry (2016) refers to. Gee (2000) relates identity to a community with shared norms and expectations, but this is dependent on pre-service teachers recognising and accepting the norms of the placement.

5.3 Teachers and teaching

Pre-service teachers bring with them their ideas about teachers and teaching; these “image schemas” (Merchant, 2006), which are based on early developmental ‘psychic’ models, can be likened to archetypes, and assimilated or adapted through developmental or environmental stimuli (Merchant, 2006). In the case of pre-service teachers, this may be their experience of teachers from childhood and in teaching placements, as well as the portrayal of teachers in literature, film and social media (Kelly and Caughlan, 2011; Breault, 2009). These psychological schemas are identified through the pre-service teachers’ own experience, and may prove to be useful in identifying future teacher praxis.

I believe that schemas may be a useful starting point in exploring identity, in that pre-service teachers’ identities may be built from a combination of the psychological and the social, the psychosocial (Mezirow, 1998) and the social, cultural and emotional (Illeris, 2014).

The work of Jung, Erikson and Arendt help to explore the formation of pre-service teacher identities; all involve the understanding of the self through personal and lived experiences, and negotiated through relationships and the moral purpose of society. In the next section I will connect these ideas with Arendt by discussing the six conditions that I hope pre-service teachers will use in the discussion of their professional identity.

6. The six 'conditions'

As discussed above, *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* are useful in identifying the categories of influence, but they are too broad to employ as an analytical tool on pre-service teachers' identity formation. They do not offer the opportunity to see the smaller steps taken by pre-service teachers in becoming teachers. As I briefly outlined in the introduction, I chose to rethink Higgins' (2010b) conceptualisation of Arendt's ideas. In my study, I use as *birth*, *death*, *survival*, *worldliness*, *plurality*, and *self-development* as a move away from a linear emphasis and towards a more meta-cognitive use of these terms. By introducing the six conditions, I hope pre-service teachers will be able to use these concepts to verbalise their perceptions of themselves as 'becoming teachers'.

Although I continue to use Higgins' interpretations of Arendt for this research, I do so with some reservations. Higgins outlines Arendt's natality and mortality on a very pragmatic level of *birth* and *death*; he discusses the opportunity of a radical physical beginning (*birth*) and "the potential to do so again" (Higgins, 2010b: 277) but misses Arendt's emphasis on the promise of multiple beginnings, and constant rebirths. Although Arendt emphasises the temporal nature of becoming, Higgins limits his views of *birth* and *death* to human physicality; he neglects to consider new ideas, innovative actions and changes of direction as equally temporal but more existential ways of being. He introduces *biological survival* as a physical condition, limited once more to birth and death, but does not consider survival as a way of establishing ourselves in our new beginnings. With *worldliness*, Higgins offers the human desire for permanence that Arendt stresses; he sees working and living with others only as a brief distraction from the misery of solitude. With the remaining two conditions, I am more in agreement with his viewpoint; in discussing *plurality*, he stresses the human ability to be distinct and live equally among others with

others for a common purpose; *self-development/self-interpretation* he believes are an extension of *worldliness* in that humans cannot help but extend our understanding of ourselves, in the search for *eudaimonia*, or human flourishing.

Below, I suggest that the six conditions may support the perceived identity development of pre-service teachers. Although these conditions are numbered below, it is for ease of recognition; this research does not recognise them as occurring in any particular order. This research introduces the terms in the first semi-structured interview, and deliberately used them as a “productive tool” (Strom and Martin, 2017: 5) in the critical incident interview to prompt pre-service teachers to think differently.

6.1 Birth and death

This study invites pre-service teachers to begin to consider who they are and what kind of teacher they want to be. *Birth* can be a new way of thinking and/or becoming. *Birth* and *death* may happen together, or at separate times. It can be the demise of a previous life, a change in values or perspectives; it may be the first acknowledgement of who they are as a prospective teacher.

The pre-service teachers have never spoken or acted in the context of their teacher education before, and this is what Arendt means by “Nobody was there before” (1998: 178). However, it would be false to assume that the birth of professional identity, the start of ‘becoming’ a teacher, coincides with the start of the pre-service teacher’s PGCE; research by Manuel and Hughes (2006) and Stooksberry et al. (2009) suggests that identity has already been an internalised issue for pre-service teachers before they arrive in the classroom, or even before starting their teacher education. As pre-service teachers progress in their teacher education, they are changed by their words and actions, “like a second birth” (1998: 176). As soon as they become qualified teachers, the death of their pre-service teacher identity is inevitable. But as Frost (2017: 4) insists, this death is a “summing up of the life story together with the life itself.” The story of the past can be told and can be left behind but in so doing, emerges the knowledge of renewal. Pre-service teachers embark upon their first year of teaching with the confidence of knowing that they have ‘become teacher’ (Strom and Martin, 2017), and have gained membership of a new community.

6.2 Survival

In this study, *Survival* is concerned with professional survival in the university and school placement due to the dual locations in which pre-service teachers operate. Early experiences with classroom teaching ... “tend to trigger gestalts in student teachers related to survival” (Korthagen, 2010: 104). Pre-service teachers are keen to know what to do to ‘survive’ and make sense of themselves in the new environment, and this is what Chong et al. (2011: 13) believe that this early stage of teaching is about. At an ego-centric stage, they are addressing their own needs and concerns. They begin to understand how the workplace operates, and understands that there needs to be a “willing obedience” by the learner to submit to the authority of the expert (Benne, 1970: 393).

6.3 Worldliness

Worldliness can be understood as a “need to inhabit human environment” (Higgins, 2010b: 277) and a need for others. The pre-service teachers are welcomed into the mentor-teachers’ environment; they become familiar with the routines and traditions of the context, the cultural community and how to establish their sense of self in context. This is where pre-service teachers begin to recognise and possibly question their place in it. The condition of *worldliness* may bring with it enculturation, and hidden expectations that the pre-service teacher will adopt the same working models as the class teacher.

6.4 Plurality

Plurality is hard to achieve, as the co-construction of identity with others can be problematic. Meehan (2002: 185) asserts that this is because our identities are “complex and different, we need myriad and different kinds of relationships with others to constitute various parts of ourselves.” With Arendt’s ideas of equality and distinctiveness, it takes confidence for the pre-service teacher to reveal themselves as the unique teacher they wish to be.

D’Entreves (2009: 32) considers Arendt’s thinking to be a two-fold process – a silent internal dialogue that challenges fixed ideas, as well as the act of thinking itself, which acts as a conscience and a moral guide. This is exactly what pre-service teachers require as they consider their developing

professional identity; by stopping in solitude to think, they can know themselves before they begin “to live with others” (Keladu, 2015: 70).

6.5 Self-development

Self-development requires opportunities to consider next steps and future actions. Higgins (2010b: 279) talks of the “radical open-endedness and contingency of human life” that allows for further evolution of ourselves through our actions. This is common practice for pre-service teachers before, during and after their teacher education; they are continually asked to reflect on their success and set targets for further professional development. Over time, “sustained engagement in practice yields an ability to interpret and make use of the repertoire of that practice” (Wenger, 1998: 153) and becomes a teacher’s toolkit, and with this comes power and authority. However, this frequently occurs on an evidence-based level, drawing from experiences on placement and a ‘what works approach’ (Biesta, 2007), rather than meta-analysing their professional identity.

Instead, I believe that identifying critical incidents or episodes (Flanagan, 1954) may be a more significant way of identifying the steps needed to evolve. These radical steps do not have to be of importance to anyone other than the pre-service teacher but should be significant enough to offer a pause or a change of direction in transforming their identities.

7. Summary

My research centres on pre-service teacher identity formation during their PGCE year. In constructing their never-complete-and-always-evolving identity, Arendt’s *Labour, Work and Action* act as broad themes to explore influences that may be exerted on their identity. In this chapter, I have attempted to define the ways in which these broad themes will be applied to pre-service teachers and their professional identity. *Labour* is associated with the personal aspects of the pre-service teacher’s life, *Work* identifies any relevant training and development before or during the PGCE course, and *Action* refers to the professional and organisational aspects of the pre-service teachers’ experiences before and during their teacher education, looking for ways in

which pre-service teachers may have been affected by local and national agenda.

Three additional 'sub-categories' were created under the broad headings of Labour, Work and Action, in line with the literature and the pilot. This was to understand how pre-service teachers may draw from a range of lived experiences to express their insight of themselves as teachers, and with the possibility of using them as an analytical tool. These 'sub-categories' were: (1) personal influences, which included personal beliefs, emotional experiences and social skills; (2) training and development influences, which included power relationships, mentoring and support; and (3) professional and organisational influences, which included choice of teacher education route, the effect of school placements, and ideas held about teachers and teaching.

As a way of verbalising the process of professional identity development, the six conditions of *birth*, *death*, *survival*, *worldliness*, *plurality* and *self-development* will be introduced in the first semi-structured interview, and deliberately used as a "productive tool" (Strom and Martin, 2017: 5) in the critical incident interview to prompt pre-service teachers to think differently. The emotive terminology of the six conditions relates particularly to moments of critical incidence and key episodes that pre-service teachers may experience in their teacher education.

In the next chapter, the influence of Arendt's *Human Condition* can be seen on the methodology.

Chapter 4 – Methodology

In this chapter I explore how Arendt's *Human Condition* (1998) drives the methodology of the research. I begin with the research philosophy and positionality before moving on to concerns related to gathering Arendtian fieldwork. In the next section I discuss how the research design has been informed by Arendt's work, before concluding with a discussion about academic quality and data analysis.

The overarching themes of *The Human Condition* provide a critical yet optimistic stance to make the reader think about society, how it came to be like this, and where it might be heading. By so doing, it also asks questions of the reader and their place in the world. Like Arendt, St. Pierre (2013) embraces different ways of thinking, which she highlights through the work of Deleuze and Guattari. St. Pierre (2013: 653) charges the reader-researcher to “plug their [Deleuze and Guattari's] work into our work and see what happen[s].” By taking steps to contemplate identity in a different way, this research affords the pre-service teachers a ‘thinking’ approach to their identity, as well as a response to Arendt's theory and concepts.

1. Research philosophy

My research seeks an understanding of pre-service teachers' interpretation of their identity. As professional and personal beliefs may develop and change during a teacher education programme, I am aware that pre-service teachers are unlikely to obtain a distinct and clear understanding of their identity that could be generalised; in fact, there may be many and complex levels of ‘truth’ regarding the values and beliefs underpinning the ‘identity’ or ‘identities’ of the pre-service teacher. Sharing the research design with the participants in the early stages of data collection allows them to consider which narrative (or ‘truth’) they wish to tell, and how they wish to tell it. The story that they offer is acknowledged as their understanding of their identity at that point in time.

This research accepts that each pre-service teacher will construct multiple, changing and negotiated knowledge, based on their own personal and professional lives, and formed from an internalisation of external experiences with others. In addition, I am interested in how teacher education may provide opportunities to assist pre-service teachers in renegotiating their identity.

1.1 Researcher positionality

Narrative inquiry involves a highly subjective epistemological stance, which I accept is affected by the researcher's own story and culture, such as my involvement in the university-based PGCE programme. I acknowledge that there may be aspects of critical pedagogy that emerge during this research but that is not my primary agenda. Working in my role as a teacher educator, it is inevitable that these aspects arise; it may be that there are findings as to how an Arendtian research study can improve my future practice. Therefore, as stated earlier in Chapter 1, and in Chapter 3, the political context is intended to be deliberately implicit throughout, as it would otherwise have become a different type of study.

In addition, I also accept that as the only researcher, and carrying out one-to-one interviews, that I may be affected by the responses of the participants. In seeking to lessen the effect, I implemented ways to reduce subjectivity and bias: I carried out the interviews at a mutually agreed time and place; I was not in a position to make judgements on their classroom teaching, nor on their academic work, and in planning three well-spaced-out data collection points, I hoped that these would act as prompts for independent reflection.

2. Seeking a research framework

Since the paradigm wars of the 1980s (Gage, 1989), the choice of philosophical approach in research circles has greatly widened. The starting point of my intended research included an initial consideration of the interpretivist-positivist binary, which is outlined below in Table 1. This allowed me to consider the ways in which my small-scale study could be philosophically positioned to answer the research questions; aspects that I considered are indicated in bold in the table.

Table 1: Considering a paradigmatic stance with regard to pre-service teacher identity

Examples of positivist stances	Application to research	Examples of interpretivist stances	Application to research
External realist	Knowledge of pre-service teacher identity is formed by generalisations based on the views of sample groups and data gained through quasi-experimental or simple descriptive methods of reducing variables. Looking for causal relationships.	Internal-idealist, relativist (local & specific constructed realities, holistic and dynamic)	Pre-service teachers may find difficulty in finding their identity due to the lack of separation of the mind and external reality. They may be aware of changes in teacher identity as they progress through placements in different schools. There will be a strong intrapersonal dimension.
Dualist objectivist	The researcher and the participants respond without any relationship being formed; the lack of researcher involvement does not influence views of identity nor are they influenced by the views of the sample population.	Subjectivist, transactional, interactive	The researcher will share the discussion with the participants on equal status, sharing and creating the findings throughout the research. It becomes difficult to find objective 'truth'.
Nomothetic, experimental, manipulative, verification of hypotheses	Do pre-service teachers possess similar features of identity? When did these views form? Do all primary post-graduate students on each ITE route hold the same beliefs? Such hypotheses are tested to verify them. Pre-service teachers would be tested at entry to their programme.	Ideographic, dialectical, hermeneutical	The use of shared discourses in interpretation of 'values and identity' is defined and developed through interaction with researcher and pre-service teachers. However, each participant will tell their own 'truth'.
Explanation, prediction and control	Longitudinal and cross-institutional data would inform explanations. Pre-service teacher behaviour would be predictable on a school placement and at differing points in their professional development. Predicted grades for professional achievement on subsequent placements would be hypothesised.	Understanding, interpretation and reconstruction	As the research progresses, there will be further, deeper agreement as to what constitutes 'teacher identity' by pre-service teachers, mentor-teachers and researcher; the political dimensions of teacher education. Findings may be reconstructed by researcher's interpretation and verified by participants.

2.1 Relevant research frameworks

Since the demise of positivism as a dominant paradigm, Grierson (2003: 2) suggests that researchers in education and social sciences have been “undergoing transformation as interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary modes of enquiry shape the borders of institutional practice.” His view supports Gage’s argument (1989: 4), in suggesting the demise of structured, traditional paradigms and philosophies. This has led to a transformation of approaches in education with particular emphasis on interpretative/qualitative studies.

However, St. Pierre (2017: 1) now argues that qualitative research has in turn become limited by those things it set out to counter, namely positivism, quantification and prediction of ‘what works’, and thus argues for a ‘post qualitative’ era that suggests choice and new approaches.

2.2 An emerging research approach

This research remains an interpretivist qualitative inquiry. However, as it evolved, influences of post-qualitative research began to emerge: I found that the established and formalised structures of qualitative inquiry became constraining; in the pilot study, I realised that the interviews were too formulaic and prescriptive, which is further discussed in the data collection section below. I also believed that the idea of co-constructing the narratives with the pre-service teachers would enable them to interrogate their identity. In fact, this was yet another constraint of a qualitative research approach; after reading Fairchild (2016: 5), it became clear that more of my role was to make connections with theory and use this to plan the research design, the data and the data analysis. St. Pierre and Jackson (2014: 716) believe that conventional qualitative research is not explored regarding its ‘adequacy’ to respond to the study’s theoretical mandate. However, in this research, Arendt’s theory informed the methodology, and the theoretical Arendtian underpinnings were introduced to the pre-service teachers in the face-to-face interviews so that data collected had a theoretical perspective, and thus had greater relevance in answering the research question.

St. Pierre and Jackson (2014) go further to debate the problems with post-qualitative data analysis, such as analysing data through coding; they argue that coding data, specifically when coding participants’ words from interviews,

provides a positivist means of ensuring the validity of the research. Although I coded the data, it was not with the intention of making the data fit the themes of the research at the initial coding stage, but as a means of listening to what the pre-service teachers believed to be important regarding their identity. Then, in terms of answering the research question, the data were analysed theoretically with an Arendtian framework. Although there are qualitative intentions to this study, the data analysis has an awareness of post-qualitative influences.

As a result, this research blends qualitative inquiry with influences of post-qualitative research. Arendt's *Human Condition* as a theory has enabled the gathering of Arendtian-focused fieldwork, and in so doing, this research becomes a 'theoretically enriched empirical' study. This approach is enhanced by the relational identities that are constructed within the home, school and university communities, seeking to build identity from the world in which the pre-service teachers live.

3. Ethics

Having gained ethical permission from the University of Exeter to carry out my research (Appendix 1), it became apparent that there were other ethical considerations to contend with. In reading, thinking and working with Arendt's ideas, she invites us to deliberate the durability and the permanence of the world, and at the same time to consider the conditions of *eudaimonia*, of human flourishing, that relate not just to the world but also to the individual. As a result, it asks questions of me, as the researcher, as to whether I am interested in the unique contribution of each individual, or of that individual's place in the world, or whether ultimately the (educational) world is of greater importance than the individual pre-service teacher. What helped to clarify my ethical position was revisiting the aims of my research to focus on three individual pre-service teachers and how understanding their professional identity may help them to flourish in 'becoming' teachers.

The four following sections consider the ethical issues in relation to participant recruitment, data collection, professional boundaries and inviting critical discussion.

3.1 Recruiting the sample

The intention was to recruit a small sample from the PGCE cohort via an email invitation for participants to complete an online questionnaire. The original ethical permission meant that this was circulated anonymously to the students, referring simply to a doctoral research study being undertaken by one of the members of staff on the PGCE course. Initially there were no respondents. Discussions with my research supervisor suggested that it was the anonymity that may have prevented pre-service teachers from opting in. The email was amended and I was clearly identified as the researcher. Seven participants completed the questionnaire and three participants self-selected themselves to opt into the further study, and provided contact emails. The size of the sample tied in with the nature of the research questions and approach (Denscombe, 2007: 28); in seeking to hear about individual experiences, and being mindful of the array of rich data that 'traditional' qualitative data collection generates, a sample of three participants was a practical number with which to work.

As a researcher on the PGCE course, I was aware that my knowledge of the pre-service teachers may have been "already caught up in relations of domination and exclusion, privilege and marginalization" (Ceci et al., 2002: 714). It was therefore essential to be mindful of the participants' perceptions of power and authority. The power relationship needed to be recognised, and in this case, it involved giving reassurance to the pre-service teachers that I was not in a position to judge their achievement on placement or academic work. A way of negating this was to be clear about my own position and stance, as well as making explicit the intent and purpose of my research, as advised by Thomas (2013).

3.2 Gathering narratives

One of the aims of this research was to make pre-service teachers more aware of their identity by gathering pre-service teachers' narratives. Arendt (1998: 105) warns that the story that is told is in itself revealing, as well as the story that is not told. There was the chance that the pre-service teachers might reveal stories unintentionally during the interview, and that they would be uncomfortable because of unintentional disclosure. Moreover, by inviting discussion of their life story, there existed the possibility of upset through recall

of difficult times or events, or, by making links to the present day, the participants may have felt that they could not make a fresh start or leave events behind.

To attempt to negate these risks, the participants were emailed information sheets in advance of the interviews (Appendices 2 and 3). It was hoped that this allowed them to feel prepared and comfortable, and that the relationship I had with them as a tutor on their course added a positive dimension in establishing trust and confidentiality.

3.3 Professional context of the PGCE course

There are a variety of routes into primary teaching in England. These include school based teacher training programmes, resulting in Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and in some cases an academic qualification (Post Graduate Certificate of Education, PGCE). Examples of these are SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training), and School Direct, which is an employment-based route, mainly for those with relevant experience. There are also the more recent post graduate apprenticeships into teaching, which are salaried, leading to QTS only. All of these involve on the job training, as well as additional training by an accredited provider such as a university.

In this study, the participants were from a one year, full-time Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programme, with QTS. This is a combined academic qualification with a teaching qualification. It is formed of a pattern of university- school- university learning, as can be seen from the course structure in Appendix 3. The university seminars include professional studies, and subject based sessions, and the resulting academic assignments lead to 60 Masters credits. School placements are generally carried out in two schools, with teaching experience is gradually built up over the three school placements (SE1, SE2, SE3), with 30% teaching in the first placement, 50% in the second placement, and 80% in the third. Most pre-service teachers return to School 1 for their final placement in the summer term.

Two of the three pre-service teachers were not from the local area, and had deliberately moved to undertake their PGCE at their chosen institution. In reading the life stories before the interviews, I was aware that there may be an element of homesickness, or even unhappiness, at having left their family

environment and/or culture. To limit the possible risk, I ensured that the questions were guided carefully and reminded them that they could stop at any point. The remaining pre-service teacher was from the local area; although this may have been easier in terms of remaining in his home environment, knowing the local schools may have added bias and judgement to the ways in which he viewed his placement, and those of other pre-service teachers.

The pre-service teachers in this study found themselves working in two schools and in university during their PGCE course. They were encouraged to discuss the influences that they felt were relevant to their professional identity, and which included school and university components, which they related to pre-course experiences and previous careers. In order to understand themselves, they needed to discuss the school, the class teacher or university tutor, and the impact of these on their identity. Professional boundaries were established within the interviews; although the discussion was highly contextualised in terms of their placement schools, pre-service teachers were reminded, where possible, not to identify staff or the school, and where they did name them, they were anonymised in the interview transcripts.

3.4 Inviting critical discussion

Generally, pre-service teachers are not encouraged to challenge or disrupt the status quo. Gramsci (1992, cited in Darder et al., 2017: 6) articulates that social control occurs through “moral leaders of society”, which include teachers whose norms, expectations and behaviour reinforce those in power, leading to a quiet and unquestioning agreement by learners. For pre-service teachers, a critical approach provides opportunity for interrogating national and local policy, school practices, for questioning that which is already established, or for seeking professional re-direction; however, these may be viewed as being critical of the school and therein lies the danger of ‘disrupting’ relationships. The participants in this study were professionally mindful of their positions as pre-service teachers and not openly critical or disruptive in school.

4. Research design

4.1 Initial considerations

I had initially considered an ethnographic approach to give pre-service teachers a voice, exploring how they perceive and develop their identity as future teachers, and into their first year of teaching. However, as Savin-Baden and Howell Major (2013) highlight, the longitudinal aspect of a traditional ethnographic study is frequently problematic, and in this study repeated access would be too intrusive for the pre-service teachers and too time intensive for the researcher.

Instead, I chose to situate it within a narrative inquiry, which is not without its problems; there is a need for the researcher to show flexibility in working with their participants and coaxing the emergence of the narrative. Even once the narrative unfolds, the narrative that the pre-service teacher may tell may not be the 'truth'; it may even be fictitious, but it will be the narrative that the pre-service teacher has chosen to share. The researcher in turn should give consideration to how they wish to respond to this. This also involves consideration of how the data will be presented, and the researcher's place and position in the story (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013: 238). This has been a fundamental consideration in designing the research; the voice of the participants should be heard, as well as my voice in interpreting their contribution. In light of this, a final commentary on their teacher identity was shared with the pre-service teachers for further comment and discussion.

I had planned to gather data from focus group discussions, with the aim that pre-service teachers would discover their identities through juxtaposition with fictitious teachers in film and in books. However, as Silverman discusses (2013: 212), focus group researchers are often outsiders and this distanced stance appeared to conflict with my working role as a teacher educator. In addition to this, I was mindful of the fact that some pre-service teachers might feel less comfortable in a group than on a one-to-one basis. I also considered that due to the personal nature of the discussion, it may yield better results if pre-service teachers were interviewed individually. Although individual interviewing can be time intensive and affected by the "interviewer effect" (Denscombe, 2007: 203), I felt that the participants were more likely to continue with the study at an

individual level, and this also afforded me the opportunity to clarify any ambiguity in their responses if it arose.

Interview formats that I had considered included Biographical Narrative Interview Method (BNIM) (Wengraf, 2001), Hierarchical Focused Interviews (Tomlinson, 1989), and Stimulated Recall Interviews (SRI) (Calderhead, 1981). BNIM (Wengraf, 2001) allows the voice of the participant to be heard, with little prompting from the researcher; the participant can follow a selected topic of discussion while the researcher listens without interruption and notes any points that may be followed up at the third and final data collection point. However, when trialling the technique, the narratives became a meandering story that didn't relate to the research question or it became a set of highly guided prompts from me. The Hierarchical Focused Interview (Tomlinson, 1989), chosen for the pilot, with its format of main key headings and a series of questions for me to focus on, became too constraining and also relied on too much prompting. Instead, SRI interviews (Calderhead, 1981) were chosen as the data collection tool for the face-to-face interview. The advantage of this interview format is that participants could bring objects or artefacts that act as identifiers of their identity, and I thought that it would help participants 'warm up' into the interview and encourage free-flowing discussion. The disadvantages of such a method are that the participants may not bring any objects, or may not be able to relate objects to their identity. Looking back at this method, I see that it may have actually reinforced an object-based definition of identity.

The third data collection tool, the critical incident timeline (after Flanagan, 1954; Day et al., 2006), was chosen as a visual means of discussing the abstract concept of identity. By drawing and identifying the peaks and troughs of their final placement, this tool allowed for crises to be discussed in the wider context of their teacher education programme.

4.2 Reflections from the pilot

I carried out a pilot of my chosen methods with the time and resources available; this included four previous PGCE students, who were now Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in their first year of teaching. Time allowed for one interview, the life story questionnaire and a brief look at the critical incident timeline. Participants were asked to bring a completed life story to the interview. Although only one of the four participants had completed this before the

interview, they were given time at the start of the interview to complete it. This became useful to refer to when the discussion 'dried up'.

What emerged was a need for interview questions to be more focused on the Arendt-Higgins' conditions. In the full study, these amended questions were sent out in advance, and made explicit use of during the interview. Critical incident timelines were trialled to see how the pre-service teachers would respond to them. There was no opportunity to carry out in-depth discussion about them but the pilot participants appeared to be able to easily identify and discuss critical incidents that had occurred during their final placement.

The interviews were appropriately timed and of a duration that did not ask for too much commitment from the participants. It was the original intention to video record the interviews but when asked, the participants appeared more relaxed about being audio-recorded rather than video recorded. Rather than having participants worry about the implications of being filmed, I believed that they would be more forthcoming in their responses if simply just audio-recorded. Any additional information that the audio recording may have missed was noted on the interview response sheets.

When asked their views on the research pilot, all participants said that they had appreciated the opportunity to talk about how they had developed over the course of their PGCE, and that the discussion about their identity was an important one to have.

5. Overview of the final research design

This research involved the gathering of an introductory life story and two narratives from three participants in the form of an online questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and a critical incident interview. These are summarised in the table below (Table 2) with a reminder of the research questions underneath it. The way that this fitted into their course structure is outlined in Appendix 3.

Table 2: Summary of the final research design

Data collection	Enabling strategy	Timescale	Purpose	Links to research questions
Introductory life story	Online	Two months after start of course but before first placement (October)	To elicit the identity that beginning ITE pre-service teachers hold, and provide an indication of what kind of teacher they think they will be	1,2,3
Narrative 1: Interviews	Face-to-face	Just before second placement (January)	To describe their professional identity and any changes to it, in light of first placement and in the lead up to second placement	1,2,3
Narrative 2: Critical incident interviews	Face-to-face	After final placement (July)	To explore and reflect upon the impact of their entire teacher education route in the formation of their professional identity	1,2,3

1. How can an Arendtian framework enable pre-service teachers to perceive and interrogate their professional identity?
2. How can Labour, Work and Action be used to identify influences acting upon professional identity of pre-service teachers?
3. In what ways do pre-service teachers use Arendtian thinking to verbalise the process of becoming teachers?

5.1 Introductory life story

The first data collection point was a brief online questionnaire (Appendix 4) to elicit aspects of the socio-cultural history of the pre-service teachers and, through the use of broad questions, provide an initial indication of what kind of teacher they think they would be. This was gathered through an online tool (Bristol Online Survey) (University of Bristol, 2017) and chosen as a means of quick data collection at a set point in time (Burton et al., 2014: 131). It asked them to describe why they had chosen to be a teacher, their family background, their education and training, whether they had come straight from school or work to the programme, and to identify a teacher they admire or not. The final question asked them to identify themselves and if they would be willing to

volunteer for subsequent interviews. Burton et al. (2014: 98) call this process self-selection.

5.2 Narrative 1: Face-to-face interview

The purpose of this interview was to look at changes in identity, as perceived by the pre-service teacher, after their first placement in school. There were key prompts from the researcher to guide the interview (Appendix 2). It was also to develop a relationship with the researcher, which until now had been through online electronic means. The purpose of the interview was to explore pre-service teachers' perception of their identities before they started their second placement, to find what had impacted upon these identities, and where these perceptions came from.

The interviews took place a week before the pre-service teachers' second placement. This was deliberately chosen so that they could draw from their eight-week placement in the first term of their PGCE programme. At this point they had been in university seminars, workshops and lectures for approximately ten weeks across the two terms. All interviews were audio-recorded.

The interviews were set up as Simulated Recall Interviews (Calderhead, 1981) and participants were asked to bring a visual reminder, photograph or artefact that represented Arendt's *Human Condition*. The pre-service teachers had been sent the information sheets and consent forms as well as a very brief copy of the six conditions broken down (Appendix 2). Only one pre-service teacher brought an object, a photograph. Reflecting on this, Arendt's ideas may have been too abstract for them to consider in the middle of a PGCE course, or it may have been too early for them to reflect upon key issues like this, or the first time that they had been asked to think individually about themselves. Given that the other two had not brought anything to refer to, I refocused the interviews to invite the pre-service teachers to simply tell their second narrative.

5.3 Narrative 2: Critical incident interview

The third narrative took the form of a critical incident interview (Flanagan, 1954; Goodson and Sikes, 2001; Webster and Mertova, 2007; Day et al., 2006). The reason for choosing the critical incident technique, set out along a timeline, was

to ensure that that these 'critical incidents' (Flanagan, 1954) or crises (Erikson, 1959) could be visually captured, both positive and negative, and act as visual reminders to prompt discussion, and to take a wider view of their teacher identities. In psychosocial theory, each life stage brings a 'crisis', a tension between societal expectations and the skills and competences of the individual. Pre-service teachers experience these crises as they travel through each set of school placements and during the demands of their Initial Teacher Education. The pre-service teachers were asked in advance to identify, on a timeline (Appendix 5), the peaks and troughs of their professional identity before, during and after their final placement. They were then asked to identify the cause and nature of the event, as well as the impact.

