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# **Becoming a university lecturer in teacher education: expert school teachers reconstructing their pedagogy and identity**

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**ABSTRACT** This article contributes to understanding of the professional learning of expert school teachers when they are appointed as university-based teacher educators. In this case study of a single department a qualitative analysis is used to interpret the transcripts of sixteen semi-structured interviews with lecturers in teacher education within four years of their appointment to higher education roles. They experience tensions within the educational partnership and professional field about the value of abstract knowledge compared to work-based practice and about what a lecturer in teacher education should be. The situated learning of the new lecturers within their particular departmental context encourages them to hold on to their existing identities as school teachers, rather than embrace new identities as academics.

**Key Words:** Teacher educator; lecturer in teacher education; identity; pedagogy

## **From school teacher to university lecturer**

This paper reports on an investigation into the perspectives and workplace learning of newly appointed lecturers, in a single large UK teacher education department, who have moved from school based teacher roles and have less than five years experience working in higher education. The key question is ‘how do new teacher education lecturers experience their transition from professional practice as school teachers to become lecturers in teacher education based in higher education?’ Within this there is a sub-question of how these new lecturers build their professional identities. The purpose of the study is to help to shape the academic induction of new lecturers in teacher education because the development of these professional educators is critical for the effective contribution of higher education departments to the training of new school teachers.

Previous work on becoming an academic has largely been generic in the sense that it investigated the experiences of new lecturers across a range of subject disciplines and professional fields (Trowler & Knight, 2000). However the situated nature of workplace learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) means that the specific professional field that the new lecturers work within is itself a key part of the workplace context. Therefore

this study explores the experiences of new lecturers within one department in one higher education institution in the UK and does that within one professional field, that of teacher education.

This paper will briefly outline the study, including the socio-cultural theoretical framework used to inform the design and analysis. It will argue that the new lecturers in teacher education experience a very challenging and confusing transition into higher education roles because of tensions in the higher education institution, the professional field, the teacher education department, and the educational partnership with schools in which they work. The paper concludes that these tensions within the workplace context encourage the new lecturers to hold on to their identity and credibility as school teachers rather than to proactively seek new identities as academics within the professional field of teacher education.

### **Workplace learning in a teacher education department**

With respect to the new lecturers in teacher education, situated learning theory emphasises the importance of informal workplace learning and the way that ‘newcomers’ interact with experienced lecturers, ‘old-timers’, as they gradually gain full membership of the community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Learning within informal situations is seen as critical (Eraut, 2000) although more formal support may also play a role (Fuller, Hodkinson, Hodkinson & Unwin, 2005). Previous work investigating academic induction and university departments as workplaces (Trowler & Knight, 2000; Knight, Tait & Yorke, 2006) signals the importance of the quality of day-to-day interaction and of departmental leadership. It also suggests the need for study within specific subject disciplines because this is such a key element of an academic workplace.

From the perspective of activity systems theory the academic workplace of the new lecturers is seen as a collective, dynamic, object-oriented system in which rules, tools and division of labour influence activity but contributions by participants are able to shape the system (Engestrom, 1987; 2001). History and the wider context are viewed as very significant influences on the workplace environment. Contradictions within the workplace are seen as potentially helping to drive further development of the activity system, ‘Contradictions are historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems’ (Engestrom, 2001, 137). Where such contradictions provoke collaborative questioning and efforts to change practice, Engestrom proposes the possibility of expansive learning in which the object of activity is reconceptualized and the activity system itself is transformed. Building on Engestrom’s concept Fuller and Unwin (2003) develop an expansive-restrictive continuum for workplace learning environments and this has been applied to work with high school teachers (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005).

Identity-building in the workplace may be viewed as a ‘becoming’, and Wenger argues that there is a ‘profound connection between identity and practice’ (1998: 149). From this perspective the newly appointed lecturers in this study will define who they are through ‘negotiation and reconciliation’ as they steer their way along ‘multiple trajectories’ of identity related to their varying positions of membership of multiple communities (Wenger, 1998). Clegg (2008) explicitly asked a small number of lecturers across a wide range of subject disciplines within one institution about their identity. She found that the boundaries of higher education ‘emerged as porous’ so that some academics were not identifying with subject discipline in a simple and traditional way but were influenced by other claims ‘beyond the confines of the university’. The current study investigates lecturers in teacher education who have significant histories and investment in wider

practitioner communities, who teach in well-established educational partnerships, and who work in an institution that is not strongly driven by the drive to obtain research funding. As Clegg points out, 'less traditional universities...might be important sites to investigate in relation to academic identity' (2008: 341). In considering the identity of academics in the UK Henkel (2000) also emphasises the influence of the higher education and wider context on lecturers in the humanities and sciences. This context is considered to include massification, an increasingly utilitarian curriculum, high levels of accountability, and a declining resource base. In some ways UK teacher education is very familiar with these contextual features, not least because it is centrally controlled by government agencies and is inspected in an arguably threatening process by Ofsted in which a poor review may lead directly to loss of funded student places.

A survey of education departments (Murray, 2005) investigating lecturer's experiences of academic induction emphasised the importance of informal workplace learning although this was found to vary considerably in focus and quality. A further study (Murray & Male, 2005) of seven departments, in contrasting institutions including new and old universities, concluded that there is a need to support the transition of school teachers appointed to higher education. It argued that post-graduate courses on teaching in higher education are likely to be useful, that mentoring is useful but varies widely in quality, that research capacity building needs to be central to induction support, and that there is a need to raise awareness amongst teacher educators of the bond between research and teaching in higher education. This work on the experiences of teacher educators informed the development of UK guidelines for the induction of new teacher educators (Boyd, Harris & Murray, 2007). Martinez (2008) provides a useful reflective exploration of the induction of teacher educators and confirms the relevance of the UK based work to building a more international perspective.