Although the critical incident timeline focused on the period from their second teaching placement to the end of their third, the interview allowed me to bring in related aspects from their previous narrative interview, and their introductory life stories. The last section of the interview focused on the six 'conditions'. The pre-service teachers were asked to add 'Arendtian labels' (*birth, death, survival, worldliness, plurality, self-development*) to the critical incident timeline. This was to ascertain if they had a sense of their identities having evolved, as well as whether they possessed a perception of how and why their identities had developed over the PGCE year.

5.4 Linking data collection to Arendt

The introductory life story, and the two distinct and separate interviews, reflect Arendt's themes previously discussed in the literature review and the conceptual framework. With the online introduction, I was seeking, through specific questions, reflections about pre-service teachers' past and current lives that told their 'recognizable life-story' (Arendt 1998: 19); this provided a contextual understanding to the pre-service teachers.

The two interviews took place five months apart, and although they were conducted sequentially, they provided a non-linear approach within each interview. Arendt does not present storytelling as a linear process; she deliberately fragments the narrative as a way of 'preserving the past without being enslaved by it' (Benhabib, 1990: 188). This non-chronological route is also supported by the work of Strom and Martin (2017), who perceive teacher

identity as a *process* (my emphasis) of becoming that also does not respond in a linear fashion.

The face-to-face interview, referring to Arendt's need for a relational and social context, allowed the pre-service teacher to respond to broad narrative questions while the interviewer followed specific questions to address the research agenda, in relation to the six conditions. The critical incident interview sought elaboration of their professional identity through a retrospective look at the university and school contexts; it afforded them a way to examine the relationships they had built, and offered a secure opportunity for them to be critical of their teacher education programme, while seeking ways to move forward as beginner teachers. Both face-to-face interviews allowed for the relational aspects of pre-service teacher identity to emerge.

6. Quality

With the rise of the post-qualitative approaches, qualitative methodological certainty is being questioned; even as far back as 1991, Atkinson et al. (1991: 164) exerted that there was 'no general methodology' to bring about the certainty that was once provided by the scientific approach. Quality and rigorous research continues to be conducted with transparency, to make reasonable claims and present well-evidenced findings.

6.1 Theoretical and interpretive legitimacy

Quality has been achieved in this research by theoretical and interpretive legitimacy. Theoretical legitimacy examines the ways in which Arendt's theory has been applied to the formation of identity on a PGCE course, beginning with Arendt's *Human Condition* as the theoretical tool, and experimenting with conceptual relationships to find a way of knowing about pre-service teacher identity differently. Huberman and Miles (2002: 50) would class this as theoretical validity, concerned with "the legitimacy of the application of any agreed concept or theory to established facts." The concepts of this research, and their relationships to theory, have been made transparent within the conceptual framework.

Interpretive legitimacy involves the participants' perspectives; this is similar to Huberman and Miles' (2002: 48) definition of interpretive validity. The

researcher seeks to understand the participants, and their intentions and beliefs. Some of this understanding is based on inferential interpretation by the researcher to form the narrative that is produced. The way in which this research is different is that the theory and the participants form a new way of knowing together; this is a way in which pre-service teacher identity can inform, and be informed, by Arendt's concepts in *The Human Condition*.

6.2 Trustworthiness

In establishing whether this research is legitimate, the approval of the participants was sought as to whether congruence had been achieved through the research design, and the processes of researching and reporting. Atkinson et al. (1991: 161) believe that a collaborative evaluation process is necessary to achieve trustworthiness, and that this is achieved through dialogue with, and consensus of, the stakeholders. In this research, the stakeholders are the pre-service teachers and the researcher.

The format of the interviews allowed the pre-service teachers to engage in dialogue with me during the process of the research. The final account of the pre-service teachers' identity was sent to them, inviting comment and changes. In future research, this would be extended to include more distant stakeholders, which would be the teacher education institution and school mentors.

6.3 Relevance

This area of research was highlighted as being relevant in the literature review. Relevance has also been conferred by the participants in the pilot, and in the main research study, who agreed that the process of finding time to discuss who they are, and who they are 'becoming' was an important part of any teacher education programme.

7. Data analysis

This section examines the choices I made regarding the data analysis and the ways in which these influenced the presentation of the findings. Firstly, I discuss data analysis with regard to narrative inquiry, as proponents of this approach argue for a specific consideration of the participants' voices. This is followed by

the decisions made regarding the data collated from the trainees, starting with the introductory life story. I then move on to the ways in which the more detailed data from the first interview have been reduced, coded and presented, before discussing analysis of the critical incident interviews.

7.1 Analysing narrative data

Data analysis should be a flexible process to suit the discipline and the needs of the study, as well as that/those of the participants and the researcher taking part. As a narrative inquirer, I was mindful that in order to hear the voice of the participants, the analysis of narrative data must be in keeping with the method in which the data was gathered. As such, Clandinin and Connelly (2000: 121) remind us of the need for a “fluid inquiry” within narrative research, and “not to represent storied lives as exemplars of formal categories.” As Wang and Geale, (2015: 4) assert, what narrative is good at is “reveal[ing] the meanings of the individuals’ experiences.”

Given that the purpose of data analysis is to make sense of the data gathered and to begin to find answers to the research questions, the data needed to be reduced in order to find meaning, themes and patterns (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Nevertheless, I was keen not to reduce the narratives disproportionately but to employ sensitive and considered data reduction. Undue reduction, which is described further in the coding decisions (see section 7.3.1 below), forces the researcher to neglect the subtext, and may result in meaning becoming broken and fragmented.

The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed by a third party due to time constraints and then I made a visual and audio inspection of the interviews to ensure accuracy, and combined this with analytical memos.

Engaging with the data, as it was told, and as I worked through the analysis, allowed me to have ‘intimate familiarity with its details, subtleties and nuances’ (Saldaña, 2016: 41). The recorded interviews with the trainees were enhanced through the use of memos. Memos were reflections written as the interviews were played back. My memos were noted at ‘trigger points’, the times when I was uncertain, or when the trainees’ voices seemed to imply something other than their words conveyed, or when I felt that the method was unhelpful. At a later point, I returned to the memos but I began to feel that these memos were separating the narrative from the trainees, rather than adding anything to the

inquiry. However, some memos were useful in drawing my attention to my thoughts as a researcher. As a reflective tool, they also helped me to join the narratives as they were gathered, and this produced a cumulative understanding of the trainees' stories. By the time we reached the final narrative, I was able to draw from the introductory life story and the first interview based on these memos and triggers.

7.2 Analysis of introductory life stories

While using the online questionnaire to gather details of the 'characters', it was important to me as a researcher that I did not view the trainees just for their narratives but as people embarking upon a new phase of their lives, perhaps a Jungian 'individuation'. After all, the pre-service teachers, or the 'characters', were telling the story of how they came to their teacher education, and the influences that may have impacted upon their professional identities along the way.

The words written by the pre-service teachers in their online life story were used, where possible, to compose the biographies, but the online format of open questions and qualitative answers meant that the answers were not always in the right form to present suitably anonymous narratives; in these cases, the data was summarised or re-worded to protect the participants and present the data meaningfully. Giving an explanation of the pre-service teachers as 'characters' and using some of their own words helps to understand their context and values.

The data were analysed using literary terms (such as flashback, flash-forward, setting, characters and motivation, role model and ideal teacher), which enabled me to make decisions regarding data reduction and presentation. I chose to use literary terms that continued the theme of Arendt's storytelling, as well as following narrative conventions. This helped separate past and future, personal lives, and perceptions of teacher identity: 'flashback' refers to previous education and work experience; 'contextual setting' denotes information about family life; 'motivation' refers to the rationale to become a teacher, and 'flash-forward' refers to future expectations of the pre-service teachers, including the ideal teacher they would like to be.

As can be seen in the introductory life story, I have used the terms 'role model' and 'ideal teacher' to enable pre-service teachers to locate teacher

types; these are derived from Jung's archetypes (Martin-Vallas, 2013) upon which it is believed all identities are based, and which are terms I expected pre-service teachers to be comfortable with on an online questionnaire.

7.3 Analysis of Narrative 1: Face-to-face interview

As with any research, decisions were made regarding data reduction, analysis and presentation to gain a more meaningful understanding of the pre-service teacher; in order to do this, several coding methods were trialled as outlined below.

7.3.1 Coding decisions

As a coding pilot with one of the transcripts I tried four types of coding: (1) structural coding, (2) attribute coding, (3) descriptive coding, and (4) narrative coding (Saldana, 2016).

Structural coding, where phrases are assigned to content or structure related to a specific research question, was too content based, and too fragmented by the subsequent levels of coding, and felt more suited to a larger study; attribute coding was chosen to help explore personal attributes but instead it gave information about the attributes of the study that were too factual and descriptive regarding the overall data set, which was again suited to a bigger study; descriptive coding, although likely to provide a basic topic for an paragraph or group of sentences excluded the participants and made them meaningless. It also drew my attention to looking beyond the surface level of the data; narrative coding, which Saldaña suggests is useful for exploring intra- and interpersonal experiences in identity work, but in applying them to the narratives they were too narrow and constraining to allow for discussion of pre-service teachers' wider experiences.

In vivo coding, which literally uses the language of the participants as codes, seemed more appropriate. It seeks to find words or short phrases that encapsulate a paragraph or set of key points being made. The benefit of in vivo coding is that it situates the reader directly within the participants' perspective (Saldaña, 2016: 23), capturing the essence of meaning. I could 'hear' the participants saying the words time and time again as I read the codes.

By using Simple Mind, a mind-mapping tool, I categorised in vivo first cycle codes into the six 'conditions' once I felt I had a good grasp of what the pre-service teachers were saying. The use of 'birth', 'death', 'survival', 'worldliness', 'plurality' and 'self-development' was to reduce the data in line with Arendt's theory. Some pre-service teachers used the terminology of the conditions in the interview with the prompt sheet I had provided but given that Arendt's work was not familiar to them, I made the decision that I would categorise their in vivo codes into the six conditions. As a researcher, it was a difficult decision to make and, in the end, I felt that by using the in vivo codes in this way I could still hear the pre-service teachers' words while relating them to the theoretical framework driving my research. An example of this can be found in Appendix 7.

What emerged from this process was an understanding of new beginnings and of leaving behind, that teaching in the early stages could be seen as 'survival', and that 'self-development' with reference to a career in teaching could happen at any point, as identified in one of my memos below:

Figure 1: MEMO M15: Visualising the data; changing thoughts on Arendt

It has become apparent very quickly using the mind mapping tool that there were instant visual gains; the data display has enabled me to see that Arendt conditions – birth/death, survival, and some worldliness to a lesser extent, are being 'met'.

This also made me more aware that I was assuming a linear pattern to the stages and had to be careful not to present this viewpoint to the trainees. It would appear the previous careers generate more 'birth' and 'death' codes, as well as having an element of 'self-development' identified after 'birth' and 'death'.

7.4 Analysis of Narrative 2: Critical incident interview

Two of the three pre-service teachers completed the critical incident timeline in advance. At the interview, they identified the key events important to them at the time of the critical incident, and which I later categorised using the influences (Personal, Training and Development, Professional and Organisational (discussed in the conceptual framework), originally derived from Arendt's *Human Condition*, recurring themes in literature on teacher identity and from the pilot. This information was used to compile a commentary on their

teacher identity, using their actual words from the interview. Each commentary was circulated to the trainees, with regard to accurate representation. Two of the three trainees agreed that this was an accurate representation of their identity as teachers by the end of their PGCE. There was no response from the third trainee.

This research design was implemented over a nine-month period, and the resulting findings are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 – Findings

This chapter is divided into three sections: Will, Monica and Rebecca. Each pre-service teacher has a section that tells their story: only then does the “full meaning” (Arendt, 1998: 191) of their identity become apparent. In each section, the introductory life story acts as a simple introduction to the characters. The face-to-face interviews (Narrative 1) are presented in thematic mind maps and transcript excerpts; they use the pre-service teachers’ exact words and, when referred to in the accompanying analysis, are italicised to make recognition easier.

In the critical incident interview (Narrative 2) the completed timeline is labelled with Arendt’s conditions. The labels can be seen underneath the timeline. Perceived changes in identity are detailed in the commentary, which is placed at the end of each section. Each commentary was compiled using the actual words from the final interview, and circulated to the pre-service teachers regarding accurate representation.

1. Will

1.1 Will: Life story (October 2016)

Characters and contextual setting

Will comes from a creative and artistic family; his parents were teachers when he was little. His father is now an artist and his mother became an art dealer. There are a range of teachers in the family.

Flashback

Will attended his local Church of England primary school and was awarded a scholarship to an independent secondary school. His undergraduate degree was in History and he later studied post-graduate legal courses in the same city.

Role model

Will did not hesitate to describe his Latin teacher, who was utterly unique, and who didn't fit into any recognisable teaching mould but he made his subject come to life. This was no mean feat considering it was Latin!

Motivation

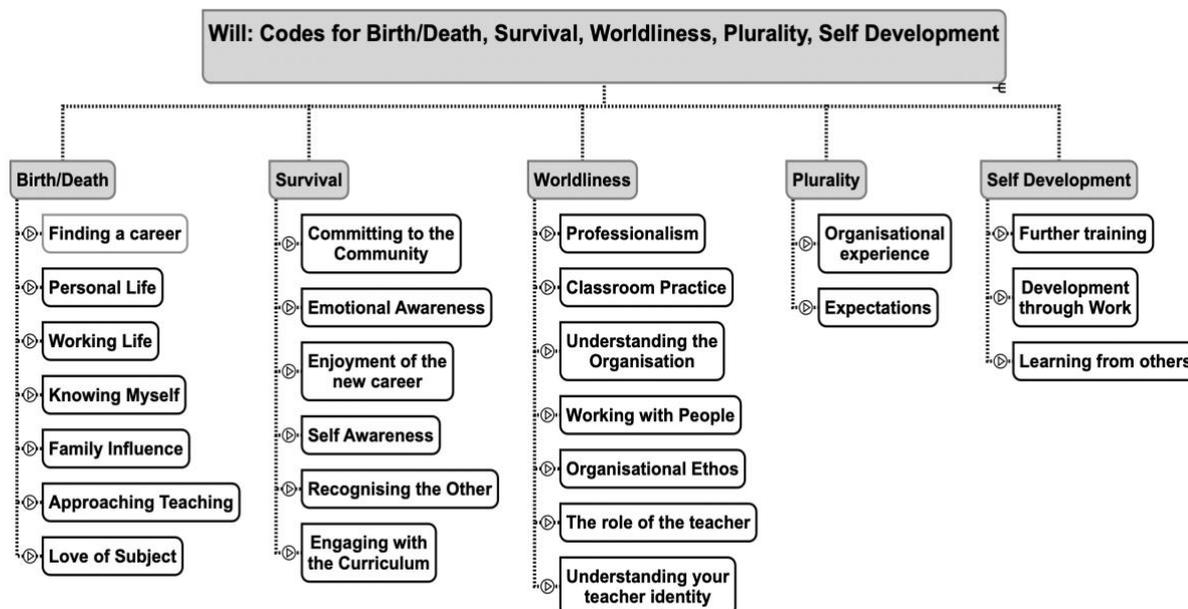
Will has always wanted to teach; he loves learning and wants to be able to share this love of knowledge with another generation. He chose to do a PGCE qualification because it was convenient and his chosen university had places available when he decided it was the right time for him to be a teacher.

Flash-forward to ideal teacher

Will wants to be a charismatic teacher, so that children want to be around him because they learn astounding *stuff* from him.

1.2 Using Arendt's conditions to understand Will's identity development

Figure 2. Overview of Will's interview responses thematically coded using Arendt's conditions



For Will, *Birth/Death* provided the background that led to his teacher education and as Betz (1992: 392) points out, Arendt's *natality* is the constant change that "threatens permanence and security." This was exactly the situation Will found himself in; he had lost his status as a solicitor, the security of paid employment, and his position as the family breadwinner due to this new beginning. Instead, he was confident in his ability to *survive* in his new identity, by drawing on his self-knowledge prior to, and during, the PGCE course.

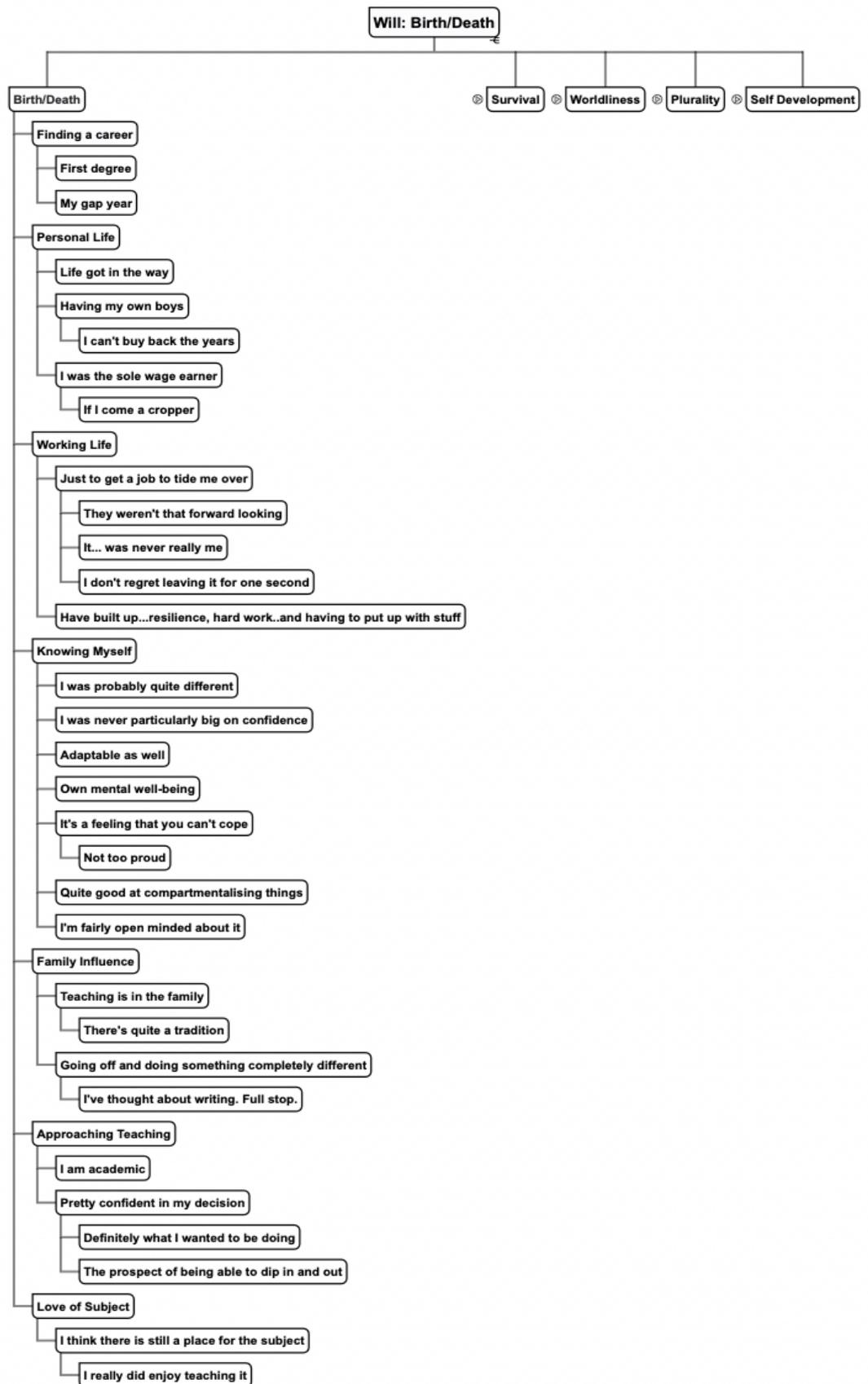
Dyson (2010: 12) cites Glasser's five basic needs that include survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun. As Will relates his experiences and reflections, it becomes apparent that he is looking to belong in a school that suits him, that he is mindful of where the power lies and he seeks a career where there may be possibilities for fun and freedom. Will's *worldliness* was about gaining experience of the school as a new workplace; if pre-service teachers are thinking about their private individual selves and combining this with thinking about themselves in the public political sphere (school), it will change them forever. This supports Shannon's view (2017: 7) that Arendt invites us to undertake *worldliness* – that, by thinking, should "bring that moment to the rest of our lives." Will's *plurality* involved transference of his

interpersonal skills, self-knowledge and previous work skills to the school context; this relates to the ebb and flow between the personal and professional selves that Fessler and Christensen (1992) suggest takes places in teachers' identity (and which, in Will's case, should allow him to explore the past in light of fresh experiences.) These new and fresh experiences highlight the "radical open-endedness" of human life (Higgins, 2010a: 279), the evolution of ourselves through our actions, which leads to self-interpretation and self-development. For Will, self-development was an acknowledgement of how training and working with others could lead to career change.

1.2.1 Will: Birth/Death

From the themes shown below in Figure. 3, Will's *birth/death* is about finding his way in life, about beginning and endings of phases of his life.

Figure 3. In vivo codes for Will: *Birth and Death*



Finding a career and personal life

Will talked about work as serendipitous experiences, moving from his secondary education through a university degree, a gap year and into a business-led career. Nevertheless, it was possible to detect sufficient confidence that allowed him to take informed risks, exemplified by his comment: *“If I came a cropper.”* Each job provided him with a new shared world or workplace, as well as uncertainty. Such risk and career changes appear to have provided a break from monotony.

The personal world that Will discussed relates to Arendt’s use of the “private” as the “realm of the household” (Mönig, 2012: 243), and which Hammer (1997) defines as exclusive and personal; Will’s work life thrived at the expense of his personal life, and it appeared that there were limited opportunities for Will to establish boundary crossings between these worlds.

In his life story, Will stated that he always wanted to teach but was prevented from taking a certain path; he mentioned that *“Life got in the way”*, and the importance of him *“having my own boys”*. He also talked of the pressure of being “the sole wage earner” which took priority over career choice. This may be an indication that his birth into the teaching world had a longer gestation period, subtly interwoven alongside his other more dominant identities that he carried with him. In addition, he admitted that he felt a sense of loss about not having been able to spend time with his children due to work commitments, referred to in the comment, *“I can’t buy back the years.”*

Working life

Will’s History degree and his later business skills gained during his gap year enabled him to *“get a job to tide me over”*, as he put it. He saw work as a means to an end, and, in Arendtian terms, Will was “a being that works” (Higgins, 2010b: 280); however, his type of work did not add to the political forum; from these experiences emerged a sense of *Work* but not *Action*. The law firm in which he started as a secretary was very traditional, and he admitted that *“[T]hey weren’t that forward looking”* but he was surprised when they offered to support him to become a solicitor:

W: Within a few weeks, they’d actually got me drafting up documents rather than just sitting there doing audio typing...within twelve months they’d already agreed to put me through and fund me through a post-graduate diploma in law and then the legal practice course thereafter.

Will had a strong awareness of his personal traits, which was reflected through the comments he made about working in various organisations. Will was used to the constant “unfolding of one’s relationship to oneself, one’s environment, and other people” (Hayden, 2012: 242), and used this to inform his knowledge of the public world:

W: ... I think what I have built up with that is one – resilience and two, both hard work and having to put up with stuff that you know nobody would wish on in terms of office politics, the daily grind and that sort of thing.

However, he did not feel that he fitted the organisation or the career, feeling that “[*It was never really me*”]; he was not emotionally involved in this career and as a result, there was no sense of loss when leaving it, and stated that “*I don’t regret leaving it for one second.*” This was the end of a job, rather than a vocation. It was a deliberate death, without sorrow. He was seeking political action, in pursuing a moral and ethical purpose.

Knowing myself

In discussing himself, Will blurred the boundaries between the private and the public, an aspect which Arendt is keen to keep separate. He talked about himself as a person but related this discussion to the workplace. These blurred lines gave us both the opportunity to understand him in a meaningful context. For instance, Will spotted and said that he could be “*quite different*” but seemed comfortable with that. Although he said that he was “*never particularly big on confidence*”, this seemed to refer to how he viewed himself as a pre-service teacher at this stage, rather than indicating his personal qualities. He realised the attributes that would be useful to him as a trainee teacher: adaptability, flexibility and stress management. He also commented on being “*quite good at compartmentalising things*” in his head, as well as being flexible in his outlook, stating that “*I’m fairly open minded*”:

W: But I’ve been adaptable as well. I wouldn’t have got into law in the first place if I hadn’t been because I didn’t have any real subject knowledge coming into that as a career at all, it was just picked up on the job and went with it. But I’ve had to adapt then to seven different firms I’ve been at over the years...

He discussed dealing with stress, aware that it was a feature of teachers' lives:

W: It's not generally speaking that people are working really, really hard that's causing stress, it's a feeling that you can't cope and it's the communication of that and being able to share the burden, look at other ways around doing things, get help with the prioritisation and do what needs to be done and then see what you can do in terms of diffusing the rest of it...

Family influence

Will had an informed understanding of teaching from his family influences, which acted as a point of conception for his future birth as a teacher; this was a blending of his and his family's personal and professional worlds. He was quite positive about coming from a family of teachers, explaining that "... *there's quite a tradition ...*" where teaching was seen as a flexible career option before "*going off and doing something completely different*":

W: Well, teaching is in the family anyway so it wasn't a sort of starry eyed oh well this sounds wonderful, lovely holidays and being creative and that sort of thing. I knew the drill, my mum was a Maths teacher, well a primary teacher and I got taught by her on supply sometimes when I was a nipper, but she did a lot of secondary Maths teaching. My brother-in-law is Head of English... my sister is teaching art, two of my cousins are teachers, my aunt and uncle are teachers. So, there's quite a tradition there and there's also a nice tradition in the Rankin family of studying a subject and then going off and doing something completely different in life and probably chopping and changing half way through. My mum was qualified as a Maths teacher... and ended up eventually becoming a fine art dealer that read architecture ...until 1979, then jumped back to obviously become an artist. My sister did fine art, she's now teaching, my brother did English, he's doing IT, so histories of law was next to nothing and then teaching after that, you know it's all the same really, isn't it?

He had considered alternative careers where he felt he could be more creative, explaining that "*I've thought about writing. Full stop actually.*" These considerations were woven through layers of his identity that were alternately rising to the surface. He commented about teaching not being creative but later in the same interview remarked that the legal profession "*was all bottom line stuff rather than, more sort of abstract and creative, which was more my cup of tea really.*" It became clear that he wanted to uncover another facet of his identity that had hitherto been ignored, but which had been explored by other family members. In addition, it seemed that he was seeking to make teaching a creative career, despite the reality of teaching being made transparent by his family of teachers. This professional tension, as initially suggested in his life story, of Will's romantic vision compared to the day-to-day experience, was once again raised and held visible as a part of his teacher identity.

Approaching teaching

Will demonstrated strong self-knowing, stating that “*I am academic*” which he said dictated his choice of route. He knew which way was best for him to become a teacher, and was confident about teaching as a career he went on to say, “*I was pretty confident in my decision and then once I went into the pre-course experience that this was definitely what I wanted to be doing.*” He knew that primary was the age range for him:

W: ... But it was something I always enjoyed doing anyway, I mean I enjoy working with kids, I enjoy having my own children. What having my own boys did do was focus me away from secondary or further higher education towards primary, because I had previously looked at secondary History ...

Having his own children had a bearing on which age phase he wanted to teach; he gave the impression that teaching would help bring him closer to his children, sharing knowledge and experiences in working with children as a form of compensation for the lost time with his own sons during his legal career. By inserting himself into the teaching world with the words and deeds that Arendt reminds us make us human, Will was never going to be the same, and he hoped that this would apply to his family circumstances too. “This insertion is like a second birth” (Arendt, 1998: 176), and linked Will’s *natality* as a trainee teacher to the mortality of his legal career.

Love of the subject

Will wanted to be able to relate his love of History to teaching, stating that “*I think there is still a place for it*”; he talked about the place of History, his own undergraduate degree, within the curriculum. Arendt relates passion or love as a “shared worldliness” (Boym, 2009: 116), and it was Will’s love of knowledge that created a “new unpredictable third-space” (Boym, 2009: 106) in which to see his subject in a different light. For his Small Scale Research Project (SSRP) he chose to look at creative ways to engage children in History through the use of computer games.

W: I think there is still a place for the subject just dotting little tit bits here and there to fire off the enthusiasm and that’s what my SSRP is all about. I’ve been playing a computer game with a bunch of kids who have not been as engaged with History as the other subjects, so what I’ve done is I’ve sat them down with this game and I’ve just kept a running commentary all the way through ...

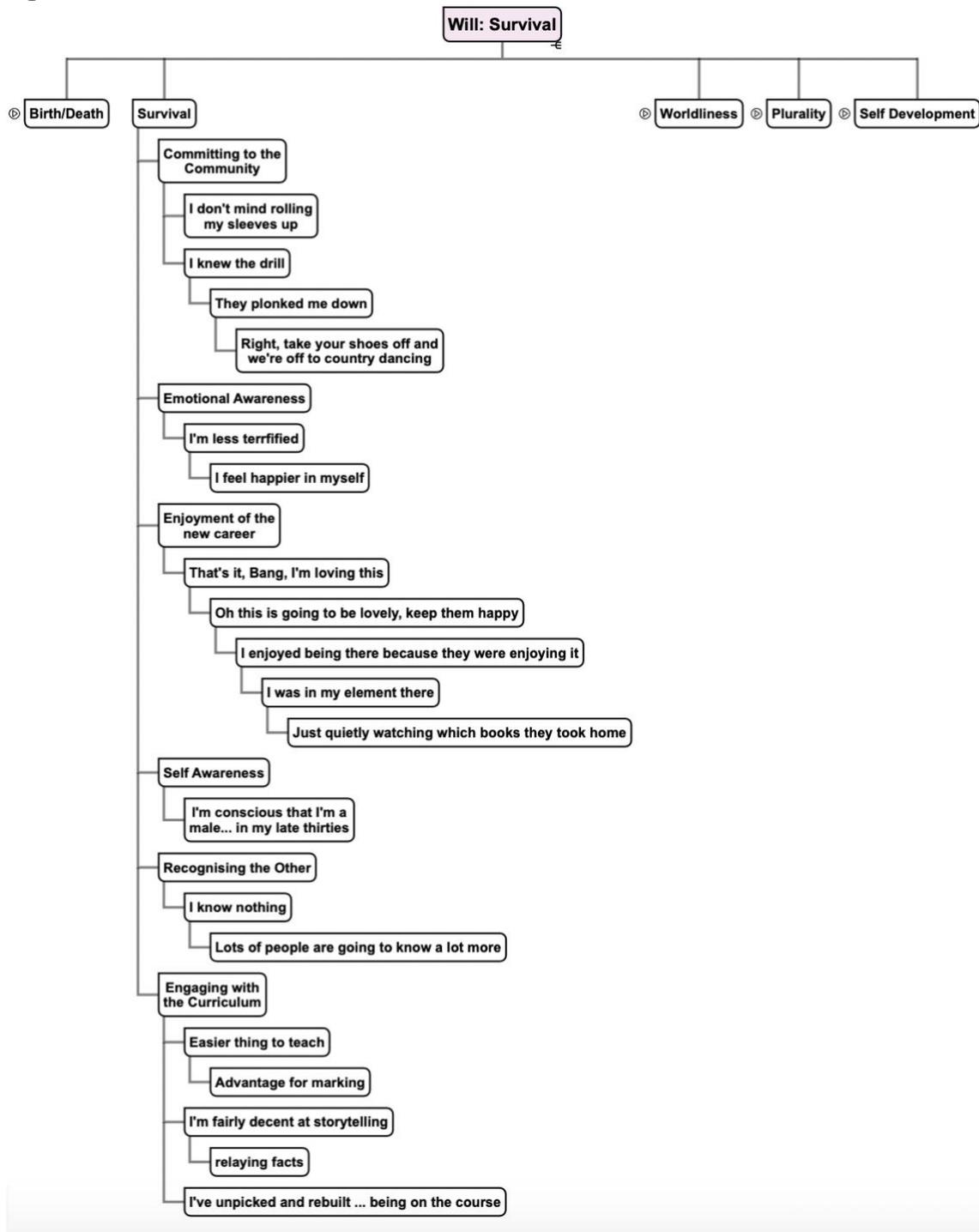
Even at the time of his pre-PGCE experience, Will had begun to look at the curriculum differently, and experienced how it felt to teach it, rather than being the learner:

W: ... the thing I enjoyed teaching the most was Maths, which was unexpected. I'm decent at Maths ... but I really did enjoy teaching it a great deal which was interesting from my point of view. That surprised me.

1.2.2 Will: *Survival*

Rajuan et al. (2008) outline the *survival* experienced by pre-service teachers in the initial stages of placement, where they demonstrate high levels of need for practical strategies rather than being at the transformative stage from trainee to teacher. As a mature trainee, Will could be somewhere in the middle of their continuum, where he could rely on what he knew of himself, and the influences exerted on him (Figure 4). He also outlined a love of knowledge, a highly political aspect of English education, whereby subject knowledge has been privileged. The key aspects of Will's *survival* were based on making the right decisions as to what he was leaving behind and what he was starting anew. This renewal is a key part of Arendt's thinking (Frost, 2017: 14), where renewal emerges from *survival*.

Figure 4. In vivo codes for Will: *Survival*



Committing to the community

From the start of his pre-course experience, Will immersed himself in classroom activities, admitting “*I don’t mind rolling my sleeves up.*” His family experiences of teaching ensured that he “*knew the drill*”, and the likelihood of being thrown into primary school life straight away, as explained by him saying, “*Right, take your shoes off and we’re off to Country Dancing.*” This positive attitude was

indicative of the ways in which he would mix with staff, and which would later develop into *worldliness*.

Emotional awareness and enjoyment of the new career

Emotional recognition was a key part of Will's teacher identity. Will moved from being terrified to happier as he approached the second placement; despite being a confident individual, the new career and the disclosure of himself as a trainee in a very public sphere posed an emotional risk. He was making himself visible, open to the vulnerability and the judgements that came with it.

He was also surprised by how much he enjoyed time in school, with comments like, "*That's it. Bang. I'm loving this.*" When talking about a school trip he had been on with his class, he said, "*Oh, this is going to be lovely, keep them happy.*" The sense of belonging – to the classroom and to the new career – came across when he said, "*I was in my element there*", which was echoed in the enjoyment he felt in small acts such as watching children choosing reading books to take home. This contradicts Loughran's (2006) view that pre-service teachers experience discomfort fitting into their placements; for Will, there seemed to be an emotional release, a freedom, where he could relax into being more of himself than had been possible in his other workplaces.

Self-awareness and recognising the other

As the only male in this study, Will seemed taken aback by the way he perceived himself as a highly visible male trainee during his first placement in Key Stage One (5-7 year olds), a highly female-dominated age range:

W: I'm conscious that I'm a male would-be teacher in my late thirties, and there aren't a huge number of them dotted around.

'Appearing' in this space as a male made him very self-conscious, which ties in with Knight and Moore's (2012) work in supporting male beginner teachers. Given that his mentor was also male teacher, Will's gender awareness was further illuminated:

W: ... he was a chap as well who had gone straight into teaching ... but he was slightly fish out of water as well because he'd always been in Key Stage 2 and he started to move down to Key Stage 1 and it was a different environment for him as well.

However, this seemed to counter what he had told me earlier in the interview, having started his legal career as a male secretary in a very traditional law firm, and he seemed quite proud to have broken the mould:

W: Well, it was quite open minded at them, actually to be fair, I mean, lots of the clients used to ring up and say, 'Ooh, a male secretary, how exciting.'

Nonetheless, working with his mentor, Will was able to reflect on, and accept, his status as a beginner. This was an indicator of a boundary-crossing, changing from an expert in the legal field to a trainee teacher (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Will said he was "*happy to be led at first.*" He realised that colleagues would be more experienced and that "*lots of people are going to know a lot more*", as well as having achieved seniority in the organisation:

W: I was in a class with a class teacher who was virtually the same age as me ..., so he was at fifteen years peak and he was on the senior management team ...

The mentor in this placement became a new role model, and may have acted as motivation for Will to consider promotion in his own teaching career.

Engaging with the curriculum

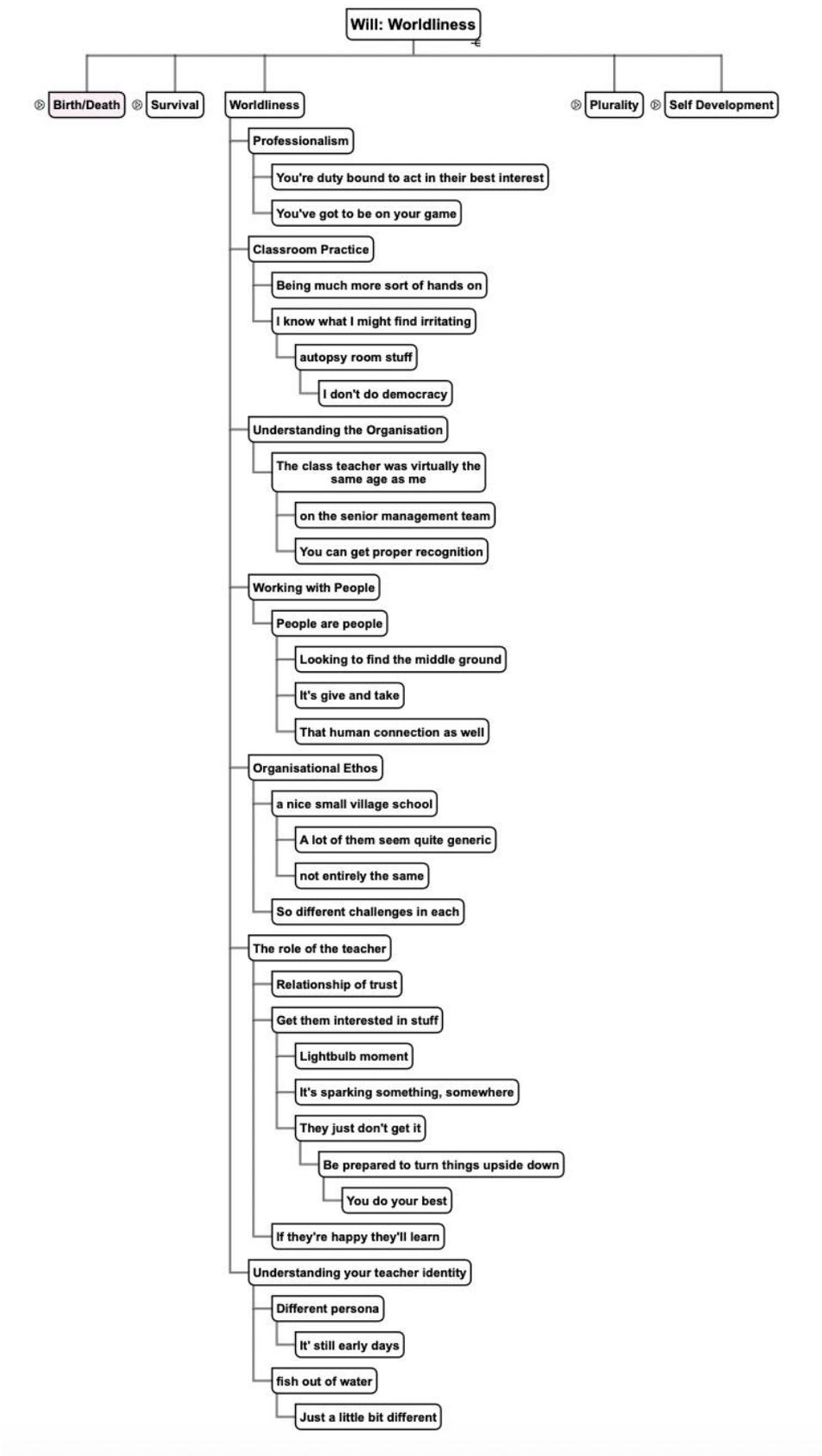
Will had a growing sense of his teacher-self; he began to explore the primary curriculum; he stated that Maths was easier to teach and had an advantage for marking. He was also aware of his own strengths in relation to the curriculum, stating that "*I'm fairly decent at storytelling and relaying facts*", which related to his teacher identity of engaging children with fantasy and imagination while also focusing on knowledge transfer. What stated that he had "*unpicked and rebuilt*" subject knowledge from university sessions, and was now able to see how to apply this in practice. Zeichner (2010) suggests an alignment of identities held by the pre-service teacher: the campus-based learner, and the school-based trainee, is a positive way forward. As the two identities started to merge, Will had begun to see himself move away from being a learner to becoming a teacher.

1.2.3 Will: Worldliness

Higgins (2010b: 278) believes that Arendt's *worldliness* is closely related to mortality, in striving for permanence, or a legacy after our physical death. However, this would appear rather inappropriate at this point in a pre-service

teacher's education. Instead Higgins (2010a: 278) defines *worldliness* as a need to be in a place that we share with others, and to have value and worth conferred by others. Will's *worldliness* allowed his professional legal skills to be linked to the new community in which he found himself; this helped to provide Will with a way to "maintain his otherness" (Goultschin, 2014), while also "enlarging [his] mentality out into the world" (Nixon, 2001: 232) without losing his sense of self. As an ex-solicitor, he found himself in a community of classroom practice, based on positive relationships with colleagues and an understanding of the school and its challenges. By beginning to understand the role of the teacher, Will could recognise that his identity as a teacher was evolving (Figure 5).

Figure 5. In vivo codes for Will: Worldliness



Professionalism

Will transferred professional aspects of his legal career to teaching, explaining “*you’re duty bound.*” He adopted a pragmatic approach, stating that “[Y]ou’ve got to be on your game” to meet professional standards, and went on to explain about professional codes of conduct:

W: I’m used to that code of conduct concept, underpinning everything. It has to be utterly trustworthy ... There’s an awful lot in there in terms of what you have to do in terms of that professionalism, professional courtesy, utter scrupulousness in terms of honesty with people and act in their best interests and confidentiality and all of that sort of stuff, it feeds right into and stuff like safeguarding things, I’m very familiar with that because I’ve seen it from the other side.

This demonstrated his ability to construct his new identity through adapting to the social context and through “repeated self-reflexion” (Lindgren and Wåhlin, 2001: 358). Such knowledge and experience is uncommon in a pre-service teacher. It is clear that Will has maintained his sense of self; this is explored by Goultchin (2014), who points out the paradox of the individual in the public sphere: how to appear ‘worldly’ without losing a sense of self.

Classroom practice

Pre-service teachers find themselves in a common world, which to them may be an unfamiliar landscape. Will was surprised to find himself “*much more hands on*” in the classroom, in direct contrast to his own childhood education. He reflected upon some practice that he might find “*irritating,*” such as blank, minimal classrooms, which he termed “*autopsy room stuff.*” Will had begun to question his identity, with regard to what teaching and learning should look like.

Understanding the organisation, and working with people

Will made judgements about the situation he found himself in, within the school: he noted that he and his class teacher were in their thirties, saying that “*the class teacher was virtually the same age as me*” but the difference being that the class teacher was on the senior management team, which Will viewed as “*proper recognition*” for hard work. Keladu (2015: 69) believes that the ethics of *worldliness* means “a way of thinking about the man-made condition of human existence” and that in such *worldliness* we make judgements that “draw new principles that involve new concepts coming from an individual thing or

situation” (2015: 77). Having never been in school before, Will made judgements about the world and the people he was working with; he created a concept of “*proper recognition*” that equated to age and responsibility. Judgements such as these need to be handled with caution; they could have created additional pressure as to how he viewed himself as an older career-changer or caused tensions in the way that he perceived other teachers who were neither the same age nor on the management team. Boym (2009: 116) reminds us of the need for others in the shared world to cast their light to “illuminate” our freedom; Will experienced this freedom as a result of his well-developed interpersonal skills and successful working practices with people in a range of contexts. He was quite accepting of them, explaining that “*people are people*.” He was tolerant and understanding as he talked about “*looking to find the middle ground*”, *realising that “it’s give and take”*; his attitude was that interpersonal relationships were important in the workplace which he described as “*that human connection*.” This was based on his experiences in the workplace and he saw no reason why they would be any different in teaching. Social interaction, as he saw it, was a key aspect in any organisation.

Organisational ethos

Despite Will being skilled in dealing with others, his lack of experience within the school setting led him to assume that the size, location and catchment area dictated the ethos of the school; he thought that rural village schools would all be pleasant and similar to each other, which he saw as “*a nice, small village school*” but noticed that “*a lot of them seem quite generic*”; further into the discussion he changed his mind and reflected that they were not entirely the same, and so “*had different challenges in each*.” He had begun to feel the political undercurrents.

Although Arendt believed politics should be kept in the public sphere, of which schools were clearly not a part (Arendt, 1954; Mönig, 2012), Will’s temporary habitation of these communities enabled him to gain a political understanding that they were culturally distinct from each other, with a range of citizens and social groupings, and led by leaders with differing perspectives.

The role of the teacher

There was a mix of idealism and pragmatism in the way Will had consolidated his views on the role of the teacher. Emotionally aware, he spoke of the need for a “*relationship of trust*” between the children and the teacher, and he wanted them to be emotionally secure too, asserting that “*If they’re happy, they’ll learn.*” The main role of the teacher, as Will saw it, was to “*get them interested in*” what he called “*stuff.*” As a pre-service teacher, his refreshing naivety was set on finding that “*lightbulb moment*” for children, sparking something, somewhere. He overtly identified two of the three Arendtian roles of the teacher (Higgins 2010a) – the carer and the instructor – but also made inferences to *stuff*, which could refer to the worldly educator’s role – to introduce children to the world and all that it was made of.

On the other hand, he was also aware of teachers’ accountability for pupil progress, stating that that if they “*just don’t get it*” (the pupils) then the teacher had to “*be prepared to turn things upside down*” and “*do your best.*” Will’s ethical and moral stance is reinforced by Hanimaki’s (2011) view that these personal beliefs underpin professional development and understanding.

Understanding your teacher identity

Will was aware of the different identities he held:

W: I suppose I’m learning that there is Will ... and then there’s Mr Rankin [the husband and father]. Mr Rankin in the classroom is not necessarily a different persona.

He felt that it was “*still early days*” for his teacher identity to be expressed fully, which he said was feeling like a “*fish out of water*” in Key Stage One, and he linked this back to the time when he felt “*just a little bit different.*” The use of persona in the Greek sense refers to when actors wear masks to perform on the public stage. Mahrtdt (2012: 260) believes this to be an important Arendtian aspect of identity, enabling the audience to focus on “*words and deeds*” and “*not to focus on what the inner motives of a political actor might be.*”

It seemed that the teacher persona acted as a form of protection to his personal self (to which he identified as Will), and which was also in place to keep Mr Rankin, father and husband, separate from Mr Rankin, the teacher. There was a feeling that this was to protect his vulnerability, particularly at this point when

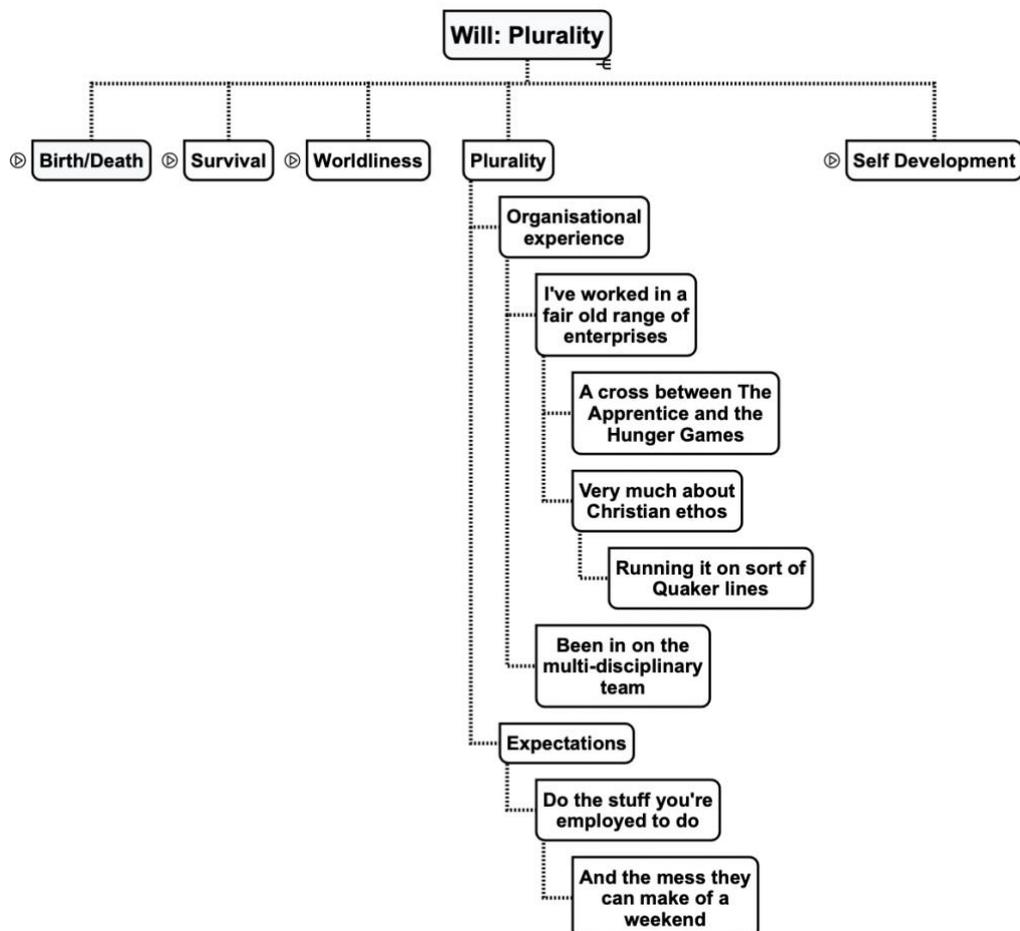
he was just beginning to gain a sense of himself as a teacher. When asked about why he needed a teaching persona, he said:

W: I think you're going to have days where the car won't start and you're feeling crappy and under the weather, but you've got to be on your game anyway for your class and they can't see that.

1.2.4 Will: Plurality

Keladu (2015: 69) reminds us that Arendt prioritises the “experiential character of human life,” such as that Will has lived through. In this interview, Will made me aware of his understanding of the wider public sphere, in which he previously worked, where he shared the perspectives of himself and others to develop “a shared common sense” (Canovan, 1998: xiii). Will’s *plurality* was therefore based on the internalised dialogue between his previous careers and the PGCE programme, as well as a knowledge of teaching reflected by his family. These are outlined in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. In vivo codes for Will: *Plurality*



Organisational experience

Will did not comment about the politicisation of education. Instead, his view of the politics and ethos of organisations emerged when he was talking about the law firms he had worked in: “*I’ve worked in a fair old range of enterprises.*” He unpicked some of the organisational features, and their impact on the workforce:

W: From a one-man band when a guy was running it on sort of Quaker lines which was quite interesting ... through to a very sort of collegiate approach at a firm over in Coventry who weren’t very big on the close knit, through to another firm in Birmingham which was more like a cross between *The Apprentice* and the *Hunger Games* in terms of how people were dealt with. They had a 60% turnover in staff within twelve months.

Will was also experienced in the wider role of the organisation, and talked of having “*been in on the multi-agency team*”, which allowed him to see the importance of multi-agency working, especially with regard to children and their well-being. “Social” workplace meetings act as a reminder of the wider global picture where we can share and debate the perspectives of others (Canovan, 1998: xiii). But co-constructing an identity in a social setting can be problematic, with disruptive actions and disagreements from the others who are taking part; however, Meehan (2002: 185) advises that because our identities are “complex and different, we need myriad and different kinds of relationships with others to constitute various parts of ourselves.”

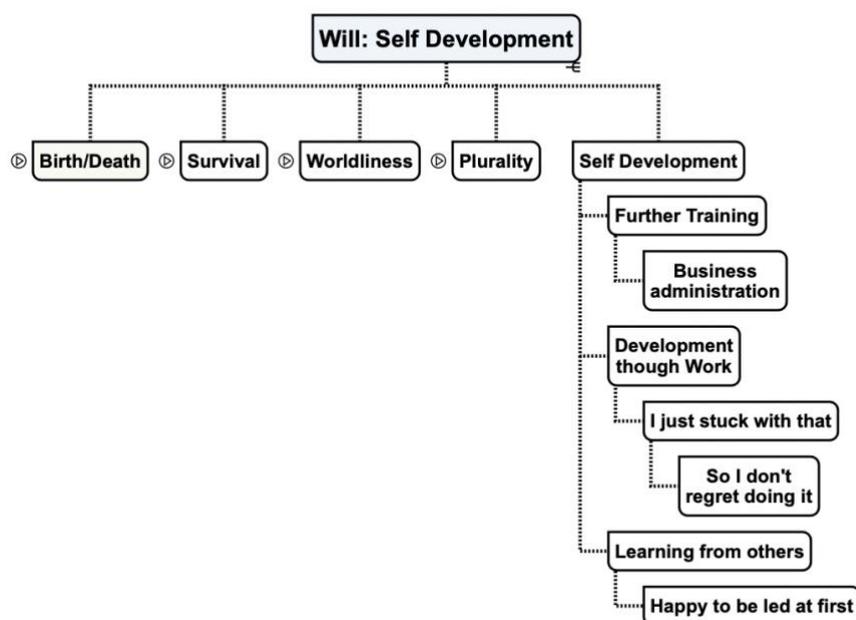
Expectations

Will appeared fairly sanguine about committing to the lifestyle demanded by a teaching career. He stated that as an employee you “*do the stuff you’re employed to do*”, and was mindful of the fact that both the legal and teaching professions were expected to work out of hours, when he discussed “*the mess they can make of a weekend.*” These institutions produce the “outcomes and structures of concerted actions” where the “power resides on the ability of plural agents to act together” (Nixon, 2001: 225). Will had no difficulty about his professional life seeping into his personal life.

1.2.5 Will: Self-development

Will's *self-development* (see Figure 7 below) had been almost continuous due to his positive attitude to change, aligning with Arendt's view that thinking can never be finished and should always be open to mediation (Keladu, 2015: 71).

Figure 7. In vivo codes for Will: *Self-development*

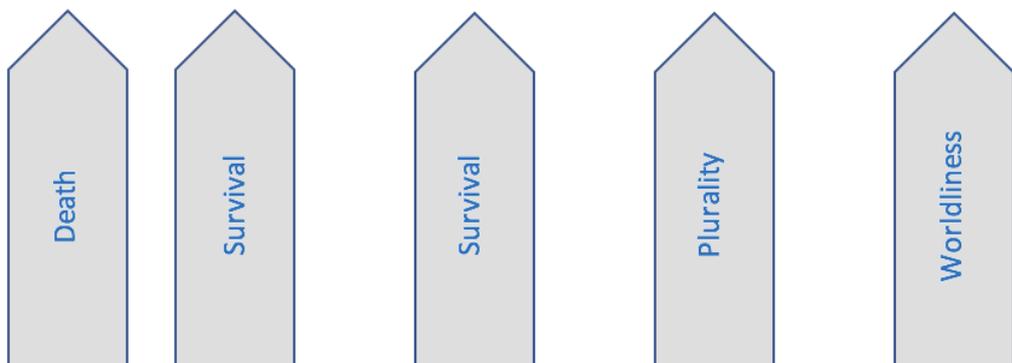
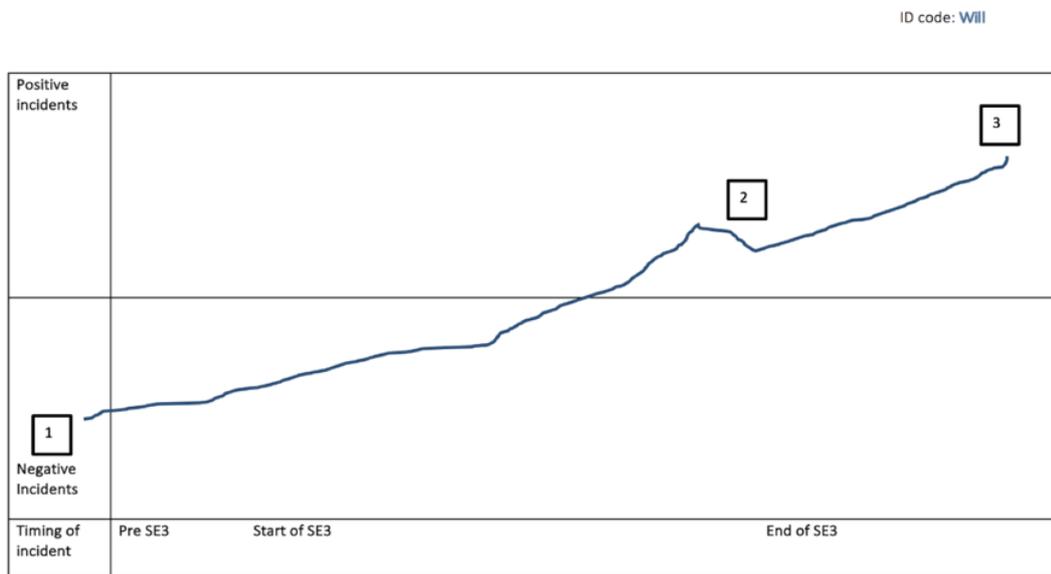


Prior to his PGCE, these opportunities were almost incidental: in his gap year, Will talked of embarking on a “*business administration* course”, which incidentally led to his legal training. In an Arendtian way, he moved between ‘appearances’ in the public sphere, which Betz (1992: 391) explains as the occasions when humans “appear out of non-being ... and disappear back into non-being.” However, the PGCE course was his only deliberate training with a focused career outcome, and he commented, “*So I don't regret doing it.*” From these experiences, he established his work ethic, which he explained as “*I just stuck with that.*” He learned from others in the workplace, where he said he was “*happy to be led at first.*” However, Biesta (2011: 142) warns of the dangers of being enculturated into an existing society or community; schools can be all too consuming, and expect the pre-service teacher to ‘conform’ to their practices and procedures without question. Nevertheless, Arendt reminds us that we need diverse perspectives brought together for the common good; by the use of the phrase “*at first*” Will suggests that he will use this ‘leading’ to inform his own ways of working as a teacher in the short term.

1.3 Will: Critical incident interview

Will completed the critical incident timeline (Figure 8 below) and discussed the events leading up to or around these incidents. After the discussion, he selected labels that he placed underneath the timeline to denote how Arendt's conditions helped him view his final stages of his development as a pre-service teacher. On the timeline, Will indicated three areas that could be seen as revelatory episodes (Points 1, 2 and 3 in Figure 8 below). Looking at the timeline, the episodes do not appear to be visually episodic or extreme but the following discussion indicated their significance.

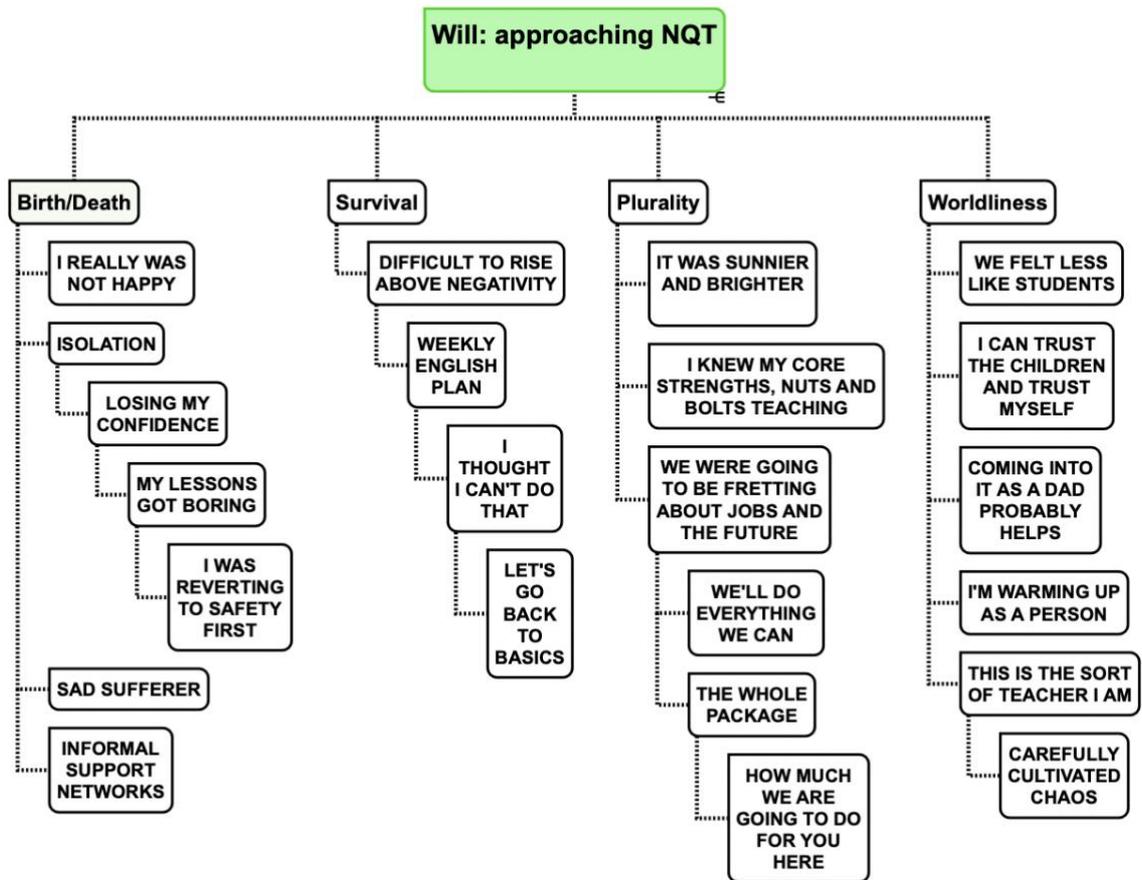
Figure 8. Will's critical incident timeline and Arendtian labels



1.3.1 Will: Approaching Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT)

As a result of the discussion and the labels placed on the timeline, a new thematic diagram was created (Figure 9 below), detailing Will's understanding of Arendt's conditions as they applied to him. As with the previous mind maps, this used his words verbatim.

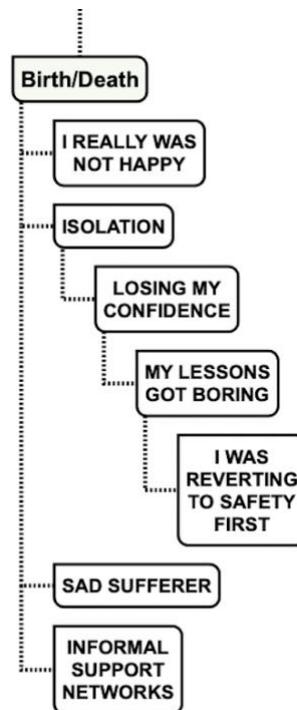
Figure 9. Will: approaching NQT



Will's timeline started at a very negative point prior to his final placement (see point 1 on Figure 8 above). This was a surprise given his strong identity in his previous interview, referring to his many transferable skills. Paradoxically, he viewed the start of his placement as a point of death. Arendt's emphasis on birth infers that death is never far away, with the 'twin' conditions of human existence existing closely together. Death becomes a cessation, a period of stasis for Will. In relation to this, Will commented on unhappiness, "isolation", Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), and the impact these had on his teaching

(see Figure 10 below). These were aspects of his identity that prevented his human flourishing, his *eudaimonia* (Arendt, 1998: 192).

Figure 10. Will's Birth and Death



Will was the only pre-service teacher in his second school placement. In direct contrast, he had been supported on his first placement through an informal support network, comprising a group of pre-service teachers also on placement at the same school. Without this social group, Will became aware of his isolation. “To be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act” (Arendt, 1998: 188), effectively rendering Will powerless, and which Joseph (2011) attributes as a reason for leaving teaching.

Will identified suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), and when looking for reasons for his *death* other than just the placement, he looked to blame himself and his mental health. He had not sought help, but just accepted that this was an aspect of his identity that he had to contend with. The culmination of these factors resulted in Will losing his confidence; he discussed having “*played safe*” with his lesson planning, and took the risk out of his teaching. This ‘safe’ mode of teaching removes Will’s opportunity to “meaningfully act and speak” (d’Agnese, 2018: 7) in Arendtian terms, and to look for the newness and exciting possibilities that the curriculum has to offer.

It took Will some considerable time to move from *death* and into basic *survival* mode. Even though he could see himself making progress, the second *survival* label (in Figure 11 below) indicated how difficult it was to pull himself out of a negative feeling about himself as a teacher. But in the interplay between the dead and the living, “something important [had] changed” (Frost, 2017: 9); Will’s motivation had been badly affected but there was hope of renewal.

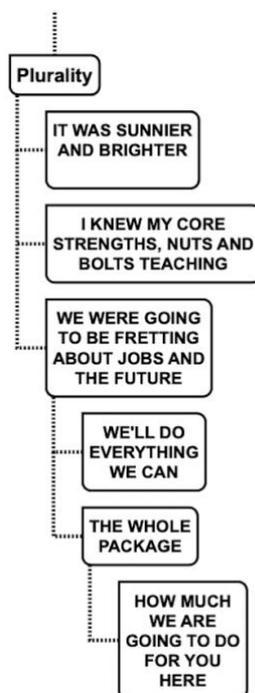
Figure 11. Will's Survival



In particular, Will’s English planning brought about the critical incident that made him question his wider professional ability, and to rethink his own professional practice. Only by becoming a reflexive practitioner, in welcoming and implementing advice, did he begin to feel more positive and identified it as a point of plurality (Figure 8 Point 2).

With the end point in sight, Will felt brighter and happier. Back in his first placement school, he had rebuilt his teacher identity, with improved clarity. He, and his fellow pre-service teachers were supported by the school to help them in their applications to other schools. This contradicts McIntyre et al.’s (2017) belief that schools are preparing pre-service teachers to join their organisation, which is also supported by Will’s later comments below (Figure 12) about the way he approached his interview.

Figure 12. Will's Plurality



At interview, Will was confident in the way he approached it; he knew that his views on teaching and learning may not suit the school but that he had to be himself. In seeking the right place to work, this allowed personal identity – in the form of passion and beliefs about knowledge and ‘stuff’ – to align with his professional identity regarding the curriculum.

As he began the transition into the profession, Will felt the change from pre-service teacher to teacher. He believed in his own ability to teach, and to learn with children. His teacher identity allowed him to draw from two aspects of his personal identity – his parenting experience and his own interpersonal skills. He was firm in his view of himself as a teacher and his teaching, which he described as “*carefully cultivated chaos.*” Will completed the critical incident on a highly positive note, with the offer of his first teaching position (Figure 8 Point 3). The *worldliness* that he felt (Figure 13 below) was a result of the professional recognition by the placement school and by his future employer. This was his *birth* as a teacher, with clarity and certainty of belonging in his new world.

Figure 13. Will's Worldliness



1.3.2 Will's perception of his identity as a teacher

These are the words from the final interview that relate specifically to teacher identity that were re-organised into a commentary:

I think my own practice has developed a little bit over the course of the PGCE course in any event. I think I was maybe a little bit hazy in terms of precisely where I wanted to go. I'm much clearer in my focus now, which is, right, here are your building blocks, we'll hammer away at them. That's the obvious one.

At the interview they said, 'What three strengths would you bring?' I said, Well, I back my subject knowledge because I do know stuff, tying in with that. My second strength is that I like finding out stuff, it's that process. My real passions are art, History, that side of things, but I love science, I love exploring with numbers and Maths. I love reading and writing so it's, yes, that enthusiasm.

What I want to achieve with children is fire them up a little bit ... They should be working harder than me in the class, and if they are interested in it, they'll do it. The only way you're going to get them to do that is if they are not bored or unhappy. I can't always deal with the unhappiness thing. Other people in school

can help with that and I'll deal with it, but the boredom thing, that is absolutely my responsibility ... My own interests are to present the curriculum as it were.

There's no reason that any of those subjects we have to make things boring. We've got those essential ideas in but we're going to actually be able to engage them by doing completely different things.

I think you keep on learning. It's like farming. There is always another crop that needs to be harvested. The draw for me really was working in that environment whereby you are giving small people a bit of a glimpse of a wider world and try and get them interested in it, and giving them the tools so that they can go out and do it.

Even if I am not actually in a classroom with Year 4 in 10 years' time or whatever, I still want to be thinking as though I am in a classroom ... and how is that going to affect them. I think coming into it as a dad probably helps. I think maybe not sets minds at rest because you get all sorts of stranger danger thing going on. ... I'm warming up as a person. Yes. I got mobbed yesterday when I came back in [to school] because I wasn't in for the morning and they knew it was the last day so I literally got mobbed, but it was lovely.

I had a sense of what sort of teacher I wanted to be. I've got the thoroughness in there, I've got the engrained working ethic but I can have, not a gamble as such, but I can trust the children and trust myself to come up with something, to be able to come up with something that is going to attract their interest. A little bit of carefully cultivated chaos I think.

Will agreed that this interpretation reflected his views accurately, as he reflected on the interview for his first teaching position and looked back at the PGCE year.

1.3.3 What has changed in his identity?

Will was, and remained, a boundary-crosser; he overlapped his identities to a varying extent throughout his life and transitioned in and out of differing workplaces, cultures and social groupings. Prior to teaching, as a "boundary-crossing individual" (Lindgren and Wåhlin, 2001: 133), he made use of his experiences as learning opportunities. As with other pre-service teachers, he transitioned from student to teacher, beginner to experienced, and peripheral member (trainee) to full member (teacher).

Will's personal and professional identities intermingled and informed each other. Erikson's (1959) psychological discussion of the individual and of their interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships can be clearly seen in Will's progress. He had clarity about what kind of teacher he wanted to be but he did not yet have the all the skills in place. In his legal career, his personal identity was not encouraged; in teaching he showed awareness that these could be a key part of his teacher identity, such as forming relationships of trust. He was surprised by the warm responses from children; he felt his personality developing as a main component of his teacher identity. Will could appreciate the benefits of being a father-teacher, but the point he made about "*stranger danger*" and gender showed how visible he still felt as a male teacher, working in the public sphere of the school. However, this aspect had now moved from being part of his personal identity to becoming a safeguarding issue, which was part of his professional identity. Added to this professional self was a view that schools had pastoral staff to deal with what Will called "*unhappy children*" and that his role was for education and learning.

Will's personal beliefs and values about education informed his organisational identity. He actively sought a school where his values and praxis aligned with the school. He wanted to be able to take risks. He was not afraid of 'appearing' in Arendtian terms as this constituted his new reality as a teacher. Now that he was '*worldly*' and accepted in the teaching community, he was confident and secure in retaining his "*carefully cultivated*" chaotic approach. He continued to see education as important preparation for the wider world; he used the metaphor of the farmer to denote a teacher and his children, using words like "*harvested*" and "*farming*." This could be regarded as Will's understanding of education as preparation for life, harvesting the crop when they have come to fruition as human beings. However, it could also refer to the cultivation of educational 'produce' for market, linked to teacher accountability and performativity.

A new thread to his identity emerged: a leadership strand. This appears as one of the I-positions that Hong et al. (2017) propose. This strand was not yet needed and would lie dormant until needed; Will knew that this was not the time for it to come to the fore, but it reiterated his earlier understanding of the management structure where he could gain recognition. He was the only pre-service teacher to raise this as part of his future teacher identity.

2. Monica

2.1 Monica: Life story (October, 2016)

Characters and contextual setting

Monica comes from a family where her parents have been married for thirty-six years and have now retired. Her dad was a business manager and her mum was a stay-at-home mum when Monica was little. Once Monica was at school, her mum worked for a company based at home. All children of the family are now grown up, and some even have children of their own. Monica is delighted to be an auntie.

Flashback

Monica worked in a local primary school at the same time as studying for her degree. She gained a 2.2 in her undergraduate degree – a BA in Learning and Teaching – the summer before she started her PGCE.

Role model

Monica remembers her favourite teacher, who would read stories that held everyone's attention, delivered Maths activities that were fun, and promoted sport with great eagerness. She had a clear, strong personality and was respected and not feared.

Motivation

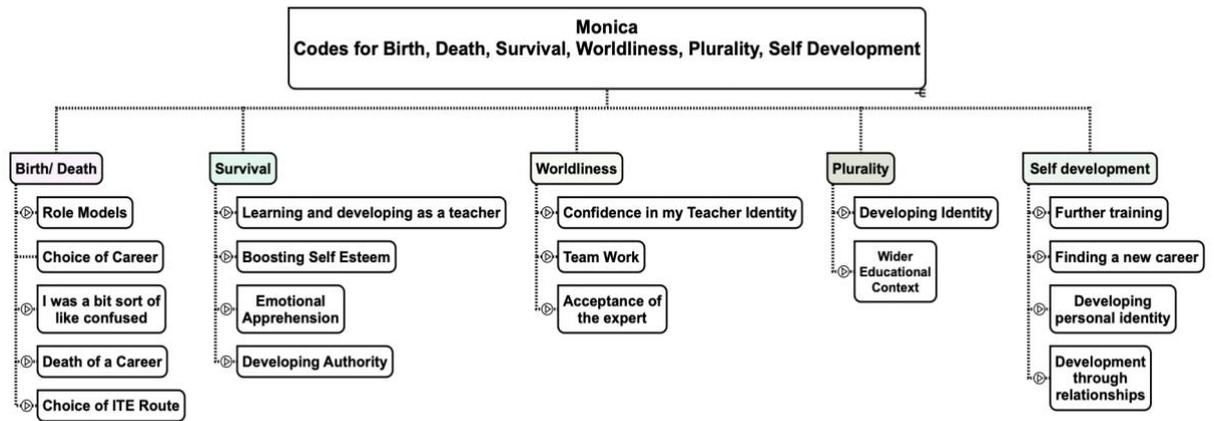
Monica wanted professional development; her role as a teaching assistant didn't seem to offer her the additional training and opportunities that she sought. Rather than staying in what she termed a stagnant role, she applied for the PGCE in order to follow a guided and academic route into teaching.

Flash-forward to ideal teacher

Monica wants to be a confident, approachable and welcoming teacher who can inspire children to learn and achieve. She is interested in finding ways to target each child's strengths and to how to develop these further.

2.2 Using Arendt's conditions to understand Monica's identity development

Figure 14. Overview of Monica's interview responses thematically coded using Arendt's conditions

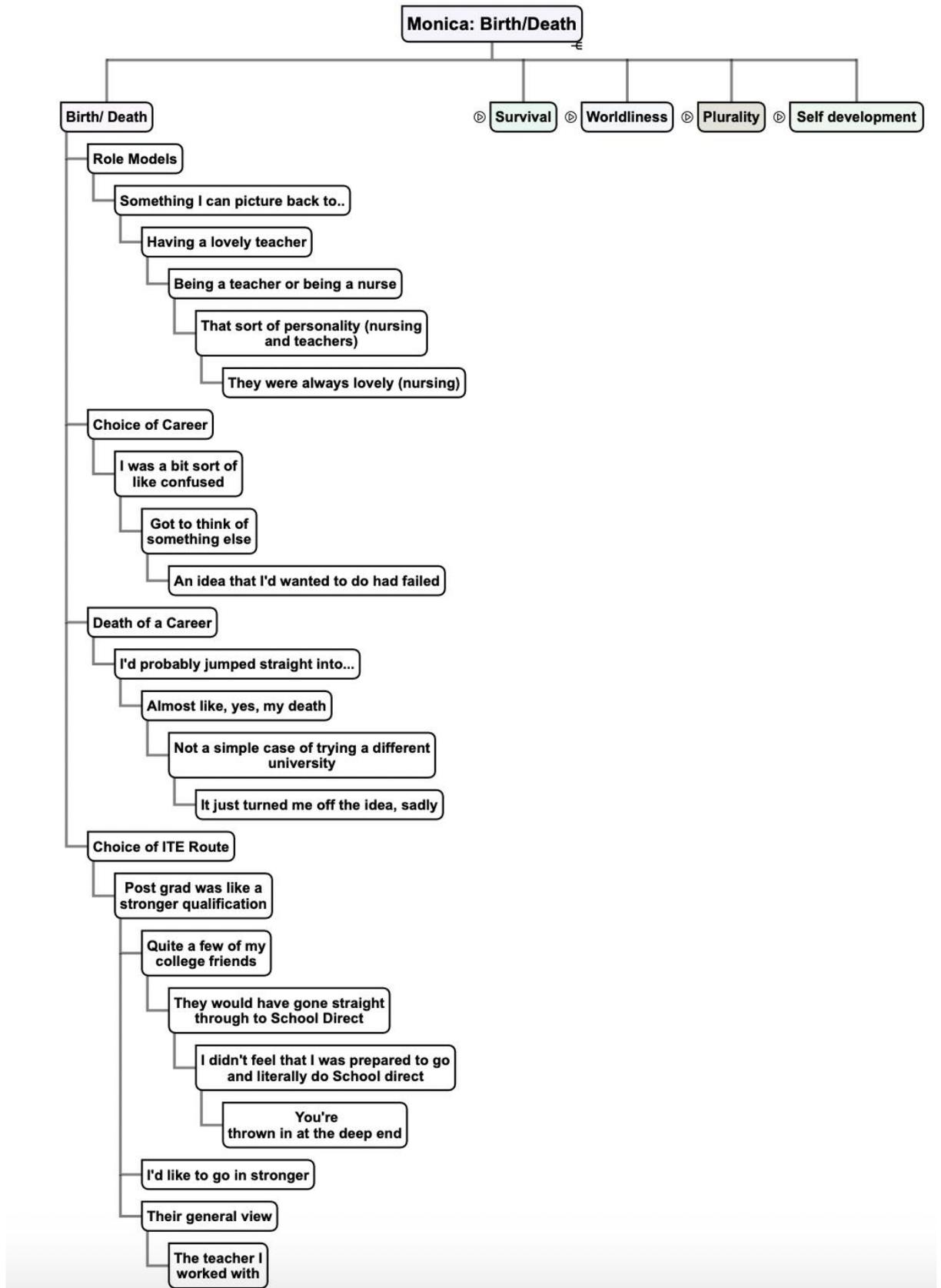


From Figure 14 above, we can see that, for Monica, these experiences were highly charged, real experiences that culminated with the beginning of her teacher education programme. There were high levels of emotional intensity. Confidence was a dominant issue for her, but she was keen to work as part of a team. Of the three trainees, she had the widest formal knowledge of education before her teacher education.

2.2.1 Monica: Birth/Death

Birth/Death was a key theme for Monica, as identified in Figure 15 below. She found her way to teaching through consideration of role models and their personality traits, lived with the choices that she made, dealt with failure and refocused on teaching.

Figure 15. In vivo codes for Monica: *Birth and Death*



Role models

As you can see in Figure 15 above, Monica's role models were based in memory (*Something I can picture back to*), and that she recalled teachers and nurses as being "lovely." At this stage, she did not make any distinction between nursing or teaching, as she talked of "*being a teacher or being a nurse*", although both careers are traditionally seen as the caring professions; it was this aspect that seemed to prevail in her preference of a career. There was evidence of a strong personal substantial self (Rodgers and Scott, 2008) dominating Monica's identity.

Choice and death of a career

Given that her choice of career was based on lack of hard knowledge and more on an emotive response towards nursing, Monica admitted that she had "*probably jumped straight into nursing*" in a rather incidental way. She talked about her nursing career as an "*idea*" rather than a vocation, and the struggle associated with being unsuccessful:

M: but then sadly I failed my second year and I was just finding it almost too hard ... it just totally turned me off the idea sadly.

Arendt warns of impulsive actions and their unintended consequences but Higgins (2010b: 289) sees the beauty of *action* in that it possesses three interconnected features: unpredictability, irreversibility and evanescence. Despite the unpredictability of Monica's nursing career and the fact that she could not erase the painful experience, which she classes "*almost, like, yes, my death*", the pain faded over time. This act of evanescence allowed her to step back and leave behind the difficult experience. Frost (2017) believes that the death of her nursing identity produced a "light that illuminates but only because it is over" (Frost, 2017: 3) and allowed Monica to consider her rebirth:

M: I suppose it would be the rebirth being becoming a teaching assistant because after the death of my nursing career, it was like I was depressed and upset about the fact that an idea that I'd wanted to do had failed and it wouldn't be a simple case of trying a different university.

LM: It was just you said no, it's not for me.

M: So, then the rebirth of seeing a teaching assistant role and seeing how that goes on and then the view of further going along. That's how I'd probably see it.

However, she did see it as a casting-off, of the previous identity. There was evidence of a dilemma, a search for a new career, which she expressed as "*got*

to think of something else.” This was still based on personality traits, and her understanding of education still founded on her own school days. Throughout the discussion of nursing and retraining, Monica described the impact on herself. She did not use the word ‘career’; she gave the impression she was working at a very tentative level, having had a painful experience and was uncertain about whether she could be successful in a new direction. Monica did not find it easy to change direction or embark on a new course of action; Betz (1992: 392) believes that with each *natality* permanence and security are threatened.

The fact that Monica chose to work at a local primary school suggested that being close to home gave her a sense of security. Once more settled, she embarked on her degree as a direct result of her “*rebirth*” as she herself called it. However, not once did she mention working with children. This contrasted with her introductory life story, where she talked about becoming “*a confident, approachable and welcoming teacher who [could] inspire children to learn and achieve.*” This change suggests that, in the three months between the life story and the face-to-face interview, Monica’s identity had become more introspective as she gained pre-service experience.

Choice of ITE route

Monica made an informed decision regarding the choice of PGCE, School Direct and SCITT routes into teacher training, which seemed to be in direct contrast to her jump into nursing. She had talked to teachers to get a “*general view*” of the routes into teaching, and arming herself with knowledge, devised a rationale for her choice:

M: the SCITT is the third choice and when we’re hearing all about these opportunities, and I was talking about it with my work colleagues, SCITT was always sort of seen as a very sort of lower qualification and that you’re thrown in at the deep end. That was always seen as a negative idea of ooh I don’t think I’ll go for SCITT then unless of course my student friend, her school that she was working with was going to take her on as a teacher, so therefore she already knew the environment and the working relationship, whereas that wasn’t going to be for me. My school was only employing TAs, they weren’t employing teachers.

LM: So, the route that you’ve chosen, do you think it’s had an effect on what kind of teacher you are?

M: I think so yes, because I’ve learnt so much about different things and things that I can relate to from my course from my degree ...

Monica needed to proceed into her new career with caution; five months into the PGCE, she felt the security that knowledge provided and could safely link

this back to her degree, which had been a major success for her at a time that had felt almost like a bereavement. But her use of the word “*stronger*” implies the call to be a more confident young woman.

2.2.2 Monica: Survival

In Monica’s *survival* (Figure 16 below) there are signs that the PGCE course has improved her confidence, and that this has been beneficial in how she perceived herself to be developing as a pre-service teacher. The emotional dimension is still apparent, and she shows awareness of having to develop presence and authority to succeed in her next placement. On one level, Monica is trying to work out how to survive her second placement, but Hargreaves (2000: 155) warns of the unsustainability of pre-service teachers constantly relying on survival strategies.

However, there is also an underlying current to Monica’s discussion. She discusses knowledge, and has a support network in place, but these appear to be an act of bravado; she talked lightly, and she hid behind the image of the teacher she would like to be, as the fear and anxiety crept into the discussion, as detailed in Figure 16 below.

Figure 16. In vivo codes for Monica: *Survival*



Learning and developing as a teacher

The theoretical underpinning of the PGCE course was what made the PGCE the “*stronger qualification*” that Monica was looking for; she saw herself as a learner first, explaining that “*I’ve learnt so much about different things*”, then, as a beginner teacher, which gave her a hook upon which to hang her classroom experience. She described it as “*I’ve been able to relate back to this.*”

She talked of “*deliverance of my prior knowledge*” from her degree and work as a teaching assistant, and the words that she used had almost a religious reverence, stressing the importance she placed on knowledge. The university-school-university pattern of the PGCE course gave her time to make the links to prior learning and experiences. Monica stated that she wanted to “*write that down*” and make sure “*it was the correct time*” to do things. However, she did not comment on subject knowledge; it was still about how she felt about herself, and how well equipped she was.

But it is possible that her anxiety focused her thinking on herself, which limited her ability to recognise what was going on around her. Boym (2009: 125) refers to Arendt’s two forms of judgement (within and without) and regards ‘within’ as an introspective way of thinking that can join imaginatively (‘without’) to the world around us. In this way, Monica may have become too introspective in her thoughts, and thus distanced and removed from the public world.

Boosting self-esteem

Monica felt reassured by the successful completion of her first placement. She drew support from her friends, and the comments they had made about her successful first placement. She said she was “*able to seek help*”, with “*just friends to contact.*” There was a lot of self-recognition occurring in Monica’s personal narrative; she was well-aware of her low self-esteem, the need to be kind to herself, and not to be too self-critical:

M: Yes, and like people have all be saying you’ve done it now, you’ve got this that and the other and I’m like it’s self-fulfilling and confidence because I’ve always been like oh sorry, oh no I didn’t manage that.

LM: So that self-esteem has been boosted as well.

M: I always have to remind myself to pat myself on the back.

However, Monica was aware that the class teacher on her first placement had recognised her fear, caution and perhaps her vulnerability, and had done her best to protect her, saying that “*She was sort of keeping me at bay just to not scare me.*” This recognition by the teacher made Monica feel judged. She was not at all certain if she had been accepted in light of her past, and its impact on her (Rose, 1996).

Emotional apprehension and authority

Despite the sense of doing well on her first placement, Monica’s apprehension and anxiety appeared to have increased, possibly due to having to cope in different school settings, commenting, “*You have to work with the other school settings; I wanted to experience a big school.*” She knew she needed to be open to change but showed anxiety about being scared and not in control which she explained as “*Maybe SE2 will try and scare me*”; her choice of words indicated that she had already adopted a passive position. Her anxiety increased as she tried to light-heartedly talk about her new placement. She was aware of the differences that existed between schools, and was mindful of schools’ reputations; Monica confirmed this by talking about the “*good things and bad things*” she had heard about schools.

Given her history, Monica was worried about the possibility of things not working out. She believed that the route to success was to develop her presence as a teacher: “*so **you** know that you’re in charge* [her emphasis].” Seeking authority and status was a way to establish confidence, and, to Monica, these would give her the skills to make her way into Arendt’s public sphere. This relates to Monica’s role model in her life story who she said “*had a clear, strong personality and was respected and not feared.*” This was the beginning of Monica’s teacher persona, fortified by knowledge and a desire for authority.

2.2.3 Monica: Worldliness

Monica’s ideas on *worldliness* were still about how she saw herself, but now extended to include how others viewed her, as outlined in Figure 17 below.

Figure 17. In vivo codes for Monica: *Worldliness*



Confidence in my teacher identity

The threat of failure subsided at this point in Monica’s narrative, which allowed her to see beyond herself. Nixon (2001: 232) believes that *worldliness* gives “a kind of permanence, a home,” which is revealed when Monica begins to visualise her own classroom. She began to believe that she could succeed as a teacher, and allowed herself to develop visions of her own classroom: “*I can picture how I’d wish my classroom to be*”; she knew that she wanted it to be “*a welcoming setting ... providing help for all the children.*”

This was the first time in this interview that she had mentioned children or herself as a teacher, and confirmed comments in her initial life story. This began to appear as a notable self in her professional identity but one that was often obscured by her personal self. Monica was making a different professional journey from Will or Rebecca; her journey may indicate more need of the personal within teacher education in order that pre-service teachers can better understand themselves. It is worth remembering that Arendt placed importance on how individuals, of a diverse nature, make up the plural collective; continuing to stress the value of the individual may give the opportunity to think about professional identity in fresh ways together (d'Agnese, 2018).

Teamwork

Monica had very little confidence on which to base her social identity and her school relationships. She was aware of the strong interpersonal skills that she needed as a teacher, discussing “*knowing how to work with others*”, with “*good clear communication skills*”:

M: It would be, I suppose it would be all about my social skills, if that is the right method of socially viewing how I can work with others and try to get my view across, and needing for assistance or advice ...

However, Monica relied on the teacher that she knew “*so well*”, and she reverted to viewing staff as means of assistance and advice; rather than seeing herself as part of a team. She “*inhabited*” (Arendt, 1998: 7) the world of the school but in a distant way, holding back, watching “*how others would work.*” This distance prevented her from playing a full part in the school community, but Smith (2007: 44) explains that *worldliness* involves both attachment and detachment. Monica had displayed the detachment but had not yet found the ways in which she could ‘attach’, or become a closer part of the community.

Acceptance of the expert

Monica was conscious of the relationships on placement, particularly the expert-beginner dynamics. Unlike Will, Monica felt uncomfortable on her placement (Loughran, 2006) and she was aware of the influence held by the mentor teacher, recognising that they had the power to pass or fail, based on expert

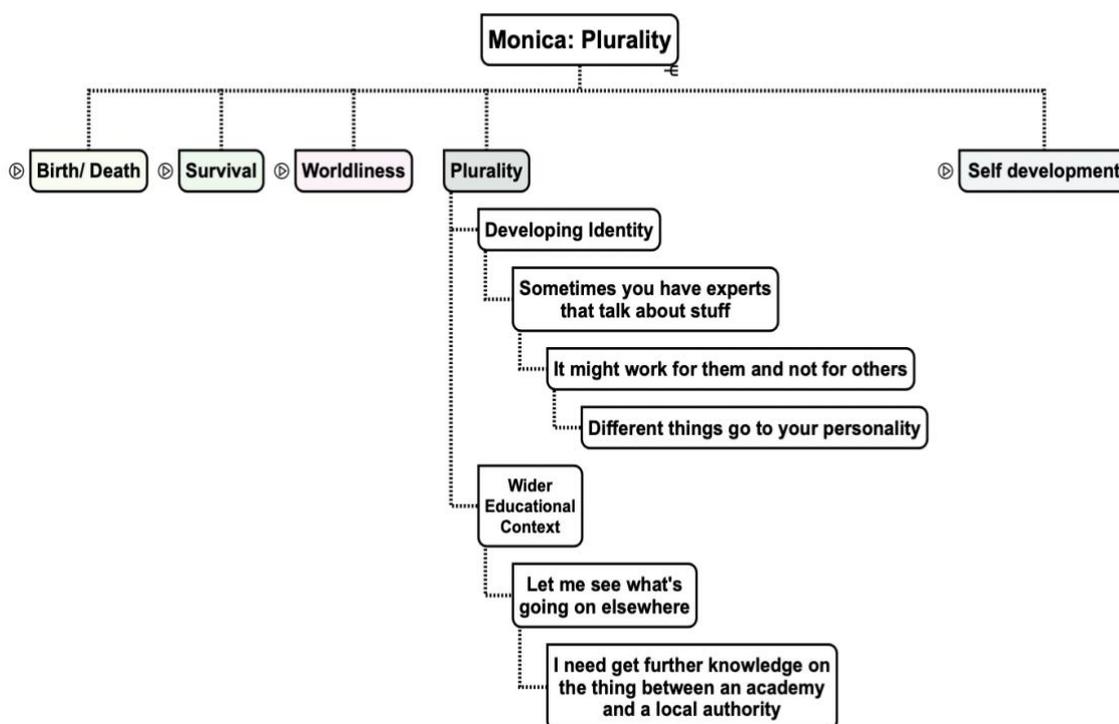
knowledge. She attempted to downplay this by saying “*It’s just getting a grander view*” but later deferred to their expertise: “*How **they** feel it’s going*” [her emphasis].

This deferral prevented her from developing her own professional responsibility. Despite others giving her freedom to think and act as a unique individual, she remained cautious and reticent in taking the lead. For Monica, *worldliness* provided a contrast between sharp light of the public arena and her private thoughts. According to Boym (2009: 117), the private space is there to “protect the darkness of the human heart” but Mahrtdt (2012) and Arendt (1998) emphasise the interplay between light and dark, where one cannot exist without the other. Monica could not survive in isolation; she needed to develop her trust and confidence in relationships with others. However, it was clear that her social-emotional identity (Elias et al., 1997) was not yet sufficiently developed to build effective relationships.

2.2.4 Monica: Plurality

Monica’s *plurality*, as seen below in Figure 18, was based on her need to gain wider knowledge, and so the *plurality* that Monica encountered was from a theoretical base, learning about practice and educational contexts. This was not what Arendt would truly call *plurality* as it lacked the social interaction, but it was *plurality-in-preparation*, in that it gave Monica time to reflect on the practice-based elements and working contexts that she might encounter.

Figure 18. In vivo codes for Monica: *Plurality*



Developing identity

Monica had a growing realisation that teachers might have their own ways of working, understanding that “*It might work for them and not for others*”, and showed insight in understanding that personality traits, values and beliefs affect a teacher’s choice of pedagogy or classroom management – “*Different things go to your personality.*” She had also learned that it would be unrealistic to get it right all the time. This wider viewpoint boosted her confidence in the classroom, knowing that teachers (and behavioural experts such as Nicola Morgan – see below) advocated such a stance:

LM: Did you find that with, the what was her name? Nicola Morgan?

M: Yes, it was amazing, I wrote down every idea that she thought. She said if it doesn’t work chuck it away and that was brilliant because sometimes you have experts that talk about stuff as if that is the only way to do it, what do you mean, what do you mean? And she was always like bin it if it doesn’t work for you anymore.

However, Monica's anxiety emerged in the repetition of the phrase, "*what do you mean*"; she was very keen to make sure she got things right, and reverted to making sure she wrote everything down.

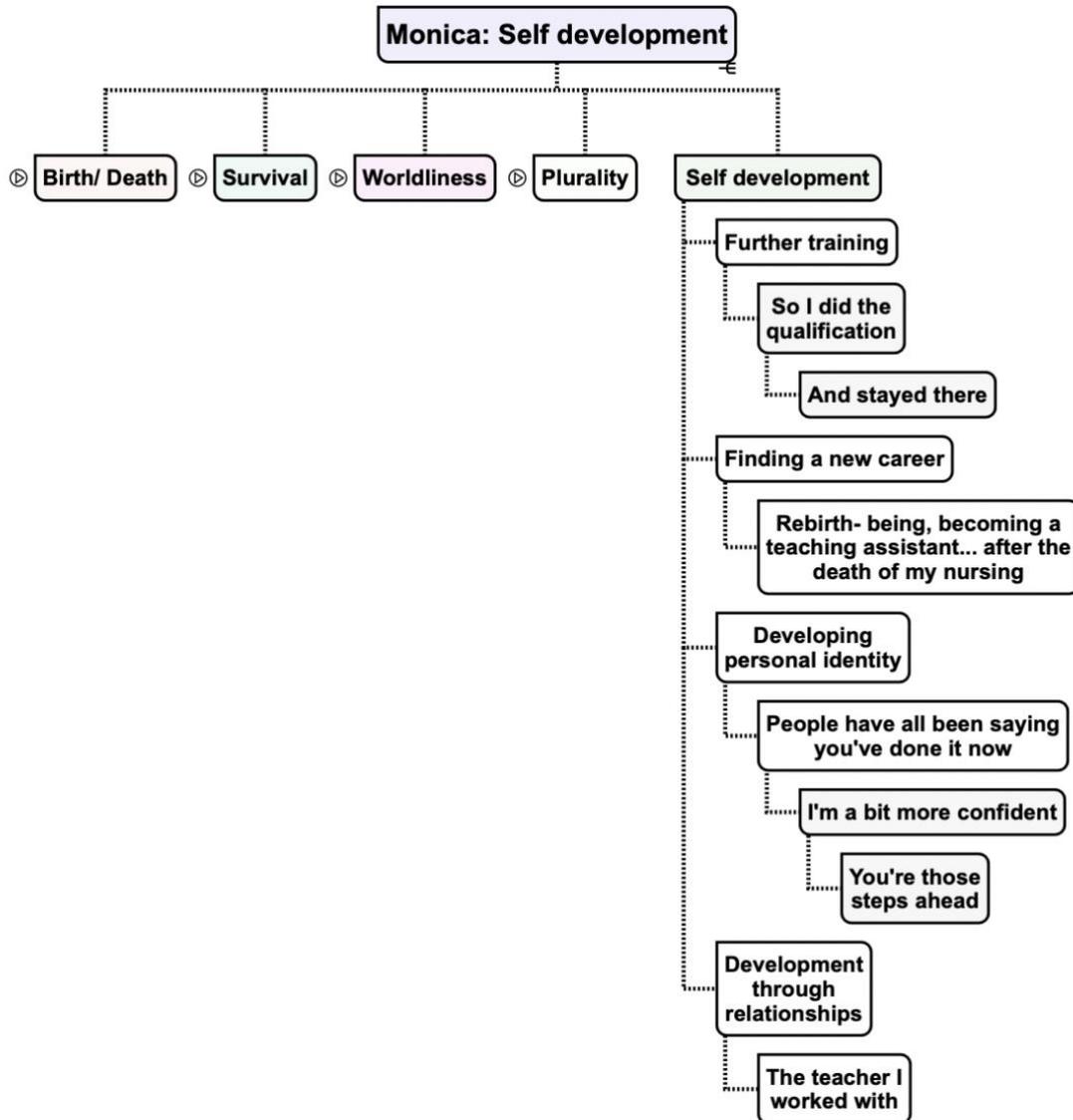
Wider educational context

Monica was keen to learn about the educational world outside the classroom by saying, "*Let me see what's going on elsewhere.*" She realised that she needed to inform herself further about the different kinds of schools that now existed as a result of government policy change; "*to get further knowledge on the thing between an academy and a local authority.*" (The two types of schools she referred to were: academies, who had opted to be removed from local authority funding and adopted self-governing; and local authority-funded and - governed schools.) This action suggested that Monica was genuinely interested in finding out about them, as another form of preparation, looking to understand the contextual factors that might affect her professional identity (Flores and Day, 2006).

Arendt discusses "spectators" (1998: 57) who watch and judge actors "so that those who are gathered around them know they see sameness in utter diversity." For the most part in this study, spectators are teachers who judge, and actors are pre-service teachers acting out their work as becoming-teachers. But Monica presented a different way of being a spectator. From her comments, it appeared that she wished to adopt the role of the spectator in watching, learning and judging the actors as their schools performed their daily actions. This was a way in which, as a pre-service teacher, she could inform herself of the possible places and ways of working that she may encounter as a teacher.

2.2.5 Monica: Self-development

Figure 19. In vivo codes for Monica: *Self-development*



Further training and finding a new career

From Figure 19 above, we can see that training and career were two aspects that were closely interlinked for Monica. Her work as a teaching assistant enabled her to perceive the change of direction as a rebirth where she talked of “*being, becoming a teaching assistant ... after the death of my nursing.*”

The primary school and its community became a safe haven, acting as the “common theatre to bring about a space for self-realization, freedom and co-

creation” (Boym, 2009: 117). The self-realisation that Monica gained from being a teaching assistant led to further qualification and into a teaching career. Monica accepted that this process had given her time and a place to decide on her next steps. What may be considered unusual in this internalisation of her thoughts is that it occurred in a semi-public space. This was a space where Monica was not as visible as she would have been as a student nurse in a ward or a pre-service teacher in a classroom. Arendt’s belief that society has taken over the public realm (1998: 400) in a non-political manner has been confirmed by Monica’s actions.

Developing a personal identity

As with any pre-service teacher, Monica’s personal life had formed a large part of her identity. She relied on friends and family boosting her confidence and low self-esteem, relaying that “*People have been saying you’ve done it now*” and comparing her progress as a pre-service teacher to that of a trainee nurse where she talked of “*those steps ahead.*” As a result, her personal identity was based on recovering from a *death*.

Development through relationships

Monica found difficulty in establishing relationships with people of strong views but this may well be a “habit of thinking” that Shaughnessy and Boerst (2017) refer to, that needs to be unlearned, or built upon, as part of her career and identity change.

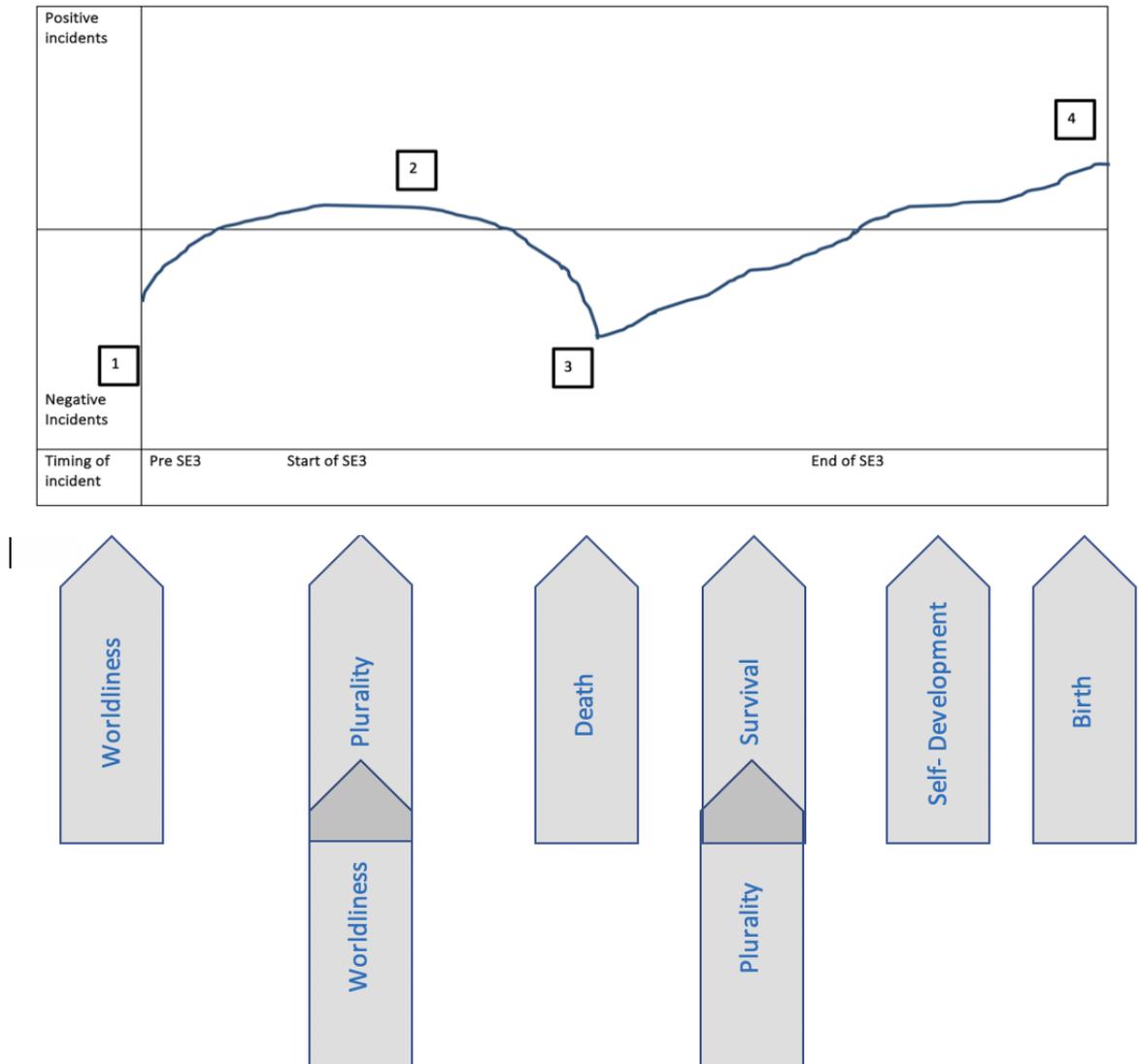
M: The teacher I worked with was a huge union rep and all this stuff with no academies, so I'd always hear strong views, very biased views ...

She did not like the overtly one-sided political view of her first mentor teacher but she was experienced enough to know that such things were the views of one teacher, in one school; in her life story, she recalled her favourite teacher who was fun and eager. Nonetheless, the overt political messages made her feel uncomfortable and this would have implications for her future relationships with staff.

2.3 Monica: Critical incident interview (Narrative 2, July 2017)

Outlined in Figure 20 are the four key episodes that formed Monica’s critical incident timeline. In light of the critical incident discussion, Monica labelled Arendt’s conditions underneath the timeline.

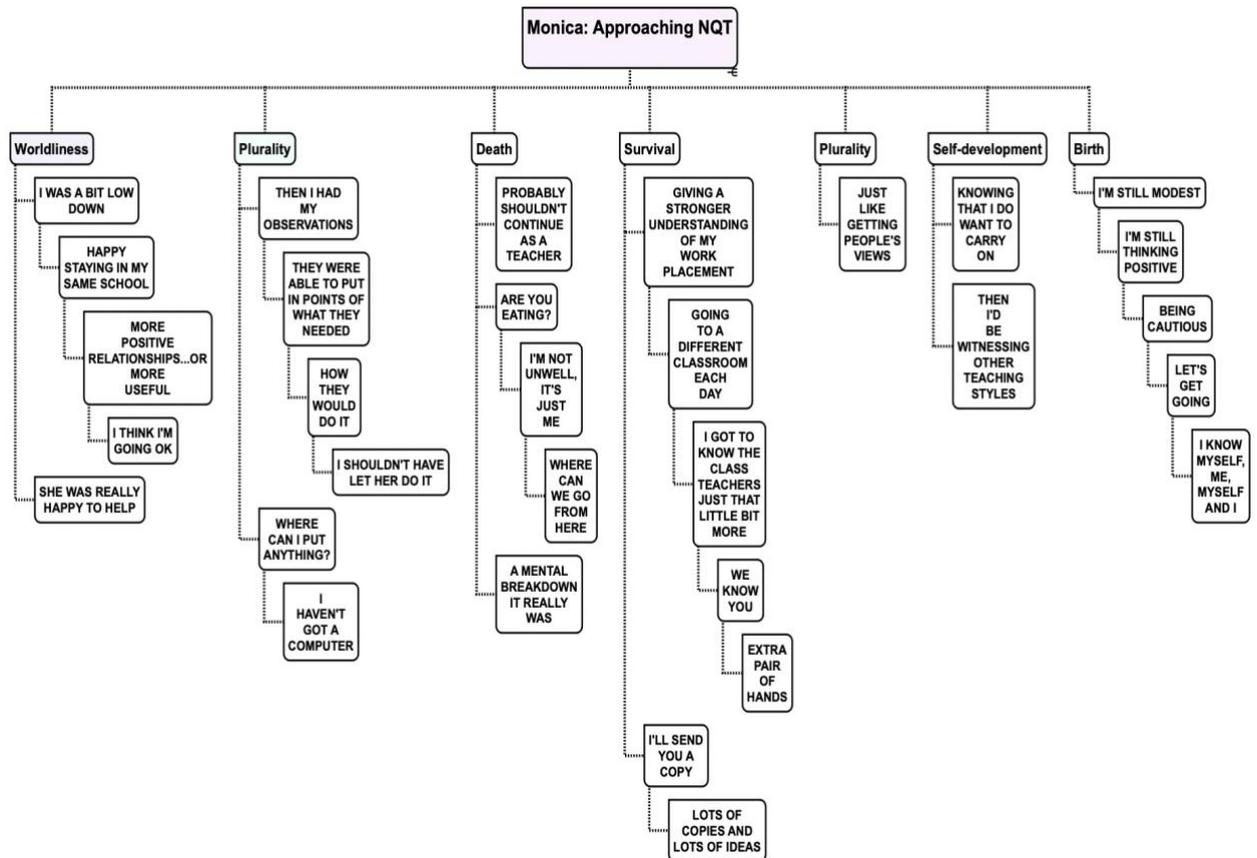
Figure 20. Monica’s critical incident timeline and Arendtian labels



2.3.1 Monica: Approaching Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT)

As a result of the discussion and the labels placed on the timeline, a new diagram was created (Figure 21 below), detailing Monica's understanding of Arendt's conditions as they applied to her. As with the previous mind maps, this uses her words verbatim.

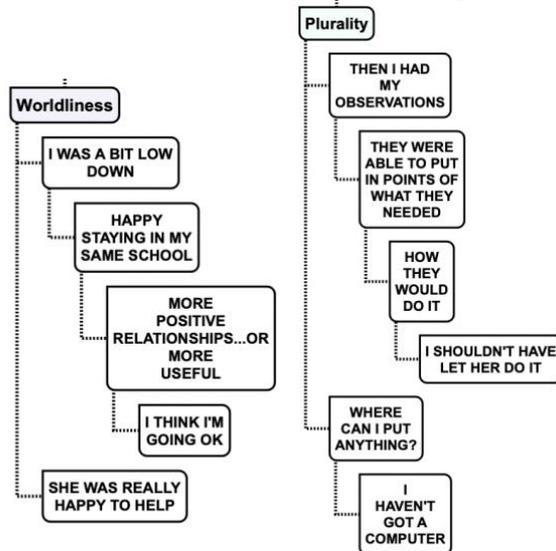
Figure 21. Monica: Approaching NQT



Monica successfully completed her second placement but with a bit of a struggle, and so the timeline began with a negative feel. Her initial discussion (Figure 20, Point 1 on the timeline above) focused on her final placement being in a Year 5 class, an age range that worried her. Despite this, she labelled it as having a *worldliness* aspect to it (Figure 22 below); she believed this placement would help her gain a wider understanding of the age range; she would be based in the same school, and, having been previously supported by a key member of staff, she looked upon it favourably.

Monica appreciated the support from school staff (Figure 20, Point 2) and this gradually allowed her to feel part of the team, and to be able to make her own decisions, in light of advice from her mentor teacher about her practice. For those reasons, she placed *worldliness* and *plurality* labels on her timeline together.

Figure 22. Monica's *Worldliness and Plurality*



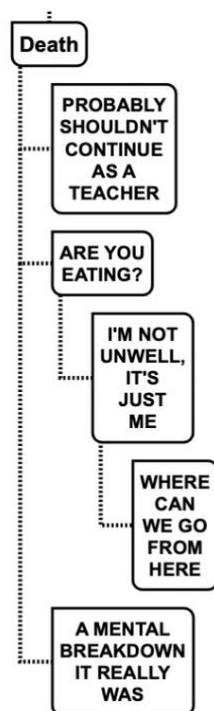
Soon after, joint observations of her teaching by university and school staff questioned her ability to teach at the required level. She believed that her voice had not been heard, a concern raised in a previous interview, and felt that the ‘experts’ had told her how they would teach her lessons. Clandinin et al. (2015) believe that problems or tensions between the individual and contextual factors may end in unsatisfactory completion of a teaching career. Despite identifying *plurality* on the timeline, Monica found difficulty in adopting a pluralistic perspective. Feeling side-tracked, she commented that the classroom arrangements had been insufficient to support her in the placement and thus she had not experienced a sense of belonging. Reflecting on the experience, Monica felt that she should have stood up for herself.

Keladu (2015: 78) explains that Arendt’s views of *plurality* and *worldliness* allow for “subjective judgement to be contrasted with the possible judgement of others” to provide a universal understanding. With Monica, this universal understanding did not materialise; the views of the school staff and the university tutor about her teaching left her feeling ostracised. Within true pluralistic dialogue, each contributor is unique (Mahrtdt, 2012); and their voices should be heard.

Monica's low self-esteem and high anxiety may initially have led her to appear less suited to teaching than other pre-service teachers. But Biesta (2011: 142) warns of the danger of pinning down citizens to a civic identity, and the same can be said of judgements made of pre-service teachers and their expected identity.

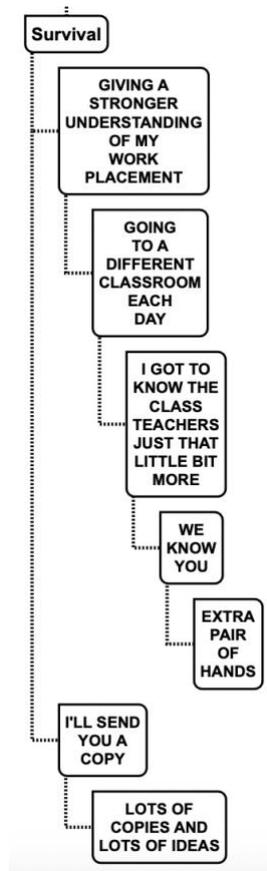
Monica reported that staff had decided that she "*probably shouldn't continue as a teacher*"; concerns were raised about the toll the placement was taking on her physical well-being. Monica felt that this perceived judgement of her vulnerability did not reflect how she felt in herself. Smith (2007: 44) advises that the danger of working lies in being judged by others; staff had made their decision about Monica despite Monica seeking support in order to complete the placement. This lack of recognition, as Zembylas (2003) suggests, can bring about psychological damage. The placement was terminated, which Monica labelled as a *death* (Figure 23 below). In the interview, she discussed this event in a very frank manner; she considered it as another failure that ended in a mental health issue (Figure 20, Point 3).

Figure 23 Monica's *Death*



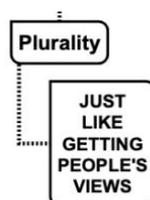
Hong et al. (2017) would argue that the disequilibrium itself in her professional identity was not enough to bring about change; the motivation came from Monica returning to her school as a volunteer to gain additional experience (Figure 24 below).

Figure 24. Monica's *Survival*



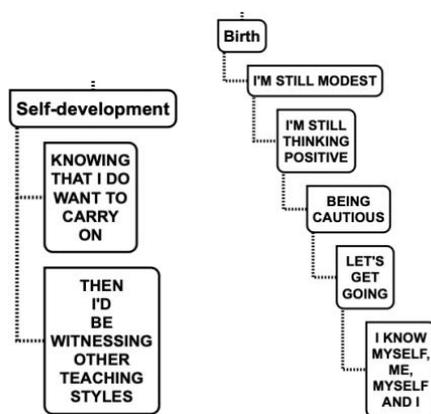
Yet again, this change of status removed the pressure she had previously felt to succeed. She survived through the support of other trainees' confirmation about her ability to be a teacher, and by sharing their ideas which echoed her earlier thirst for knowledge (Figure 25 below). She effectively integrated her personal and role-based identities (Sluss and Ashforth, 2007) in search of a more cohesive professional identity.

Figure 25. Monica's *Plurality*



As Monica considered recent events and made contingency plans, she began to develop the capacity to deal with challenges that lay ahead (Mentis et al., 2016). As Karlsson (2013) suggests, trying to make sense of her experiences of teacher education and relate them to her future expectations of herself as a teacher was a complex and demanding process. Affirmations about her ability, and knowing more about her future placement, built layers of confidence; she labelled these as aspects of self-development on her timeline. *Self-development*, outlined in Figure 26 below, was preparation for *action*, and drew upon Monica's resilience. The second chance to be a teacher through a re-sit placement acted as a rebirth (Figure 20, Point 4).

Figure 26. Monica's *Self-development* and rebirth



Monica was humble about her own abilities but with a cautious and positive attitude. *Death* had not scared her as it had before. Monica accepted that with *death* came a fresh start, and she had returned with renewed vigour and commitment to her teacher education, and with a certainty of who she was.

2.3.2 Monica's perception of her identity as a teacher

These are the words from the final interview related specifically to teacher identity that were re-organised into a commentary. Monica agreed that this accurately reflected her views.

SE1 [School Experience 1] was a nice village school that I'd worked in before I really prefer that, I'm gauged to that scale, I believe. ... I went to that primary school [as a pupil] and then came back and then worked there and she was still working there, and at first it was a bit like 'Oh it's my teacher.' It was lovely, further along as I worked with her, I realised that 'She's really a role model to me.' Sort of a bit later on, I realised 'That's why teaching's good, that's the personality that I really admire.' The teacher you all remember.

When I got to the second one, I was like 'This is big.'

It's always confidence that I need to bring further forward, reflecting back on practice, because I've not conducted much practice, so I'm always learning new things, which is the whole teaching view, exactly. Sometimes I've come to children that are just stuck in the mud that won't go forward, they don't want to go forward and I'm like 'I'm running out of ideas.' You have to call out to other teachers about what they've done, or teachers from their previous years.

I think I'm okay at delivering a lesson, once I know really clearly in my head what it is I want to achieve, in the LOs [Learning Objectives] and success criteria. Seeing it in the children, that they enjoy the activity. So, if I've planned a lesson and I think 'This is going to go well' and it does, then it's like 'Yes! We had a fun lesson and we learnt those things.'

You never want to be their friend, but you want to know what things they enjoy. Seeing how much lessons can be fun, they don't have to be SATS related ... They're paying attention to me as well, that's the crucial thing. You get the positive relationships, the respect of one listening to the other. I'd almost prefer to be in Lower Key Stage 2 [7-9yr olds], just because sometimes the curriculum overflows my head ... and some parts of the curriculum are so unappealing, 'Oh was that parenthesis, oh that's lovely let's do a lesson on that, shall we?'

There are so many things in the educational system that you could be brilliant at, and you could do this, and flourish at that, but it doesn't mean you have the answer to everything, I know myself: me, myself and I.

2.3.3 *What has changed in her identity?*

Monica experienced a *death* during her teacher education, but displayed “the capacity to act” (Arendt, 1998: 236) in preparing for her re-sit placement, which Arendt believes shows the “greatness of human power.” There was a sense of hope and optimism to her that had not been present before, which Estola (2003) considers to be important to the experiences of pre-service teachers.

Monica’s anxieties lessened as she progressed through her teacher education. The use of emotional and intense language decreased and by the end of the year she showed greater personal confidence and self-assurance. Through each ‘regeneration’, she became less impulsive. Her mental health appeared outwardly to be more positive; there were signs of resilience, determination and an acceptance of responsibility of her own professional development.

In her life story, Monica identified personality as an important component of a teacher’s identity, and this remained so to an extent, but was now supported by professional understanding. She felt more comfortable about her classroom authority, in the practicalities of delivering lessons, and in seeking support. In addition, she had become comfortable in not knowing everything. She lessened her focus on theoretical knowledge in favour of developing her professional practice in the school context. Monica had identified herself as a teacher and this was confirmed by her fellow pre-service teachers. She had chosen to ignore the lack of recognition by teachers in school, who had brought her placement to an early conclusion. Her determination to complete her third placement acted as motivation to continue. Monica’s future identity was confirmed, but the timescale of her professional development had been an individual one, and very much related to that which had occurred in her ‘past’ life/lives. Reid (2011) asserts that pre-service teachers need more time in school to become more confident in their teaching skills. This additional time in school suited Monica but may not be a model that would suit all pre-service teachers; this calls for greater flexibility in teacher education programmes, where possible, to respond to individual needs.

Her interpersonal relationships improved over the year; she realised she needed to work with, and learn alongside, others, rather than watching them from a distance. Working with little or no pressure, she worked as part of a team; there was an acceptance and sharing of values and behaviours that

enabled her social identification (Koutouzis and Spiriadou (2017)), allowing Monica to be a core member of the community.

As Monica moved out of survival mode, her teaching became politically important in Arendtian terms, as it now focused on the children; Higgins (2010b: 399) reminds us that Arendt views the pupils as those who invigorate and renew the world; the teacher is an educator, “acting in concert” (Arendt, 1998: 161) with the pupils, to educate them about the world.

In addition, Monica’s organisational identity was informed by her experience of schools. She was able to confirm that she preferred small schools, and remained cautious in working with staff who expressed strong opinions, as demonstrated in her first interview where she discussed the politically informed teacher, and in her second interview when talking about the staff who had withdrawn the placement. However, this seemed to contradict the preference she expressed in her life story about her role model having a “*clear, strong personality*.” This change of perspective suggests that Monica has renegotiated her professional identity, and has left behind the “untested” parts (Chong et al., 2011; Watson, 2006) that she brought with her to her teacher education. However, leadership and management in the organisations were not mentioned; this is not surprising, given that pre-service teachers work mainly in a smaller community of practice related to their class and teacher. Instead Monica focused her thoughts on the curriculum and the assessment landscape.

In relation to her subject and pedagogical knowledge, Monica ended the year finding the Key Stage Two curriculum *overwhelming*; she was not impressed by its content. She critically reflected on a curriculum that was assessed by standardised tests, and that failed to promote a love of learning. Her professional perspective had evolved sufficiently to appreciate learning from the children’s experience. Monica gathered her professional identity around her as an object, working outwards from her personal anxieties to the wider aspects of classroom practice. Importantly, she sought to develop her relationships with colleagues and began to understand the workings of a team; this emphasises Monica’s shift to a relational identity that, as Benwell and Stokoe (2011) suggest, blends her personal uniqueness with her need to belong to a collective group.

3. Rebecca

3.1 Rebecca: Life story (Narrative 1, October 2016)

Characters and contextual setting

Rebecca's family is a close-knit extended family group, with a strong work ethic, driven not for the money but by the things they love doing. The family has a strong Catholic faith, and the family cohesion is strengthened by their shared love of activity and sport.

Flashback

Rebecca attended Catholic schools in Wales for her primary and secondary education. She completed a degree in physical education at a Welsh university. Rebecca used to work as a teaching assistant in a local school.

Role model

Rebecca had a secondary school PE teacher whose incredible sense of humour, her authority and her caring consideration she greatly admired. She was the sort of teacher that children wanted to do well for, just to make her proud.

Motivation

Rebecca chose teaching as a career because she has had role models that she aspired to be like. She decided to do a PGCE because she felt it would help her to help children experience the high-quality education she had had. It has been helpful to have a brother who is a recently qualified teacher, and she hears of his experiences as an international teacher in Qatar.

Flash-forward to ideal teacher

Rebecca hopes that her pupils will trust her, will come and speak to her when they are worried, and that she will be able to transfer her love of learning to the children that she teaches.

3.2 Using Arendt's conditions to understand Rebecca's identity development

Figure 27. Overview of Rebecca's interview responses thematically coded using Arendt's Conditions

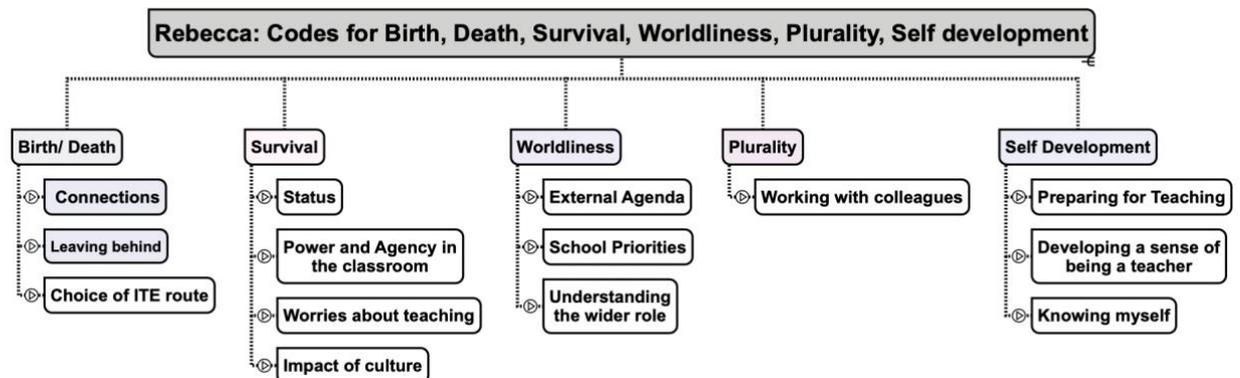
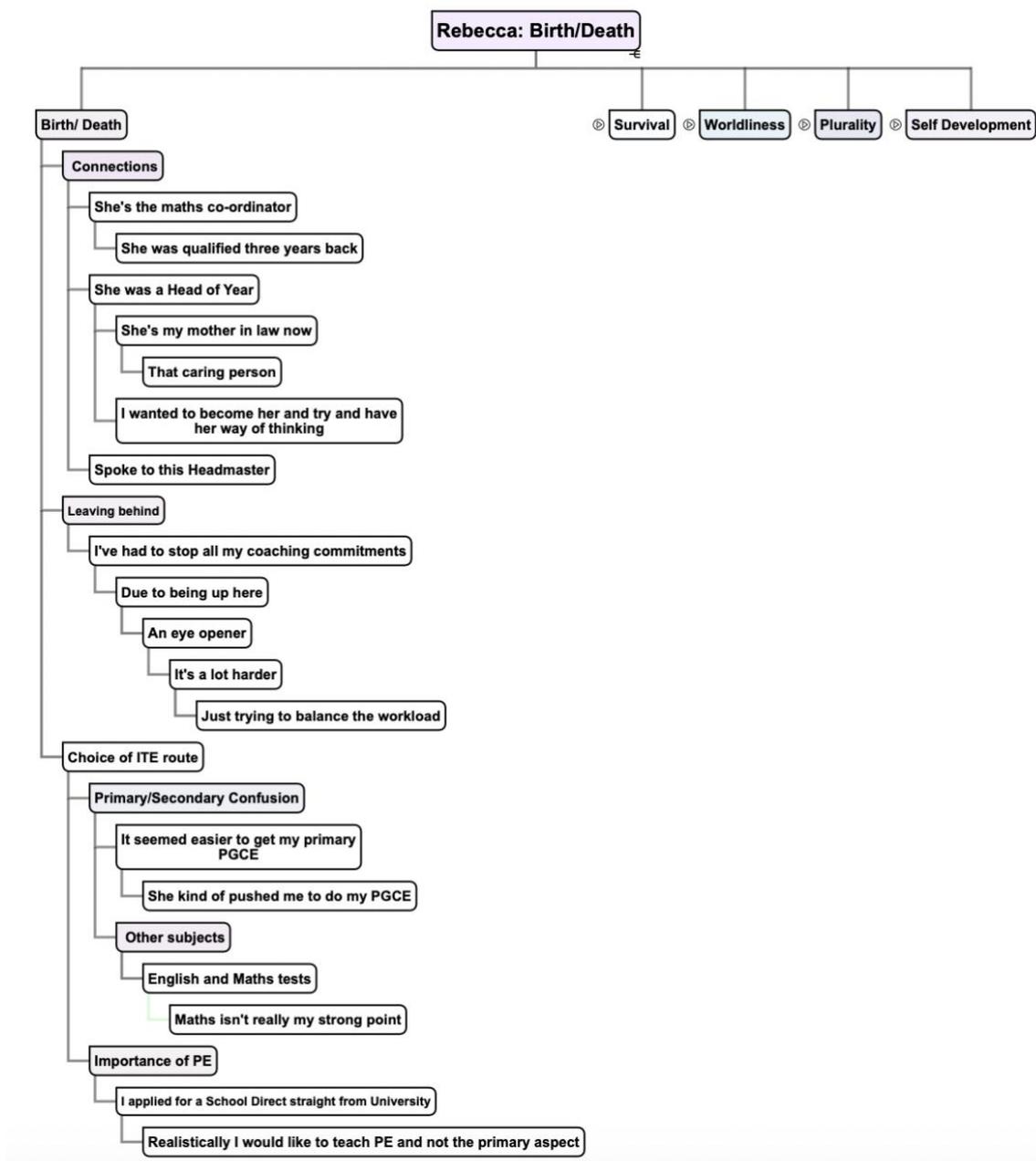


Figure 27 (above) indicates that there was uncertainty and some confusion in Rebecca's route to teacher education, as well as a real sense of leaving things behind, which is outlined in *Birth/Death*. There were issues related to status and belonging, and Rebecca struggled to balance the workload. Despite her experience as a teaching assistant, Rebecca took some time to understand the wider role of the teacher, but had a realistic sense of what relationships with colleagues could be like. As Rebecca engaged with the discussion process there was a real sense of personal and professional development emerging from this interview.

3.2.1 Rebecca: Birth/Death

Figure 28. In vivo codes for Rebecca: *Birth/ Death*



Connections

As her life story suggested, Rebecca enjoyed becoming part of a cohesive community. For this reason, and based on her experience, she appreciated the organisational hierarchy of schools, indicated by the fact that she commented on “*She’s the Maths co-ordinator*”; “*She was a Head of Year*”; “*Spoke to this headmaster*” and strategically sought the right people that could help her in her career choice: a recently qualified teacher, a middle manager, and a head teacher. Having been highly influenced by the PE teacher at her comprehensive in Wales, previously identified in her life story (“*I wanted to become her and try*

and have her way of thinking”), Rebecca also recognised the teacher’s approachability, in that “*she was the person I would just go and speak to*” when anything was wrong at school. This was reiterated multiple times.

R: So, I was in comprehensive school and my PE teacher, she basically was my role model ... So, as I got up the school, I started to then become her understudy coach to help the little ones to give her a bit of help because she was a head of the year and senior management, she had a lot on. So, I started to help out on dinner times and after school helping out.

This relationship enabled Rebecca to understand the pressures of a teacher. Rebecca’s engagement to her role model’s son softened the boundaries between working relationships and personal ones. The personal qualities she outlined in her life story still featured as an important attribute, in being “[*T*]hat caring person”, and she identified closely with relationships in her personal life. She showed me a picture of the family:

R: So that’s Stacey, my mother-in-law and that’s her husband who has had the accident and then the one at the back is Gethin and that’s his brother and sister.

Becoming part of the family seemed important to Rebecca; Meehan (2002: 184) acknowledges Arendt’s acceptance of the family as the first important influence in self-identity, achieved through a private and sheltered existence. Her mother-in-law’s daughter may have been initially cautious, in that Rebecca commented, “*she seems to think that I’ve got more in common with her [the mother-in-law- than the daughter has.*” Through day-to-day interactions she accepted Rebecca; perhaps this was recognition of the ‘outsider’ coming into the family and she might not be classed as an outsider in the long term.

Leaving behind

Belonging was a key part of Rebecca’s status and personal identity. She had been known and accepted as a coach in Wales: “*I’ve had to stop all my coaching commitments*” but by leaving it behind, it had caused a loss, a *death*, leaving a large gap in her identity. Frost (2017: 4) asserts that the point of *death* acts as a summing-up of the previous life story, which can never be achieved the same way again. Rebecca blamed the move from Wales to England, but she did not become involved with any sports or coaching in her university town “*due to being up here.*” Instead, she used weekends to travel back to the family; her father-in law in Wales had suffered a serious accident and Rebecca was

going home each weekend to support the family. This prevented her from renegotiating her identity; Rebecca's professional identity was in stasis as she did enough to 'get by' until she returned to her family each weekend as she re-experienced her past but in an "irreversible way" (Butler, 2001: 23).

In addition, to the weekend travelling, Rebecca found teaching harder than expected; she saw it as "*an eye opener*", and realised it was "*a lot harder*" than she thought it would be. By mentioning that she was "*trying to balance the workload*", it was clear that Rebecca recognised the work pressure and the imbalance it created in her personal life, and she made particular reference to PE specialists who may have sports commitments outside school hours.

Choice of ITE route, primary/secondary confusion, other subjects and Importance of PE

There were additional factors that made Rebecca unsettled; she seemed to have allowed herself to be steered into teaching by a class teacher with whom she worked as a teaching assistant. "*She kind of pushed me to do my PGCE*":

R: So, I'd built up a relationship with her, so when I went into school to work, she kind of pushed me to do my PGCE; yeah, she did a three-year BA course in Carmarthen, so she was qualified three years back. She kept saying what you're doing you're doing too much just for a level 1, so you need to be doing something more.

LM: So, she was pushing.

R: Yeah, she was giving me, like right, these are the universities you need to have a look at.

Rebecca talked about which ITE route was easier, rather than the one, if any, that she actually wanted to follow. However, she was quite relaxed about it, stating that "*it seemed easier to get my primary PGCE.*" She relied on others to guide her.

R: Yeah, like realistically I would like to teach PE and not really teach the primary aspect but it seemed easier to get my primary PGCE and then go up [to teach secondary PE] than it would have me into a secondary and then think oh actually I don't really enjoy it, I'd have to convert down.

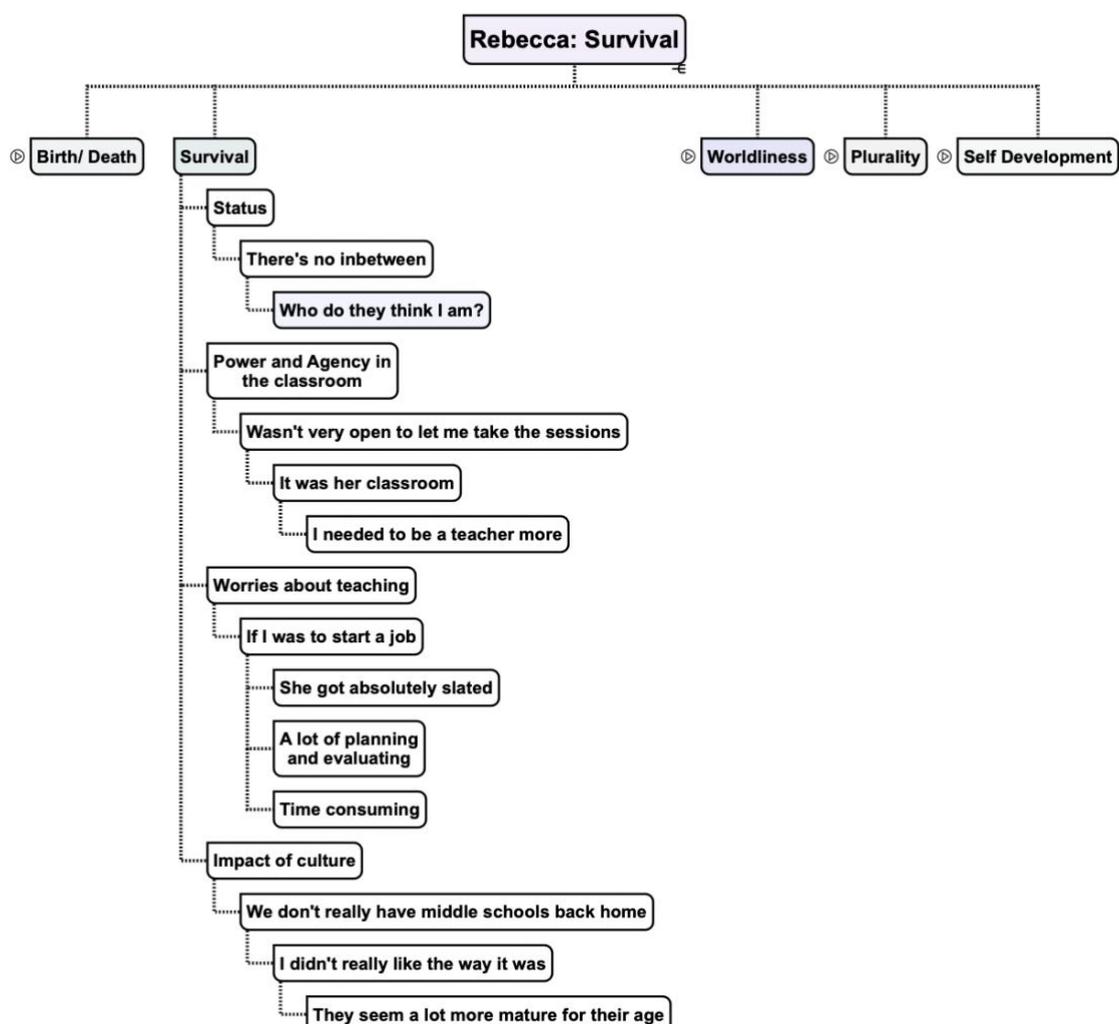
From her unsuccessful application to the secondary PE School Direct route Rebecca commented that her subject knowledge was not strong enough, particularly in "*English and Maths tests.*" This added further confusion as to why she thought a primary PGCE would be easier, needing subject knowledge for ten subjects. What emerged from this interview was that there was some

confusion regarding the application process for teacher education (Hilton, 2016) and that a year on a primary PGCE was not what she had intended.

3.2.2 Rebecca: *Survival*

Rebecca's *survival* was based on her individual self as she transitioned into a pre-service teacher from a sports coach. *Survival* focused on her status and anxieties (Figure 29 below).

Figure 29. In vivo codes for Rebecca: *Survival*



Status

Having lost her status as a coach and a teaching assistant, Rebecca sought recognition. She wanted others to recognise her, and she felt she should have been introduced as a pre-service teacher on her placement, which did not happen. She wanted to make known to the children that she was not a teaching

assistant, making the case that she was more than that by stating, “*There’s no in between.*” By not being introduced to the class, Rebecca was left wondering “*Who do they think I am?*” Her comments revealed that she was seeking clarity about her status; having made a bold move to leave her life behind in Wales, she needed acknowledgement of her new status as a pre-service teacher.

In this “sphere of not-yet given” (d’Agnese, 2018: 2), Rebecca found herself experiencing the loss of one identity but had not quite discovered and/or assimilated another identity; this was a troubling time for her. Neither the school nor the university was aware of this difficulty. D’Agnese (2018: 6) goes further to remind us that “there is no room for something like a private meaning” and Arendt’s *plurality* suggests that only by being together and revealing the self to others do we begin to understand who we are. However, if the others around Rebecca were not aware of this pre-liminal phase, they were not able to support Rebecca’s transition.

Power and agency in the classroom

Before her teacher education, Rebecca had favoured informal relationships and talked of the way her class teacher “*came over the house and helped me*” [improve her Maths skills] but these relationships became more formal as she became aware of the professional boundaries. For the first time, Rebecca became apprehensive in realising the power held by the class teacher and her own place as a pre-service teacher:

R: I was a bit reluctant to talk to her ... because it was her classroom ... My teacher wasn’t open to let me take sessions so for the first two weeks I was more of a TA role.

Rebecca was aware that she was a visitor in another teacher’s domain, knowing “*it was her classroom*”; she recognised the classroom dynamics and deferred to the authority of the expert (Benne, 1970). She had been made to feel like a peripheral member of the community because the class teacher held the power and “*wasn’t very open to let me take the sessions.*” Rebecca had adopted the practice of “strategic compliance” that Flores and Day (2006) identify as a means of compromise in finding professional identity. This left Rebecca feeling that she needed more teaching opportunities than she was being offered.

R: Then when it came to me delivering, I delivered one lesson before my tutor came in ... which didn't help me at all ... I needed to be a teacher more.

With her university tutor due to visit, tension and pressure built for Rebecca, which affected her relationship with her teacher. Teacher education frequently involves rebuilding relationships where tension and anxiety have been to blame; Nixon (2001: 228) suggests that in seeking *plurality*, “forgiveness” should be considered. But rather than reactive behaviours being deployed to resolve tensions, Martin and Pirbhai-Illich’s (2016) call to understand tensions and differences before they cause difficulties, would provide a proactive and alternative way of working.

Worries about teaching

The tensions between primary/secondary and School Direct/PGCE that emerged before beginning teacher education had not been resolved at the time of this interview, five months into the PGCE course. Worries started to surface about how to survive teaching, with the result that Rebecca doubted whether she would ever teach, making comments such as “*If I was to start a job.*” Her first teaching placement had highlighted the realistic nature of working within a school community, which may have illuminated differences between school and the sports communities; she felt that relationships in the school community were quite harsh, having noticed how a supply teacher, who according to Rebecca “*got absolutely slated.*” Rebecca may have found comfort in her relationship with the supply teacher, who was also a peripheral and temporary member of the community (Wenger, 2008); they may have recognised themselves in each other.

Despite these concerns, Rebecca appeared realistic about the time needed to do the job properly; she seemed quite accepting of it: “*I know it's time consuming and there's a lot of planning and evaluating and everything.*” However, when looking back at an earlier point in the interview, Rebecca had discussed trying to balance the workload, not just during the PGCE course but also as a future teacher with weekend sports coaching commitments. It was clear she still saw a sports element as part of the self-image that Beijaard (1995) refers to. The differing identities of sports coach and teacher appeared to have been in earlier conflict, but Rebecca appeared to have reconciled them, perhaps made easier by not doing any sports coaching at that point.

Impact of culture

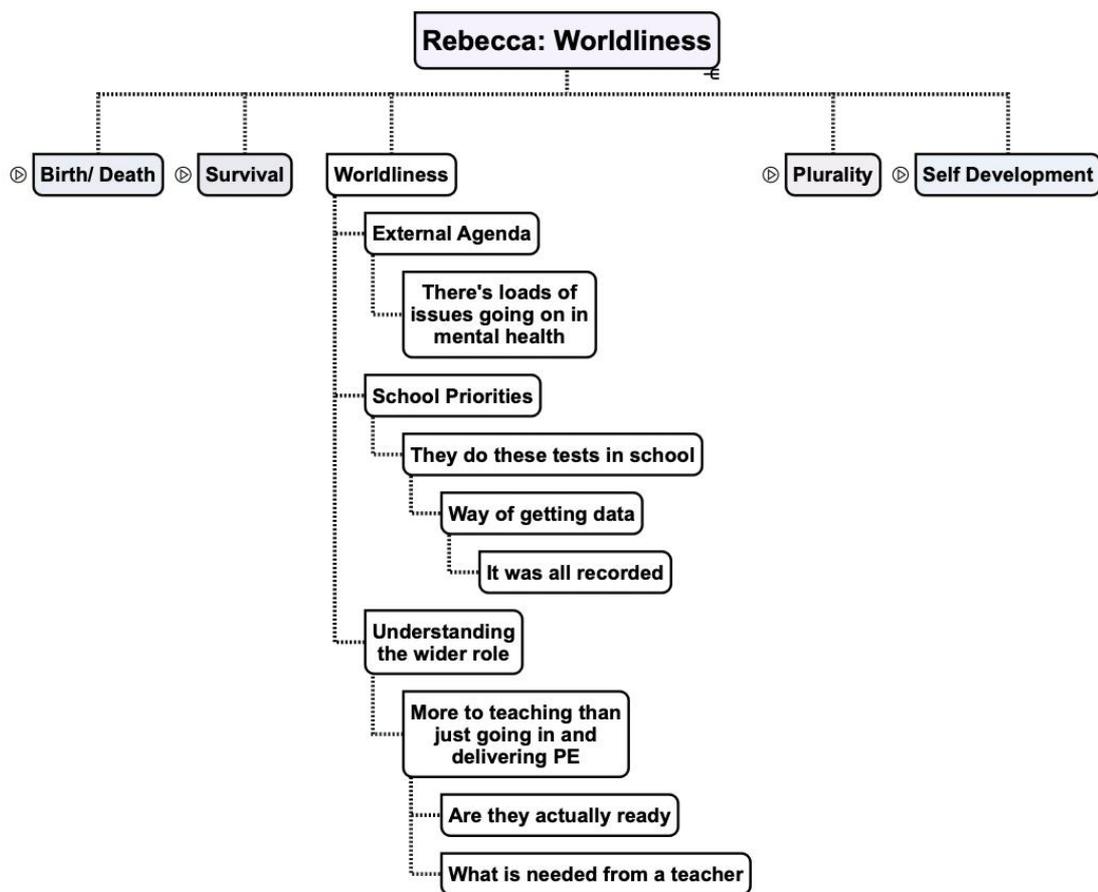
Rebecca found herself in an education system that was different to that in Wales. She explained that “*We don’t really have middle schools back home*”, and made clear her opinion of them: “*I didn’t really like the way it was.*” However, she did not seek to gain an understanding of the wider picture. She remained within her own culture, without any recognition of what she could bring to her placement, in terms of her own cultural capital. She saw only the differences and not the similarities, whereas Betz (1992: 232) believes that the “diversity and variety of humans is more fundamental than their unity.” A diverse perspective can achieve a common good: Goultchin talks of the liminal spaces between countries and cultures (2014: 288) and Rebecca, with support, could have brought a unique and distinctive insight to her professional development and to her teaching.

Rebecca realised after her first placement at a middle school [aged 9-13years] that it seemed more like a secondary school: “*they seem a lot more mature for their age.*” Despite her initial intention to be a secondary teacher, she was not at ease in this context. However, this may have been recognition of the fact that she was not fully committed to a teaching career, either in primary or in secondary. The emotional confusion (Zembylas, 2003) that Rebecca felt was not heard; there were opportunities available to her at the university but taking her concerns back to a different campus may have been too difficult during a busy teaching placement. In addition, she felt that the planned visit by her university tutor would be too late to make a difference.

3.2.3 Rebecca: Worldliness

Rebecca’s *worldliness* allowed her to understand the educational landscape. By the end of her first placement, she had a greater understanding of the role of the teacher, as shown in Figure 30 below.

Figure 30. In vivo codes for Rebecca: *Worldliness*



External agenda, school priorities, and understanding the wider role

Similar to Monica, Rebecca had begun to examine the wider school life. She had an awareness of education outside the classroom, iterating “*There’s load of issues going on in mental health*”, and her role model had iterated the need for strong pastoral support systems in schools. Rebecca’s concern about children’s well-being was evident in her first placement, and she was now able to question the impact of testing. While this enabled Rebecca to understand performativity and accountability procedures: “*They do these tests in school*”; “*...ways of getting data*”; “*It was all recorded.*” She now queried them as being possibly detrimental to children’s learning, by asking “*Are they actually ready?*” Becoming involved in these responsibilities early in her pre-service teaching, as Hokka and Etelapelto (2013) suggest, enabled Rebecca to move the focus away from herself.

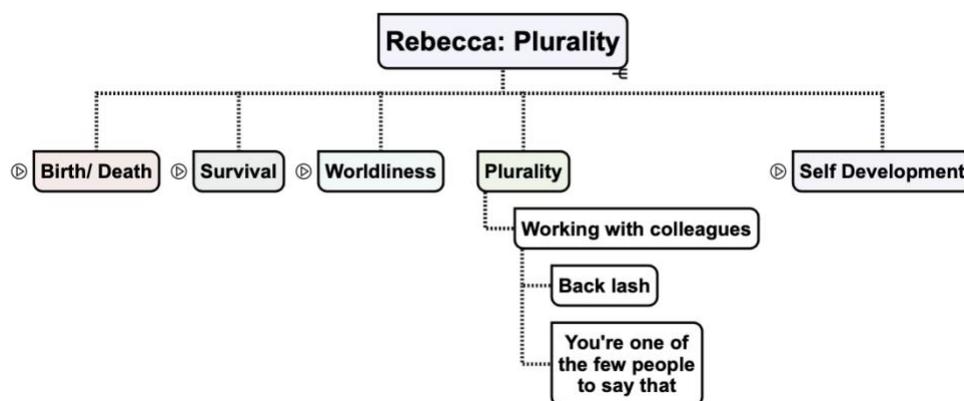
Rather than viewing teaching as an opportunity to teach her specialist subject, she had begun to consider how the teacher might help meet the needs of the pupils, realising that there was “*more to teaching than just going in and delivering PE.*” This increased awareness of her responsibilities added concern about her ability to be a teacher.

R: Yeah, I think from the experiences of being in a school and seeing how lessons are run and what is needed from a teacher, so behind the scenes, I think with all that I’m ok with. I think it’s more so the confidence and delivering lessons because I’ve always been at the back just helping out, as opposed to being that front stage.

This was a period of liminality for Rebecca. She was coming to terms with the changes she was experiencing in her identity, and beginning to see herself as a future expert (Freire, 1996; Berry, 2009). It was this process, involving critical thinking and reflection, that brought about the transformation in Rebecca’s identity.

3.2.4 Rebecca: Plurality

Figure 31. In vivo codes for Rebecca: *Plurality*



Working with colleagues

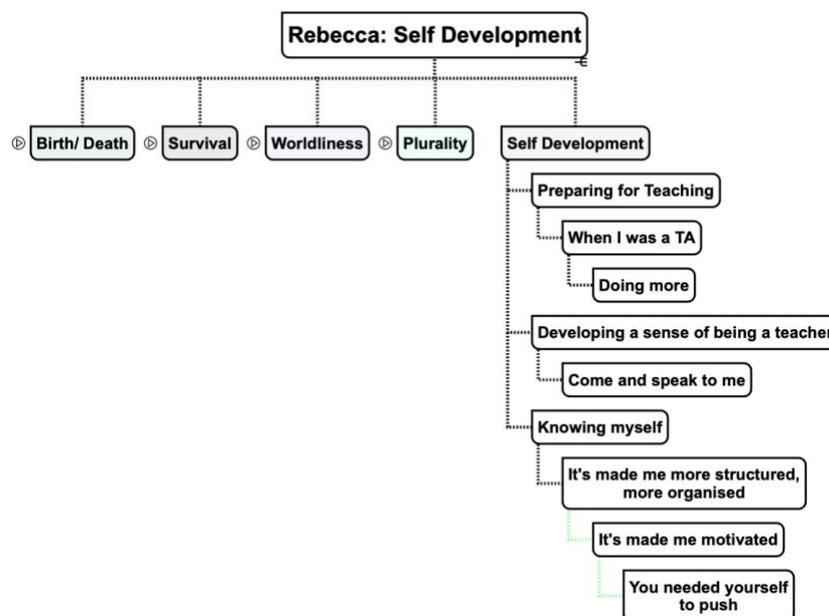
Given her preference for close interpersonal relationships, combined with the uncertainty she felt outside her family and cultural environment, Rebecca tended to focus on the negative aspects of working with colleagues (Figure 31 above). Despite this, Rebecca seemed to draw motivation from them; this is supported by Rodgers and Scott’s (2008) framework who believe that having the opportunity to challenge and negotiate their own beliefs is vital. Rebecca actively sought to negotiate her own understanding in response to negative comments.

She commented on the “backlash” she had received from her colleagues who had thought she was on a higher pay scale as a teaching assistant: “I got a bit of backlash from the other TAs so they went to the unions about me.” In response to this, Rebecca became quite determined and said she would “show them” (in terms of making a success of herself). This was reinforced when she told of being recognised as a supportive colleague in the middle school placement: “You’re one of the few people to say that.” It seemed to draw out an inner strength and determination from her to make the situation work. Resilience and determination were key characteristics that came to the fore at this point of the interview.

3.2.5 Rebecca: Self-development

Rebecca’s self-development, shown below in Figure 32, arose from her work-based experiences before and during her PGCE.

Figure 32. In vivo codes for Rebecca: *Self-development*



Preparing for teaching and developing a sense of being a teacher

Rebecca had gained employment as a teaching assistant in a primary school in preparation for her PGCE. She said she was keen to be involved as part of the community by “doing more” than was detailed in her job description. She sought to become a valued member of the team, echoing the close-knit community she

had cited in her life story. In the light of her first placement, Rebecca confirmed what sort of teacher she wanted to be:

R: Well, I just wanted to be a person where children come and speak to me and I'd be more approachable and there's loads of issues going in mental health and they just need somebody to speak to. So, I always wanted to be, obviously not a friend because you're a teacher, but that caring person who they've just got somebody to go to and opposed to bottling it all up.

It became apparent during this conversation that Rebecca identified herself as having qualities of a counsellor, which she had brought to her teacher education. Stooksberry et al. (2009) believe that these pre-dispositions play an important part in guiding teacher behaviour and thinking, and that awareness of these dispositions plays an important part in understanding oneself as a teacher. Embedding this role into her teacher identity would give her the empathetic approach that she herself had valued as a pupil.

Knowing myself

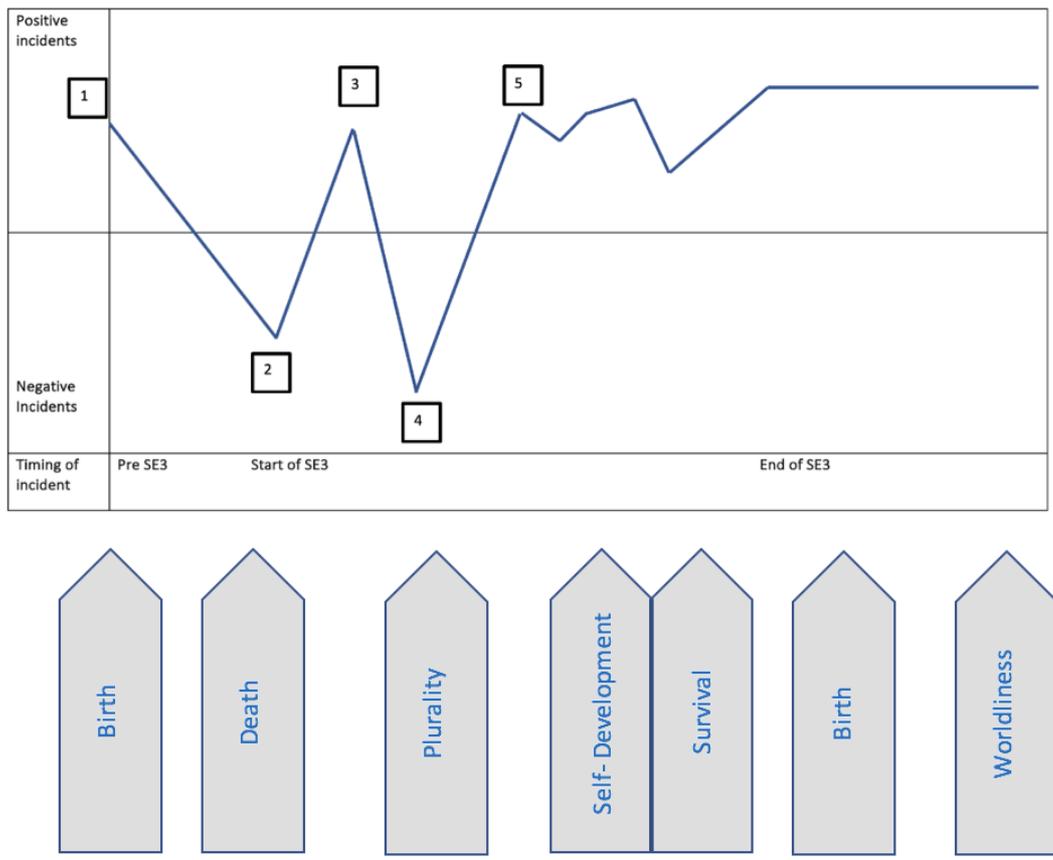
Rebecca found the reality of learning to be a teacher harder than she thought. Although Edwards and Nuttall (2015) discuss the 'praxis shock' when newly qualified teachers experience the reality of teaching, the challenging experiences of pre-service teachers should not be underestimated either. Rebecca demonstrated a realistic awareness of the level of commitment that was asked of her, and so Stenberg et al.'s (2014) call for coping strategies for those entering the profession would also be a support mechanism for Rebecca.

The difficulties she experienced on her placement yet again fired her determination: "*It's made me more structured, more organised.*" She concluded that in order to succeed, the motivation had to come from within: "*You needed to push yourself*", and she began to feel more confident in modelling the practice of the class teacher. This was a marked change in her. Rather than waiting for others to tell her what to do, she had accepted professional responsibility, which Pillen et al. (2013) would see as signs of an effective and balanced professional identity.

3.3 Rebecca: Critical incident interview

Rebecca discussed five key episodes in her critical incident timeline that showed extreme changes (Figure 33). In light of the discussion, Rebecca added Arendt's labels underneath the timeline.

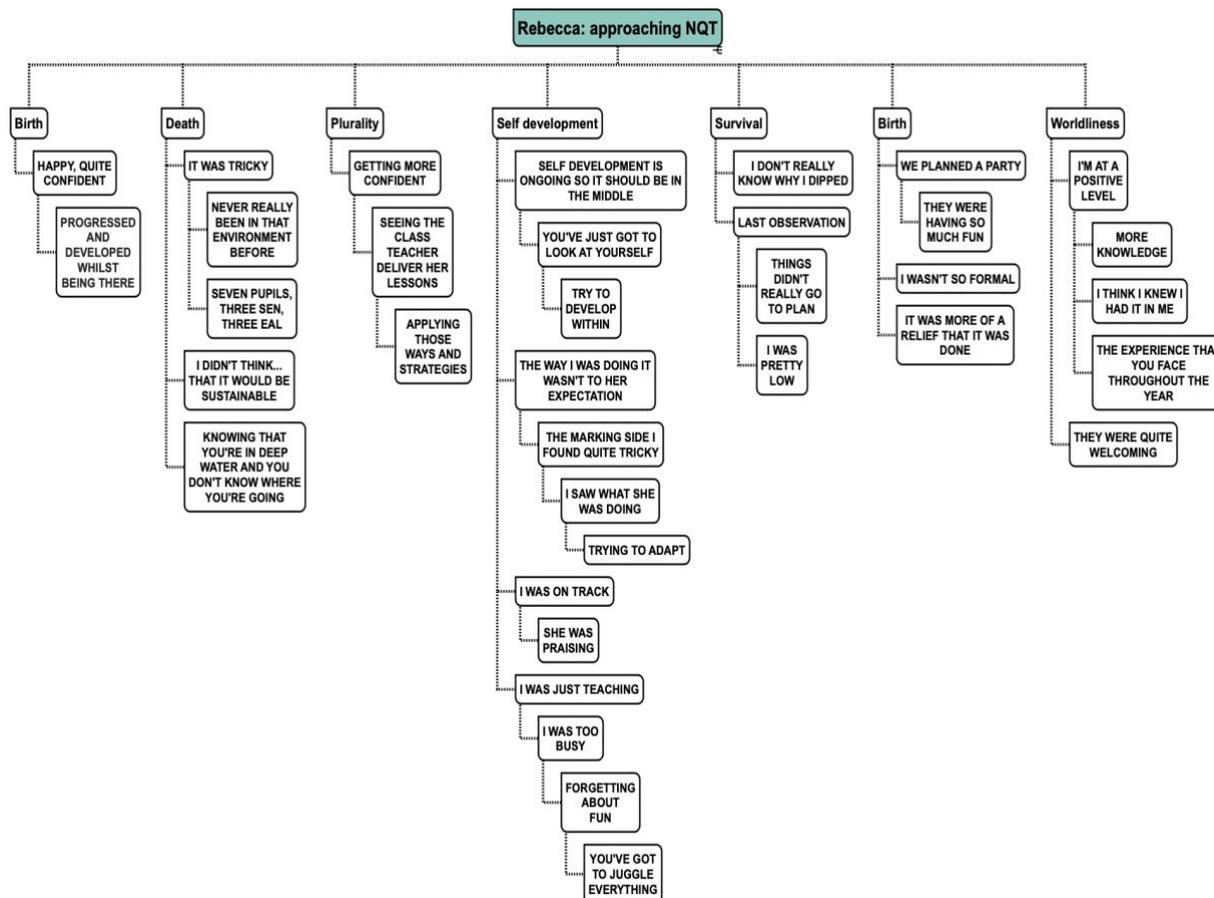
Figure 33. Rebecca's critical incident timeline and Arendtian labels



3.3.1 Rebecca: Approaching Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT)

As a result of the discussion and the labels placed on the timeline, a new diagram was created (Figure 34 below), detailing Rebecca's understanding of Arendt's conditions as they applied to her. As with the previous mind maps, this uses her words verbatim.

Figure 34. Rebecca: Approaching NQT



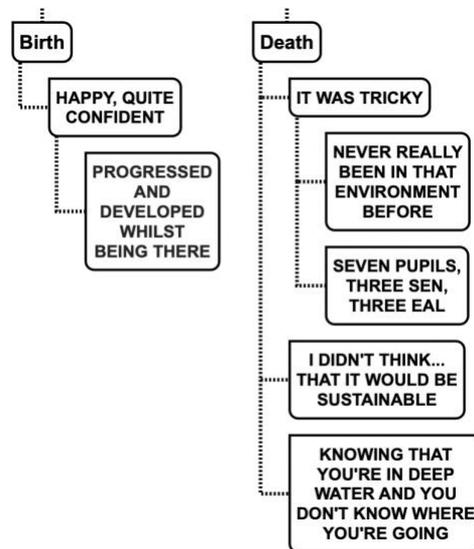
Rebecca was the only one of the pre-service teachers to start her final placement with a strong positive identity, which she identified as a *birth* (Figure 33, Point 1). She anticipated her final placement with a positive outlook and developed a relationship with a girl in her class whose father lived in Wales:

- R: She was the little girl in reception and she lives in Monmouth and she attached to me straight away. I found that quite—
 LM: It's quite comforting, isn't it?
 R: Yes. There was a weekend I was driving home and she saw me in the service station getting petrol and that Monday morning, the first thing she did was come up to me and say, 'Miss, I saw you at the petrol station, you were going back to Wales.' It was, like, 'Oh yes, I was.' So, every weekend, or every Friday, you could guarantee she'd come up to me and say, 'Are you going back to Wales this weekend, Miss?' She'd go, 'Oh, I'm missing my dad in Wales.' Then she'd say, 'Have you been to Swansea? That's by you, isn't it?'

This provided Rebecca with a link to her home culture, which acted as a comfort. At times like this, it is mindful to heed Arendt's (1998: 177-8) warning of the nature of new beginnings; there was an unexpected turn of events (Figure 33, Point 2) that so surprised Rebecca that she classed it as a *death* (Figure 35 below). The mixed age range of her small class had led to an episode of

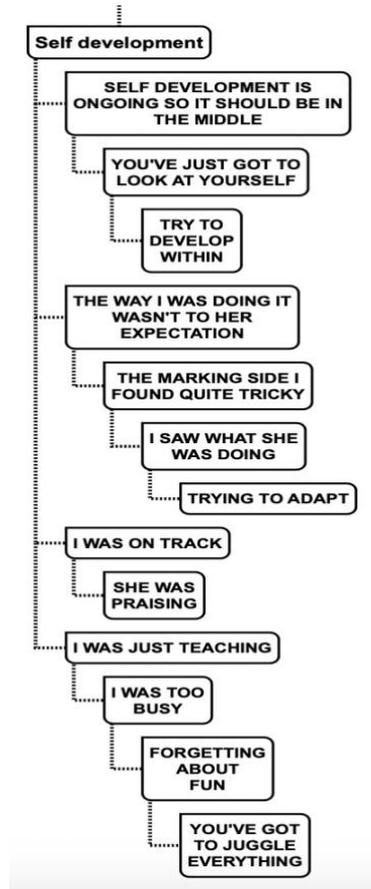
difficulty (Figure 33, Point 2). Based in a Reception/Year 1 class [5-6 year olds], an unfamiliar age phase, Rebecca found the level of differentiation and planning difficult to manage. She sunk to a new and unexpected low.

Figure 35. Rebecca's *Birth/ Death*



With class teacher support, Rebecca gained in confidence in the planning and delivery of her lessons (Figure 33, Point 3). She saw this as a sign of plurality, working together with a shared purpose. The public space of the school placement allows for a “multiplicity of dialogues” (Boym, 2009: 123). It allowed Rebecca the freedom to be a co-creator, taking calculated risks which created a “space of adventure” (Boym, 2009: 107) that she shared with the teacher and pupils (Figure 36 below).

Figure 36. Rebecca's *Plurality*



Rebecca knew that her progress was dependent on modelling her class teacher's practice. However, the expectations of the placement became overwhelming and she identified a low point (Figure 33, Point 4) where she recognised she was not meeting the class teacher's standards. It took another attempt at embedding the class teacher's practice in her own teaching before Rebecca found herself making progress (Figure 33, Point 5). She embedded the necessary skills to achieve "meaningful integration" (Newman and Newman, 2007: 214) that could be assimilated, in an Eriksonian way, into her professional identity.

When placing the Arendtian labels on the timeline, Rebecca stated that "*self-development is ongoing, so it should be in the middle*", which was clearly related to the progress she felt herself making (Figure 37 below).

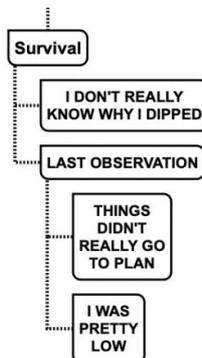
Figure 37. Rebecca's *Self-development*



Her *self-development* involved assuming the responsibility of becoming the class teacher, and the multiple roles involved in it. This allowed Rebecca to draw together the theory–practice nexus that Coward et al. (2015) and MacLure (1993) believe to be the foundation of identity development. However, despite managing the practicalities of planning and teaching, Rebecca identified that she was becoming mechanistic in her teaching.

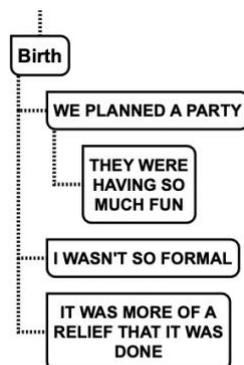
Rebecca added *survival* to the timeline after the fifth and most positive incident, indicating how hard she found it to keep going, as shown in Figure 38.

Figure 38. Rebecca's *Survival*



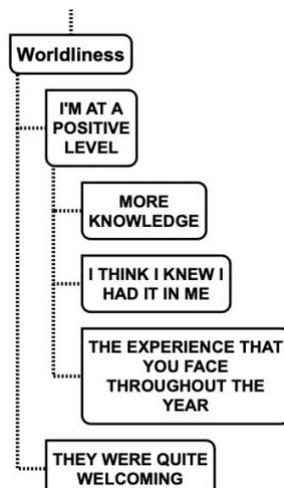
Over the long eight-week placement, her positivity dipped around the time of her last observation. Yet again, the support from the mentor teacher was important; in allowing the children to plan a party, the class teacher showed Rebecca that learning could be creative, fun and educational. In response, Rebecca relaxed; she saw the last few weeks of her placement as another *birth*, where she felt confident and in control (Figure 39). Because of Rebecca's flourishing, the children that she was teaching experienced a new way of 'becoming' too.

Figure 39. Rebecca's *Birth*



Nonetheless, Rebecca admitted that *"it was more of a relief that it was done."* At the end of the PGCE course, Rebecca added *worldliness*, as an understanding of what it meant to be a teacher (Figure 40).

Figure 40. Rebecca's *Worldliness*



She accepted that she was finishing the course, and was confident about the outcome. Having 'disclosed' herself to the teaching community, it enabled the teachers she worked with to regard her as one of their professional community.

3.3.2 Rebecca's perception of her identity as a teacher

These are the words from the final interview related specifically to teacher identity that were re-organised into a report. Rebecca did not respond to the report.

That's what teaching is about, you've got to juggle everything, that's what I've come to know ... even though you're planning for these children, their

enthusiasm and the motivation because they are motivated rubs off on you so you want to motivate them even more to make them enjoy.

I think I'm more patient. When things are happening in the classroom, I'm more inclined to let it go then, when it comes to a point, then you interact, as opposed to something little happens and you interact straight away. I think, throughout the year, I've become more confident in teaching and then, with that, obviously, come other aspects.

I would apply for primary. It's different because, when I'm working back home, I'm working with children who want to be in a physical activity environment. Then going to a comprehensive school where some of the children couldn't care less, they don't want to be there, they don't want to partake in anything, they hate that subject ... whereas when they're young, when you're teaching them the skills they need, they're eager to learn because it's something different and they haven't experienced it before, whereas the people in secondary, they've experienced it- They've obviously had bad experiences but that's made them who they are and then it's hard to try to change their way of thinking. Whereas when I've been teaching reception, teaching the fundamental movements of just running and catching and throwing, if you don't teach them at that age, that's when they could turn against physical activity.

I think I'm the kind of teacher who isn't driven by results, or isn't driven extrinsically. I feel like I thrive and it motivates me more knowing that the children are eager and they want to learn and they enjoy your lessons and they tell you, 'Miss, I loved that lesson, can we do it again?' And that they have a good relationship with you and they can trust you, I think that's the main thing. You've got to put the boundary down and they know that, if they were to do anything which was against the school rules, that they would be punished. At the same time, you want them to have a positive experience of school and you want them to remember you as being the teacher who helped them with their Maths or being the teacher who helped them, I don't know, play cricket or taught them how to – 'Oh, do you remember when Miss did this?'

From SE1 to now, there have been so many ups and downs, through school and personal reasons, that the lower you go, the harder you fight to get back up to where you were. I think that comes from the competitiveness of being a PE person. You never want to lose, you always want to win and be the best, but

then things and obstacles come in your way and you either crumble, and let them attack you, or you've just got to go for it. It makes you realise what is important and what isn't important. The things that some people think are important, when it actually hits you, they're not actually that important.

So being caring and being supportive, some children might not have that at home, they haven't got the close-knit that I've had. You can see that in their personalities. If they cling to you, you know there's maybe something going on that they can't speak to in their personal life or they just don't feel the same with their parents or guardians as they would with you. When I first went into my comprehensive school ... she [my role model] was authoritative, she put you in your place straight away. However, when you got to know her and you developed that relationship with her and you trusted her, that's when that other personality came out.

I think boys look up to men more and girls look up to women more, but is that just a stereotypical way of life? Some girls see the role model as the male teacher because maybe they haven't got a father back home, whereas the opposite with boys. Every child in every class is different, it depends where you're based or what type of school or environment ...

Back in September, especially in my first placement, if somebody said to me, 'You will finish the course with closely being an outstanding teacher,' I would have laughed at them. I think, within me, I knew I had it in me to be a teacher but there were other people in the way and obstacles in the way which made me realise, on numerous occasions, perhaps it's just not meant to be, or it is meant to be but maybe not now, maybe down the line. It's the confidence that you ... If you have no confidence as a teacher you're already losing a battle.

3.3.3 What has changed in Rebecca's identity?

In this last interview, a strong personal-social identity was in evidence; Coldron and Smith (1999) assert that identity is partly given and partly achieved by context; this is borne out to some extent in Rebecca's drive and determination that she identified as coming from a competitive sports background; her given identity was more problematic as she actively had to negotiate the tensions between what was being asked of her and her beliefs. This was aided by her ability to work in a team. Her relational identity enabled her to form

relationships; they had become more professional and showed an awareness of the status of the class teacher. Rebecca's interpersonal skills afforded her mobility between the almost familial community of the comprehensive she worked in, to the more formal schools during her teacher education. Personally, she felt that she was more patient, and continued to balance this with a caring outlook. She had a greater self-belief in herself as a teacher but the doubt as to whether she wanted to teach remained.

There was an element of social justice emerging in Rebecca's identity, more so than in Will's or Monica's; she wanted schools to be a positive experience for children, where their needs and home background could be taken into account when planning for their learning and social experiences. This included possible role models being identified. Rebecca's own background called for greater cultural diversity in the classroom, and by the end of her PGCE she recognised that in children. Rebecca never embedded her Welsh culture in the English education system; she never discussed the possibility of working in England; the call to return to Wales remained strong.

Rebecca understood how complex and demanding teaching was as a career but she was now motivated by the children. She took time to make conscious decisions as the teacher; the impact of her teaching featured in her professional identity. Status was no longer a key issue for her; instead she focused on making learning memorable for children. By teaching very young children on her last placement, Rebecca understood the importance of fundamental skills and building blocks in children's learning, particularly in PE. However, contrary to the usual competitiveness that PE specialists display (as Rebecca herself admitted in her interview), measures of performativity were not a driver for her; she questioned the purpose of standardised testing and high levels of assessment. Instead, Rebecca's concern was for children's well-being to make learning exciting and show them their way in the world; this is not so different from Arendt's concern for children as citizens of the future, and the contribution that they can make to the world.

These findings will be summarised in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 – Discussion of findings

This chapter draws together the findings as a means of answering the research questions. It is formed of three sections: the first section provides a summary of the ways in which the Arendtian framework has been successfully applied to pre-service teacher identity in this study; the second section reviews the ways in which *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* were an effective means of identifying influences on professional identity, and the third section evaluates the ways in which pre-service teachers used the six conditions to refer to the process of becoming teachers. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings.

1. How can an Arendtian framework enable pre-service teachers to perceive and interrogate their professional identity?

What emerged from literature is that models of reflective practice, currently used by schools and universities, tend to be linked to professional competences, and are best suited to a performative agenda. In recognising this, I developed and built an Arendtian framework to envisage a new way of exploring professional identity with pre-service teachers. Exploring identity from an Arendtian lens afforded them the opportunity to reflect upon their lives, values and experiences, rather than measure their achievements against the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011).

Labour, *Work* and *Action* were beneficial in categorising the influences relevant to pre-service teacher identity. They confirmed the applicability of Arendt's concepts to pre-service teacher identity, and outlined factors from the personal, social and public arenas, relating to *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* respectively. They became valuable in highlighting professional tensions, such as Rebecca's cultural friction, as well as personal and professional strengths, including Will's safeguarding experience, upon which pre-service teachers could draw. The influences formed an important part of the research; by exploring the influences acting upon each pre-service teacher we began to see how professional identity evolved and changed, as a result of social interactions, thinking, and a growing understanding of what it means to be a teacher. In addition, the influences also acted as vehicles for discussion of professional identity in the critical incident timelines.

The dominant influences were those relating to *Labour* (personal influences): Will drew on his perspectives as a father; Monica used her views of teachers and nurses, and Rebecca was happy to discuss her lived experiences as a Teaching Assistant; *Work* (training and development influences), which is to be expected given that the research focused on pre-service teachers' lives during their PGCE course: all three pre-service teachers were forms of career changers and needed additional support through this process; Will felt isolated in his second placement, Monica needed a softer approach by her mentors, and Rebecca sought clarification about her status.

Action (professional and organisational influences) emerged as a more active influence towards the end of the teacher education programme, which is not surprising given the need to successfully complete the PGCE, and gain employment. Monica, for example, benefitted from additional interactions with staff in preparation for her re-sit placement; Will was supported by his final placement school in interview preparations, and Rebecca was able to take the next steps in her professional development by finally blending her university and school based knowledge together in the classroom.

The face-to-face interview and the critical incident interview introduced the six 'conditions', which was the other aspect of the Arendtian framework. The emotive language of the 'conditions' provides an innovative and unusual way to rethink and re-imagine how they felt about themselves in the process of 'becoming' teachers. By applying the six conditions to their own experiences, pre-service teachers identified the successes and difficulties that contributed to their professional identity during their very individual PGCE year. Monica talked openly of her *deaths* and *rebirths*; Will used *death* to denote his unhappiness and isolation, and Rebecca used *plurality* to refer to the need for support from others. The two sections that follow discuss the influences and the conditions in more detail.

2. How can *Labour*, *Work* and *Action* be used to identify influences acting upon the professional identity of pre-service teachers?

The pre-service teachers in this study identified influences they believed to be relevant to their professional identity, and the original categories have been amended to reflect this. Personal influences now include lived and living experiences to emphasise the effect of the present as well as the past; well-

being has been recognised as an important addition, while gender has been noted as being more prominent for the male pre-service teacher in this study. In the training and development section, status and support, teacher education route, motivation to teach, career changers and professional journey extend the original category. Included in professional and organisational influences are the organisation itself, completion and transition, jobs and outcomes.

2.1 Personal influences

There was evidence from the interviews that personal dispositions, interests and previous careers remained an active part of pre-service teacher identity as they moved towards the completion of their teacher education. Will sought the charismatic approach to his own teaching but realised that some compromises had to be made, and Rebecca's interest in sports was evident throughout her PGCE year, even though it had become less dominant on her final placement. Although pre-service teachers may look and sound the same, they are, in Arendtian terms, the same but different. This is supported by comments that pre-service teachers made when reading their commentary on their professional identity, in that they felt differently to when they began their teacher education.

The lived experiences that pre-service teachers brought with them affected how they viewed themselves as teachers. For example, the cultural and family pressures weighed more heavily on one of the pre-service teachers: Will knew that he had to be employed by the end of his PGCE. Their ways of 'being' in families and in their home communities were a consistent and strong pull, causing tensions between personal and professional aspects of their identity; Rebecca was divided between supporting her boyfriend's family at a difficult time and doing well on placement. The critical incident timelines showed that they struggled at the times when their identity was being renegotiated, such as Will's unhappiness in his second placement, and this led to a sense of loss. However, this research shows that when pre-service teachers become more confident, they can renegotiate their professional identity, which may include revisiting aspects that have previously been discarded; Will may have left behind his legal career but used this experience to fulfil a sense of professional duty in his teaching.

In my research, I note that pre-service teachers bring not only self-awareness to teacher education, but they also bring individual image schemas that influence the kind of teacher they would like to be; Monica was able to revisit her role model and attempted to implement a sense of authority and confidence in her own teaching. Given that these role models are not openly challenged in universities, presumably due to constraints within the teacher education programme, and schools are equally too busy to initiate such a dialogue, Britzman (2000: 203) calls for teachers to turn “habituated knowledge back on itself, and examin[e] its most unflattering ... features.”

For Will, gender seemed to be more prominent an influence than for the other two participants; it has been well documented (Cruikshank et al., 2018; Pollitt and Oldfield, 2017; Knight and Moore, 2012) that in a female-dominated context, male pre-service teachers may need additional support to find their identity. However, in a study of this size, generalisations cannot be made based on such a small sample, but it may be an aspect that I will choose to research in the future.

This research offered pre-service teachers opportunities to reflect on how they viewed themselves as ‘becoming-teacher’, but Britzman (2000) suggests that an awareness may not include the things that are hard to know or accept about oneself, such as negative personal traits or dispositions. However, I believe that the critical incident and the use of Arendtian labels were fundamental in enabling pre-service teachers to discuss the demanding, distressing, and sometimes disappointing aspects of becoming a pre-service teacher; Will talked of his Seasonal Affective Disorder and his great unhappiness, and Rebecca referred to the challenges of teaching a mixed age class, with a high number of pupils with additional needs. There was a definite sense of flourishing and well-being from all three pre-service teachers as they reached the end of their academic year but this was not the case in the lead-up to, and during, their final placement.

Human flourishing is a challenging task in current times when teachers are leaving the profession, and when work/life balance is hard to achieve. This is enhanced by the difficulties pre-service teachers face. This research discovered the considerable emotional turmoil experienced by pre-service teachers during their teacher education, as indicated by their use of terms such as *birth/death/survival* on their timelines. This happens even with the most

confident pre-service teachers who seem to be successful and effective in their professional practice. The documented emotional swings in pre-service teachers are significant in duration and in magnitude, and it is surprising to note the negativity attached to their final placement; it took Will most of his final placement to reach a more positive trajectory, and even then, it was only in the last week when he received a job offer that he felt most positive.

Although greater attention is being given to well-being during teacher education, including ways to reduce teacher workload (Estola, 2006), prevent burnout (Joseph, 2011), and build capacity to adapt and change (Mentis et al., 2016; Stenberg et al., 2014 and Koutouzis and Spiriadou, 2017), I believe that for pre-service teachers, different pressures exist. In my findings, pre-service teacher well-being was related to events past and present in their personal lives, to the demands of the workplace and to their status. There was a vulnerability as they travelled through their teacher education, which included even the most confident pre-service teachers. Will's change of school affected him more than he had anticipated; Monica's mental health needed careful handling, and Rebecca seemed on a precipice, trying in a competitive way, to be the best teacher she could be, while travelling back home to Wales every weekend.

As a researcher and a teacher educator, I was surprised to see how distinct and unique the pre-service teachers were. There was a real sense of being isolated, and having very specific and individual needs, and this has raised concern about the ways in which teacher education can build in specific mechanisms for identifying and supporting pre-service teachers at a much earlier stage, and in a more proactive way. It is notable that there are very few funded studies that relate to initial teacher education, and although there may be some studies, they tend to be small scale, with limited opportunity to create policies from these for the future.

2.2 Training and development influences

The three pre-service teachers in this study demonstrated three very different journeys through teacher education, each a personal and demanding one. It was clear that this was their individual way of 'becoming-teacher'. What emerged from this study was that beginning a teacher education programme had to be accommodated within their personal lives; Monica had used her

break from nursing to become a teaching assistant, while gaining an education degree, and Will had given up paid employment because he felt the time was right in his family circumstances to begin his teacher education. The full range of personal backgrounds affecting pre-service teachers was possibly only revealed due to the pre-service teachers taking part in this research, but it was clear the considerable effect they exerted upon them, and the choices they made in choosing a teacher education route.

Many PGCE pre-service teachers come from another career background. Transferring to another career and understanding the work of others can be confusing, which leads to Mioskaro and Berding (2014: 44) suggesting that support is needed for career changers in moving to a new understanding or a new way of becoming. I would suggest that this is what happened to Will, even though he had come from a family of teachers, and to Rebecca when she was placed in a middle school setting. The routines of the school community, the language and the tacit information used by teachers can be bewildering to the uninitiated or the unfamiliar. Mioskaro and Berding (2014) go on to stress that “natality is not only found in one’s birth, it is also present when one existentially inserts oneself into any given situation on one’s life journey.” As a result, changes in identity may be accompanied by a change in status. My research has shown that some pre-service teachers come to teacher education with experience and skill in a previous career but feel they lose status and recognition as they begin their PGCE; Will had been an experienced lawyer, Rebecca had a sense of place and social standing in her sports coaching, and Monica possessed a great deal of educational knowledge. Yet schools and universities frequently adopt the transmission-of-knowledge approach, based on the expert–novice model. By adopting this hegemonic position, pre-service teachers are not invited to work from their strengths, nor their expertise, yet these could be of benefit to tutors, teachers and peers alike and be instrumental in re-balancing the dynamics in these relationships. It was found in this research that career changers seek acknowledgement for who they have been, and who they still are, for, as Benhabib (1990: 187) suggests, “to be without a sense of the past is to lose one’s self, one’s identity, for who we are is revealed in the narratives we tell of ourselves and of our world shared with others.” Made vulnerable by their lack of recognition or professional identity, pre-service teachers struggle with the emotional demands of becoming a teacher

(Zembylas, 2002, cited in Song, 2016). Rebecca felt this and questioned her status when she was not introduced to the class; not sure herself, she needed the class teacher to identify who she was. This research found that for the most part, they dealt with these difficult moments by themselves, internalising their identity battles, before later seeking help from others: Will, for example, did not ask for help in his second, and most difficult placement, but only asked for support in his third placement when he realised that he needed to rebuild his confidence. Often feeling isolated, Hammer (1997: 322) argues that “private and social identities are a critical aspect of our being at home in the world,” but asserts that pre-service teachers draw from each other’s private and social identities in forming new judgements. In this study, pre-service teachers gained support in both their private and professional lives, and although Clarke (2009) and Zink (2010) believe professional support is important, there is evidence from this research that support from family and friends is also a vital component. This can be seen when Monica initially returned home after her failed placement.

Stenberg et al. (2014) suggest that different kinds of support be made available during the teacher education process, by promoting pre-service teachers’ awareness of their developing professional identities. This study argues that identification of support should begin even before teacher education. It is important that teacher education programmes understand the identity of the future pre-service teachers in order to support them as best they can. Had Monica’s nursing experience been taken into account, she may have been placed in a school more supportive of her mental health; Will’s initiative and independence could have been developed by taking a lead in his degree subject, or Rebecca’s keen interest in pastoral issues could have been encouraged by working with pastoral teams in the school.

It is interesting to note that university tutors were not mentioned in the interviews as a support mechanism. Rebecca and Monica only mention their tutor visiting as a quality assurance mechanism. Apart from carrying out lessons observations, the voice of the teacher educator has not been silenced but exists as a whisper. Their role was seen separately from the school experience, and existed mostly in university; this supports the calls made by Zeichner (2010), Lewis (2013) and Henry (2016) for greater working partnerships between

schools and universities, and from Clandinin et al. (2009) in the search for greater clarity about the role of teacher education.

2.3 Professional and organisational influences

From the interviews, it became apparent that pre-service teachers find difficulty in meeting professional expectations at times but given the complexity of becoming a teacher, this is not surprising. We often forget that the pre-service teacher is both the learner and the teacher at the same time (Coward et al., 2015), undertaking a dual and complex role in learning and teaching. Additionally, Strom and Martin (2017: 4) believe that pre-service teachers “struggle to enact what they have learned in the pre-service teacher education programs, while simultaneously learning to work with colleagues and the culture of the institution,” which corroborates previous claims made by Lewis (2013) and Henry (2016) about the need to draw closer the two campuses of teacher education. Both Rebecca and Will struggled to embed their university knowledge into their professional practice, and only with the support of their class teachers were they able to find a way to blend these together more cohesively.

This is also combined with the fact that pre-service teachers feel under a great deal of pressure. In this study, this was particularly evident when pressures and responsibilities were removed, and pre-service teachers experienced a greater sense of enjoyment as beginner teachers; after her failed placement, Monica revisited the school but only as a volunteer and began to mingle more with a wider range of staff; Rebecca relaxed into the idea of planning a party with the children, and became surprised by the ability to have fun and enjoy her teaching. The critical incident interviews revealed the extent of the pressures felt by pre-service teachers as they neared the completion of their PGCE, juggling not only the demands of the final placement but job applications and interviews. Will applied to a school where he hoped he would ‘fit in’ but used the interview process to test if this would be the case. He firmly believed that his professional identity and the organisation had to be in alignment, although he did admit that he may soon have to concede his idealism for the realism of a salary.

Despite such professional tensions, the hope for schools and universities is to bring confidence to the newness of the pre-service teacher as they approach

the transition into newly qualified teachers. The state of “being-beginners” (d’Agnese, 2018: 10-12) brings hope for the next generation, who are “... navigating on the verge of the actual and the not-yet, are, in a sense, the shepherds of this newness and of the uncertain, fragile equilibrium created in classrooms.”

3. In what ways do pre-service teachers use Arendtian thinking to verbalise the process of becoming teachers?

From an early point in their teacher education, my study shows that pre-service teachers use Arendtian terms to describe their identity, particularly at moments of professional tension. Each of the pre-service teachers interpreted the six ‘conditions’ slightly differently. The ways in which the six ‘conditions’ were used to explore their professional identity are discussed below.

3.1 Birth and death

In this study, *Birth* and *death* were recognised as part of the life cycle that paradoxically ends in birth of the new teacher. Arendt’s *natality* allows humans to create the world, through labour and work; for pre-service teachers, the placement itself is the “re-enacting” (d’Entreves, 2014) of *birth*, but is described by the participants in different ways; *birth* denotes positivity about progress as a teacher, or as a personal way of looking at the journey that lies ahead on the teacher education programme. It is also about the reality of ‘becoming-teacher’.

Death, like *birth*, referred to personal and emotional responses to challenging events in school placements, and to pre-service teachers’ difficulty in demonstrating their professional competence. The period of negativity is significant and illuminates a substantial rethinking of professional identity. Recovering from *death* takes a large proportion time, which indicates the depth of personal investment in becoming a teacher.

3.2 Death, survival and plurality

A pattern of *Death-Survival-Plurality* was identified; after *death*, *survival* related to personal and professional tensions, followed by a questioning of professional identity, a slow upward trajectory and a search for professional confidence. *Survival* was identified as a struggle, demonstrated by a downward dip in

confidence, often due to unfamiliarity and inexperience. Remembering that *plurality* can be linked to equality and distinctiveness (d'Entreves, 2014), it came as no surprise that each pre-service teacher brought a different perspective to their teacher education. *Plurality*, in a positive sense, involved pre-service teachers going back to basics and reflecting on aspects of teaching to embed or improve. This *plurality* involved the support of others, and the enacting of the class teacher's practice, such as Rebecca being supported by her class teacher when planning a party, or Will seeking his teacher's support with his English planning. *Plurality* was also seen in a negative light, when multiple voices were used to counter the views of one pre-service teacher, such as Monica feeling her class teacher and her tutor were not listening to her views.

3.3 Worldliness

In this study, *Worldliness* was seen in two ways. Placed at the beginning of the timeline, it recognised the school placement as a professional world, physically different from the university, as used by Monica to recognise the school that she was keen to return to; the use of *worldliness* in this way reinforces the distinct "geographies" that Lewis (2013) refers to, and suggests that pre-service teachers need to understand how to live and work in different localities. Secondly, *worldliness* was placed at the end of the timeline, in reference to a more existential world, one that confers recognition of the pre-service teachers and gives them a rite of passage into the profession, as Will indicated in his critical incident timeline.

3.4 Self-development

Self-development was highlighted midway through school placements to denote a period of reflection and re-evaluation. Monica used it in this way to illuminate the progress she had made in her voluntary time in school, while Rebecca used it to refer to assuming the responsibility of the whole class. This contrasts with Higgins' (2010b) definition, where *self-development* (also labelled self-interpretation) is placed as the last chronological 'condition'.

In coding the face-to-face interview responses, I interpreted *self-development* to signify any training, education or experience that developed pre-service teachers' professional identity. However, I found that pre-service teachers use

self-development to refer to 'self-improvement' or 'self-understanding' in their personal identity, and as a means of resolving professional difficulties. This study argues that with *self-development* comes soft border crossings between identities, based on self-knowledge and self-belief. As a result, perhaps Higgins' (2010b) use of 'self-interpretation' would be a better way to view the self through reflection, liminality and critical evaluation.

4. Summary

- Pre-service teachers are aware of their professional identity from the start of their teacher education, and possibly before.
- It is an individual journey of transition; in renegotiating their identities, they are aware of what they are leaving behind, and this may cause professional tensions.
- Pre-service teachers face difficult and emotional times, struggle to resolve difficulties and are reluctant to ask for help.
- The final placement may be very demanding, particularly as they take on the role of the class teacher.
- Well-being and emotional support are paramount in helping pre-service teachers become confident in their role as beginner teachers and in ensuring successful completion of teacher education programmes.
- University teacher educators have a limited role in schools, and it is one that mainly focuses on quality assurance.
- *Labour, Work and Action* comprise a useful analytical tool in indicating the influences at play on professional identity, but the six conditions and the critical incident timeline are the key tools in enabling pre-service teachers to interrogate their teacher identity.

Box 3: Key findings of the research

The final chapter reflects upon the methodology, and outlines the implications for teacher education and next steps in this research.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion and implications

At the outset of this thesis, I presented two vignettes to highlight some of the difficulties with pre-service teacher identity on the PGCE route. They guided me into an investigation of professional and personal identity, explored through an Arendtian lens, in the context of the politicised teacher education landscape.

This developed into the research questions upon which my study was based:

1. How can an Arendtian framework enable pre-service teachers to perceive and interrogate their professional identity?
2. How can *Labour, Work and Action* be used to identify influences acting upon professional identity of pre-service teachers?
3. In what ways do pre-service teachers use Arendtian thinking to verbalise the process of becoming teachers?

Designing the study as a piece of theoretically informed empirical research, I employed the work of Arendt, particularly *The Human Condition (1998)*, as a new way of looking at pre-service teacher identity. In this chapter I summarise the thesis, discuss the implications of the findings, and look to next steps in future research. I do not attempt to resolve the problems in teacher education but aim to provide a contribution to the ways in which we could move forward.

1. Summary and key findings

In this thesis, and in support of the work of Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), I established the research problem of pre-service teachers requiring a greater awareness of their professional identity. This was in order that they may be better able to deal with a shifting and political landscape, as identified by Biesta (2007), McIntyre et al. (2017) and McNamara, Murray and Phillips (2017), and which positioned the study as having relevance in today's educational context.

In the literature review, I argued that the existing literature on professional identity, although theorised through a range of lenses, including the psycho-social self (Zembylas, 2003), the socio-cultural and biographical (Furlong, 2003; Timoštšuk and Ugaste), the practice-based identity (Coward et al., 2013; Reid, 2011) and a more philosophical identity (Day et al., 2006; Edwards, 2015). However, I discussed that the literature is slow to recognise the uniqueness of pre-service teachers as a group in their own right, in that the PGCE year is a year of transition, where pre-service teachers may have limited professional

experience upon which to build their professional identity, and may need additional support transferring between university and school (Zeichner,2010). In addition, much of the literature presents professional identity as object based (Frieson and Besley, 2013; Reid, 2011); although this may prove to be a useful starting point with pre-service teachers in consideration of their fixed role models. I further iterated that a post-structural view of identity, such as those suggested by Strom and Martin (2017) and Sluss and Ashforth (2007), links to Arendt's *Human Condition*, in exploring the place of the past, present and future; of people and places, and of the social dynamics in the personal, social and political 'spheres'. These are the arenas in which pre-service teachers will live their professional identity. I rounded off the literature review with a belief that Arendt offers "social hopefulness," believing that the story of each individual pre-service teacher must 'appear' and be enacted in the public domain, as a counter to the dominant political landscape, and as a means of re-purposing education (Osberg and Biesta, 2018). In concluding, the literature review highlighted the work of Dyson (2003, 2010) and Lund et al. (2012) regarding the need to find a new way to think about pre-service teachers and their identity.

In the conceptual framework, I outlined the ways in which *The Human Condition*, professional identity and pre-service teachers can be conceptualised to form an innovative research study. This was originally based on Arendt's key activities of *Labour*, *Work* and *Action*, providing a broad set of influences to guide discussion of professional identity. Three additional 'sub-categories' were created in line with the pilot and the literature (Hanimaki, 2011;Gibboney-Wall, 2016; Song, 2016; Shaughnessy and Boerst, 2017) to illustrate how pre-service teachers draw from a range of experiences to express insight of themselves as teachers. In addition, working from research by Boym (2009), Goultchin (2014), Hayden (2012), the six Arendtian 'conditions' were used as a tool for pre-service teachers to discuss their identity development. Interpreted individually by each pre-service teacher, the terminology of the six conditions suited the key episodes and the moments of critical incidence that they experienced.

The findings told the story of each pre-service teacher as they lived and worked through their teacher education. They came from very different backgrounds, told very different stories, (Joseph, 2011 and Hoyle and Wallace,

2009), yet common experiences emerged from their interviews. They began their PGCE with an awareness of teachers and teaching, but became more aware of themselves as teachers (Britzman, 2000) and how they changed over the year. They discussed the influence of personal, professional and training experiences, and how these affected their teacher identity. They were clear about what they were leaving behind as they started their teacher education, but found moving forward to be a demanding process (Mentis et al., 2016), often strewn with professional tensions, particularly the enacting of university-based ideas in the school context. Clearly, the two campus identities were still proving to be problematic (Henry, 2016). Using critical incident timelines and the final report, they reflected on their perception of themselves as emerging teachers. The difficulties that they identified (Zembylas, 2002) might have been less problematic had they asked for earlier support. In the end, all three pre-service teachers looked back on the formation of their professional identity, and identified the benefits of seeking dialogic relationships (Clark, 2009; Zink, 2010) with meaningful others in their school.

In reviewing this research what has struck me is just how individual a journey it is to become a teacher. As a teacher educator, and having worked in the sector for sixteen years, it is humbling to be made aware of how emotional and difficult yet rewarding this process is for pre-service teachers. I believe that this research makes a significant contribution to the field of teacher education, in that there are clear implications for future practice and future research, which are discussed in the following two sections.

2. Implications for teacher education

From the findings of my research, there are three major recommendations for teacher education, each of which is dependent on the creation of a more integrated partnership approach. As Clandinin et al. (2009) suggest, teacher education needs a greater purpose, and it is hoped that these recommendations may be helpful in achieving that. However, they do come with a warning; in asking teacher education providers to work differently and beyond the inspection frameworks, they should be prepared to take risks.

The first is that the ways in which universities and schools currently work needs to change. Pre-service teachers should flourish in their chosen career, as

did the three pre-service teachers in this study by the end of their PGCE. However, given that *survival* is a key component in the findings, school based and university based teacher educators need to be more responsive to this negative aspect of school placements, particularly in light of the current teacher well-being and workload agenda in England (DfE, 2019). There are relatively straightforward ways in which this could be achieved: pre-service teachers need access to safe, tangible but unjudged spaces, both at school and at university, to discuss difficulties and to seek advice; they would benefit from support from impartial staff in both settings, and the introduction of a peer-supported 'time-out' session at university during their placement could be an effective way to combine university and school based identities.

Additionally, not all partnerships in this study were effective; Will struggled in his second setting, Monica felt that her voice was not heard, and Rebecca experienced an unfamiliar middle school setting. In each case the partnerships were based around a static pattern of expectations from both the school and the university. Those who are open to new partnerships in teacher education recommend the development of a third space (Cuenca et al., 2011), a third landscape of teacher education (Dyson, 2010) or a third hybrid space (Lee, 2018). Ideally this is a neutral space to denote a space of triadic collaboration between university, school and pre-service teacher. Within this environment, the intention would be to interrogate ways of becoming-teacher, with the aim of reaching a new understanding that informs and questions the professional identity of pre-service teachers. However, Lillejord and Børte (2016) discuss the realities of these ways of working; they doubt the effectiveness of the third space unless there are clear expectations, transparent leadership, and the ability to feed new ways of working back into the system. A well-constructed third space would allow tutors, teachers and pre-service teachers to spend time developing ways of shared working, working from a mentoring position rather than a supervisory role. Through this, Monica could have been more confident in her new school, Will may have felt less isolated, and Rebecca's confusion about middle schools could have been appeased by sharing expectations and discussing tacit rules and knowledge that otherwise would have been left unspoken. This could evolve into opportunities for tutors to work alongside pre-service teachers in lessons, and delivering professional development for

teachers (Thomson, 2008). This would also help to clarify and raise the profile and purpose of teacher education in a more contemporary way.

The second implication is that in seeking new ways of partnership, it is hoped that teacher education can be brave enough to reconsider what we expect of pre-service teachers. Rather than keeping pre-service teachers busy practising the 'apprenticeship' of teaching, with little time to consider their developing identity, Dyson (2010: 17) asserts that we need to see them as "discerning individuals, capable of monitoring their own progress in learning and in control of themselves ...". It would, however, mean that the university and school expectations of the placement would need to be sufficiently flexible and adaptable, with suggested ways of working, rather than a pre-determined number of lessons and professional development tasks. In the introduction, I discussed pre-service teachers as 'people-who-teach'; in adopting a more negotiated process, pre-service teachers could draw from their lived experiences to the benefit of the schools, and possibly deliver relevant seminars or workshops at university.

The third implication is the provision of high-quality programmes that recognise that becoming a teacher is a non-linear journey; Monica particularly suffered stops and starts along the way, handling issues in her personal life, dealing with set-backs and failure in different ways, and coming to grips with academic challenges. In supporting pre-service teacher well-being, teacher education programmes could consider building in flexibility to respond to the needs of pre-service teachers. There are some flexible PGCE routes available in England, which allow pre-service teachers to create a 'road-map' of their teacher education in line with their personal commitments. In light of the current well-being agenda, these could be considered by universities as a more mainstream option. Even in a traditional PGCE programme, there needs to be scope for trainees such as Monica to have time to pause her teacher education, seek additional experience and, when ready, return to a more personalised school placement that may be formed of part time teaching and additional observation of other teachers.

In any teacher education programme, all pre-service teachers need experienced mentoring, facilitated through positive ongoing relationships. A dialogic relationship offers the space of not-yet potential (d'Agnese, 2018) in pre-service teachers' professional identity and allows them to be transformed by

their own thinking. This could include providing adaptive mentoring and additional support before the school placement. In this study, Monica would have benefitted from non-assessed time in school to gain confidence before her second placement; Rebecca could have had a meeting with her class teacher to look at the ways in which she could celebrate her Welsh culture, and make use of her experience of the Welsh education system, and Will could have continued to have ongoing meetings with his first placement school during his second and more troubled placement.

Combining proactive and blended ways of working between schools and universities as discussed above may be a way forward, as well as being a way in which the power is handed back to the pre-service teachers.

3. Insights on the methodology and next steps in the research

Before revisiting the methodology, it is important that I make clear my understanding that in a small-scale research study such as this there can be little generalisation or comparison, but it is intended that the findings and methodology may prove to be a starting point for similar research with other pre-service teachers or institutions.

There were constraints that affected the research process, and if I were to undertake this research again, there are things that I would do differently. As a part-time researcher, and full time teacher educator, it was difficult finding the opportunity to engage with the research at a time that was appropriate to pre-service teachers. There was a limited period when pre-service teachers were in university, during which it was also difficult for pre-service teachers to commit to two interview slots. They did this by giving up their very limited lunch time or family time, of which I was, and continue to be, very appreciative.

The life stories were paramount in raising their awareness of a professional identity and possible influences acting upon it. It was an efficient way to gather basic introductory information about the perceptions they held of their professional identity; having this information meant that it could be used to elicit further detail in the subsequent interviews. However, I felt that there was only a limited amount of relevant information that I could gather this way, and I was reluctant to introduce Arendt's ideas at this point in case it prevented them from signing up to the research.

The first face-to-face interview confirmed that pre-service teachers could identify and discuss the influences exerted upon their identity (Furlong, 2013), and began to use Arendtian 'conditions' to do so. Although this was a way of introducing Arendt to pre-service teachers, it was also a means of testing out the theoretical application of Arendt to the research, and if applicable, enable me to thematically code the responses using the six conditions. The rich discussion that resulted from this interview led me to believe that the six conditions could have been more overtly employed, and possibly through introducing the critical incident timeline at an earlier point.

The critical incident interview was an important data collection tool. It visually revealed how differently each pre-service teacher perceived their developing identity. As all three timelines showed, the positioning of Arendt's 'conditions' varied considerably, yet the pre-service teachers were confident in using the labels to reflect their experiences. The depth of the peaks and troughs of their experiences, highlighted on the timelines, indicate the complexity and the Arendtian unpredictability of rhizomatic identity (Strom and Martin, 2017). It questions how pre-service teachers survive teacher education. The discursive component of the interview offered them time to think and talk about themselves, a process that is not easily available on teacher education programmes. The timelines with the Arendtian labels could be introduced in the first interview and revisited in the second interview.

Next steps in the research will focus on the impact of the teacher education route; only as this research was written up did I question whether this had an overall impact on how they came to see themselves as teachers. There are also possibilities of extending this research to include school-based pre-service teachers such as School Direct, which may illuminate the impact of the teacher education route on professional identity. There was insufficient time to delve more deeply into the place of role models but there is the possibility of including this as part of a revalidated module on an undergraduate ITE degree in the coming months. In addition, this research will also be presented to a committee of teacher educators to highlight the doctoral level research that is taking place. It is hoped that these future steps will raise the awareness of identity work as an important aspect of initial teacher education.

This thesis makes a contribution to original knowledge in relation to the field of teacher education, using Arendtian theory to inform specific research

methodology. It is one of the few studies that has employed an Arendtian framework with pre-service teachers. My thesis holds relevance for pre-service teachers; it highlights how they may be better prepared, through an understanding of their professional identity, for the turmoil of the teacher education journey. It is intended that this research will allow me to build upon the findings of this thesis and undertake additional research on Arendt's relevance to professional identity. I would hope that it will also be of benefit to those working with pre-service teachers.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Ethical approval

There are two ethical approval forms. The permission dates were extended to allow additional time for completion of the project, as can be seen from the second certificate.



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: Student Teacher Identity: Birth, Death and Regeneration

Researcher(s) name: Linzi McKerr

Supervisor(s): Fran Martin/Vivienne Baumfield

This project has been approved for the period

From: 01.02.2016
To: 01.07.2016

An extension has been approved for the period:

From: 02.07.2016
To: 22.07.2016

Ethics Committee approval reference: D/15/16/21

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Durrant'.

Signature: (Dr Philip Durrant, Chair, Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee) Date: 14th July 2016

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

Title of Project: Student Teacher Identity: Birth, Death and Regeneration

Researcher(s) name: Linzi McKerr

Supervisor(s): Fran Martin
Vivienne Baumfield

This project has been approved for the period

From: 01/09/2016
To: 31/08/2018

Ethics Committee approval reference:

D/15/16/21



Signature:
(Dr Philip Durrant, Chair, Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee)

Date: 25th July 2016

Letter to participants about face-to-face semi-structured interview, with consent form attached.

Dear

Thank you so much for agreeing to help with my doctoral research.

I am looking forward to our meeting, which hopefully will offer you the opportunity to reflect upon your career and aspects of professional identity as you moved from student to teacher. The purpose of this email is to tell you a bit about that meeting and to explain the attached preparation task.

So how will this work? What's your involvement?

- The first part before the interview consists of an information form and a consent form, which I have attached. You will need to bring the signed consent form to the interview and I will countersign and make a copy for you to keep.
- Then the interview; one to one with me. Purely confidential. These are the areas that we will be focusing on in the interview. Just to stress that there are no right or wrong answers as this is a qualitative study that is interested in your views and perceptions rather than the search for a definitive answer.
- Ideally I'd like you to bring a collection of items (photographs, artefacts, objects) that represent the following stages to you:

Stage one: birth, death and rebirth

Recognition of you are and what kind of teacher you want to be; what you might have left behind as you approached PGCE

Stage two: professional survival

Understanding the workplace

Stage three: worldliness

Needing to work alongside others

Stage four: plurality

Bringing together varying viewpoints, both within yourself and the school community

Stage five: self- development

Recognition of yourself and where you want to be/ where you have come to at this point in time

Stage six: birth, death and rebirth

Many thanks for your continued co-operation

If you have any questions regarding our forthcoming meeting please feel free to contact me (contact details supplied to participants)

Best wishes,

Linzi

Linzi McKerr

Consent form for participants

Title of Research Project: **Student Teacher Identity: Birth, Death and Regeneration**

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

I have received and read a copy of the information sheet for participants

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 and may also request that my data be destroyed

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 or academic conference or seminar presentations

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

the student/trainee participants taking part will not have been supervised by the researcher as their SE tutor

the researcher will not have any discussions with school staff about the student/trainee's professional development

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): (contact details supplied to participants)

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

(Supervisors' names and email addresses were supplied to participants)

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.

SRI Interview with Arendt Framework

I would also like to remind you, that this interview will remain confidential, that your identity and your school placement details will be anonymised. This interview will be audio-recorded. There is water available for you and we can take a break any time.

So, moving on, as you know my research is on trainee teacher identity. I am interested in how you have come to see yourself as a teacher and what sort of teacher you like to be.

I asked if you could bring with you some photographs, artefacts or objects that relate to the six stages below. Remember there is no right or wrong answer to this.

So, let's get started. 'I'm interested to know how these photographs or objects have represented these stages for you. Here they are enlarged and perhaps you might decide where the items you've brought should be placed. Then we could talk a little about them.

Let's recap:

Stage one: birth, death and rebirth

Recognition of you are and what kind of teacher you want to be;

Stage two: professional survival

Understanding the workplace;

Stage three: worldliness

Needing to work alongside others;

Stage four: plurality,

Bringing together varying viewpoints, both within yourself and the school community;

Stage five: self- development

Recognition of yourself and where you want to be/ where you have come to;

Stage six: birth, death and rebirth

So tell me about your objects. Let's start at stage one. What did you bring to represent that?

Appendix 3 PGCE course structure with data collection points

University	School 1	University	University	School 2	University	School 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•September-October•6 weeks•ONLINE LIFE HISTORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•October-December• 8 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•December•1 week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•January•3 weeks•FACE TO FACE INTERVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•January - March•8 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•March-April•2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•April-July•8 weeks•CRITICAL INCIDENT TIMELINE

Appendix 4 Online questionnaire

Dear PGCE student

Thank you for filling in this questionnaire; your time and your answers will be used to form the basis of the data for my thesis on student teacher identity. By filling in the questionnaire will mean that you are giving you consent for your data to be used anonymously.

If you are happy to participate further (in two individual interviews, one in February and one in June) there is a contact box to complete at the end of the questionnaire. Further details and a consent form will be sent to you. Please do not feel obliged to take part but it is hoped that it may be beneficial in thinking about your evolving identity as you progress through your teacher education course.

1. Which teacher education route are you on?

- PGCE
- School Direct

2. Please give reasons why you choose this route into teaching.

3. What made you choose teaching as a career?

4. Describe a teacher you admire– and why.

5. Describe the teacher you would like to be.

6. Please describe what you were doing before you started your teacher education course.

- Work- education related
- Work- other area
- Studying
- Other

7. Tell me about your family background.

8. Please summarise your education to date.

9. If you would like to participate further (2x forty minute interviews, February and June), please provide your name and email contact. Thank you.

Appendix 5 Critical incident interviews

Information form emailed to participants in advance of the critical incident interview

Birth, Death and Regeneration: an Arendtian analysis of pre-service teacher identity

Useful notes and preparation

Thank you for your continued agreement to take part in the study.

There will be two parts based on your trainee experiences so far and described as 'critical incidents.' **Please complete part one in advance (in bold below).** Tripp, one of the key proponents of critical incidents, describes them as

"mostly straightforward accounts of very commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice which are critical in the rather different sense that they are indicative of underlying trends, motives, and structures." (1993:24-25).

Part One:

In preparation for the discussion please draw a line on the attached critical incident chart to indicate the highs and lows of your professional identity as a trainee teacher. These highs and lows indicate events or times that have made you more aware of how you feel as a pre-service teacher.

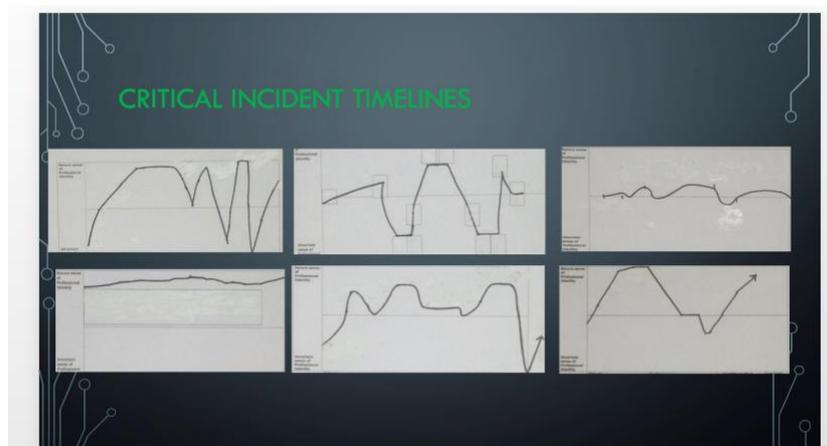
At each high or low point write a short phrase that identifies the event. Some examples are given on the last page.

Part Two:

You will be asked at the meeting to discuss in more detail some of the critical incidents noted on your chart prior to your final teaching placement (SE3), during and by the end of SE3. You should focus on incidents that you feel are of particular significance to your identity as a pre-service teacher. You will be asked to describe the incident, the events leading up to it and how this has affected how you see yourself as a teacher.

The three-part discussion should take no more than forty-five minutes, and will be audio-recorded.

I very much look forward to seeing you next week.



Appendix 6 Example of coding

Extract of in vivo coding from face-to-face interview with Rebecca

Interview (p1) Q=LM; A= Rebecca	Researcher Memos	<u>in vivo codes</u>
<p>Q Ok so moving onto the first stage of self-development, where you are now and where you want to be, what do you like about yourself? What do you recognise that you think oh actually I'm really quite pleased with the way that things are developing? Like I know I want to do XYZ say on this forthcoming practice, can you describe how you've got to where you are with how you feel as a teacher?</p>		
<p>A Yeah, I think from the experiences of being in a school and seeing how lessons are run and <u>what is needed from a teacher</u>, so behind the scenes, I think with all that ...I'm ok with. I think it's more so the confidence and delivering lessons because <u>I've always been at the back</u> just helping out as opposed to being that front stage.</p>	<p>Is it a lack of confidence?</p>	<p>“What is needed from a teacher”</p>
<p>Q So now you're front stage really.</p>		<p>“I've always been at the back”</p>
<p>A Yeah. That was one of my criticisms in my last teaching practice because my teacher <u>wasn't very open to let me take the sessions</u> so for the first two weeks I was more of a TA role helping out, going round the children seeing if everything was ok, what they needed, then when it came to me delivering, I delivered one lesson before my tutor came in and observed me which didn't help me at all.</p>	<p>Impact of mentor teacher</p> <p>Need for practice-ability to <i>survive</i></p>	<p>“wasn't very open to let me take the sessions”</p>
<p>Q No, so you were back in that TA role really for a lot of your SE1 and you needed to be now having moved on with that responsibility.</p>	<p>Back to <i>birth</i> stage again</p>	
<p>A Yeah, but towards the end it did get a lot better and I think she understood that <u>I needed to be a teacher more</u>, so I was teaching two or three lessons a day.</p>	<p>Teacher- sensing worldiness?</p> <p>Self development of PST</p>	<p>“I needed to be a teacher more”</p>
<p>Q So the whole thing about the class teacher understanding what you needed is quite important?</p>	<p>Relationship</p>	

Interview (p2) Q=LM; A= Rebecca	Researcher Memos	<u>Invivo codes</u>
<p>A Mm. Even though you talk to the teacher obviously and you've got everything written <u>in a book</u>, <u>you needed yourself to push</u>, I needed to be doing this, where at the start I was a bit reluctant to talk to her because I didn't feel like I could because <u>it was her classroom</u>, she was the one delivering.</p>	<p>Uni handbook Relationship not there; using it as an excuse</p>	<p>"you needed yourself to push" "It was her classroom"</p>
<p>Q Yeah, that's interesting. So actually there's almost an ownership of the classroom that they've got to kind of hand it over to you at some point is there.</p>		
<p>A Yeah. When I first went in, <u>I wasn't introduced</u> and it was just a bit well <u>who do they think I am</u>, do they just think I'm a student coming in?</p>	<p>Upset? Not having a place or sense of importance/ place/role</p>	<p>"I wasn't introduced" "who do they think I am?"</p>
<p>Q Yes because they don't know anything about you.</p>		
<p>A No and they don't realise that people come in and train as teachers, they're either a teacher or they're not, <u>there's no in between</u>. So for them they would just say well who's that woman over there.</p>	<p>As in work experience? Student?</p>	<p>"there's no in between"</p>
<p>Q And they didn't say who you were?</p>	<p>Seeing herself differently now</p>	
<p>A No until like a few days in where the children were already like it was a bit...</p>		
<p>Q They were trying to work out what was going on.</p>		
<p>A Yeah.</p>		

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