This study focused on the experiences of new teacher lecturers in a complex academic environment and considers their professional identities in relation to the workplace communities to which they belong. These communities are seen as non-formal and socially defined rather than simply the formal department.

## **The Study**

The sources of data included interviews with lecturers, interviews with their line managers, and analysis of institutional documents related to appointment, induction, and staff development. Semi-structured interviews with a sample of sixteen lecturers in teacher education were recorded and transcribed. The new lecturers had moved from school-based roles within the previous four years. The convenience sample was selected in a stratified way to include participants with a range of school curriculum subject specialism, to broadly reflect the gender balance within the department's academic staff and to include a spread of experience of between 1 and 4 years working within higher education. The participants were assured of anonymity and the right to check their interview transcript and a draft of the analysis; all those approached agreed to participate.

The main question in the interview schedule was 'how has the journey of becoming a teacher educator in higher education been for you? What is your personal story?'. The interviewers used neutral prompts and checking of understanding to encourage a narrative but also introduced prepared prompts where this was required to cover the research agenda. These prompts included open questions on areas of strength and key challenges, experience of formal and non-formal support, approaches to teaching focused at least initially on a specific recent session, and the place of scholarship and research activity.

Semi-structured interviews with four line managers used a modified form of the schedule. A sample of 8 institutional documents, relevant to recruitment and academic induction of new lecturers were analysed to provide contextual information. They included job descriptions and person specifications for lecturers in teacher education posts, as well as policies on induction and probation.

The qualitative data analysis began with a coding framework based on our reading of the literature and the interview questions but this initial framework was developed in an iterative way as themes emerged from the data and use of the constant comparison method led to development of conceptual categories (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Charmaz, 2006).

### **The workplace context**

An important aspect of the institutional context is that this is not a 'research intensive' university. The teacher educators were not under very high pressure from the institution or the department to publish although there is some underlying expectation and provision of time for scholarship and research activity. The significant variation in pressure for research and publication between education departments in England is a key contextual aspect which influences induction of new teacher educators. The case study department has more than 100 academic staff and within it section leaders have direct responsibility for the management and professional development of smaller groups of lecturers, they are the 'line managers' responsible for the new teacher educators.

Analysis of the institutional documents suggests that within the institution's strategy there is an emphasis on professional development in relation to teaching but some ambivalence towards research activity. Overall a corporate approach appears to be dominant in the sense that there is clear strategic intent but a tension is apparent between corporate strategy and the needs and interests of the individual lecturer. The analysis of documents indicates that the emphasis within academic induction is mainly on formal systems with a key role for the line manager, but there are some signs of recognition of the importance of non-formal support. There is a tension apparent between the corporate desire to promote professional development but a perceived lack of institutional influence over the range and quality of non-formal support.

Line managers identify 'coming to know organisational and academic systems' as a key challenge for new lecturers. They consider 'professional knowledge' to be an important strength of new lecturers including useful prior experience of supporting student teachers on school placements. The line managers experience a tension between the need to provide time for a measured induction and the pressure on the department in terms of covering the teaching commitments. Line managers appear to view 'preparation for teaching' as scholarship. They view formal programmes, such as the postgraduate course for new lecturers and other Master's level subject courses, as useful and see them as supporting scholarship and research activity. They do not appear to have high expectations for research and publication activity and position it largely as an individual interest.

## Feeling new

The new lecturers in teaching describe 'feeling new' and they experience considerable levels of stress. They are aware of a change to a lower status within their new institution. The new lecturers feel that they were thrown 'in at the deep end' especially in teaching and supporting students. They also feel 'in the dark' partly with regard to teaching content and strategies but even more so in terms of the specialist language, procedures, relationships, line management responsibilities, and level of autonomy within higher education.

*'Coming from that position where I felt respected and confident in my work and that was a big shock when I came here, my lack of confidence. I did not know what was expected and the teaching I was supposed to be doing did not relate to my latter area of experience.'*

Lecturer 12: female, 3 years experience in higher education

*'I would describe it as being a steep learning curve...I wasn't too sure of what was involved. I was worried that I would be out of my depth to some extent. So it's been a case of learning things as they arise really and having to cope with them and deal with them on task really.'*

Lecturer 11: male, 3 years experience in higher education

The response of new teacher educators to 'feeling new' appears to be a seeking for 'credibility'. They suggest a struggle with their previous identity as a teacher. Overall the new lecturers in teaching expressed a determination to develop and demonstrate competence in their new role by 'seeking credibility through knowing'. They focused mainly on the student audience and on the context of teaching in order to establish this credibility. Their aim, at least in the early stages of their new role, was on establishing credibility as a 'teacher'.

*I think the one thing I've felt confident about is the fact that I can teach...*

Lecturer 9: female, 1 year of experience in higher education

Other workplace experiences were identified as challenging. Workload pressure, time management in general and the ability to say 'no' to requests for their time were key issues raised by the new lecturers. Developing organisational knowledge, of administration and procedures, was often seen as more of a challenge than developing subject knowledge.

The new teacher educators' perspectives on the support provided for their development included a fairly balanced view of the benefits of both formal and non-formal support, and of centralised institutional and more local departmental support. They did generally find mentoring to be a useful form of support but used both formal and non-formal mentors and emphasised the importance of close physical location and of time and commitment by the mentor for the arrangement to be effective. Some new lecturers found themselves to be learning through being a member of a well-defined, collaborative and supportive team. Others lecturers, who were not working in such a clearly defined team, found their own non-formal mentors:

*'For me the most important support I got was from colleagues immediately around me on this campus, not necessarily doing my subject. I was really lucky because I got put in an office to share with someone who was very experienced and was really happy to lead me through it and talk to me about anything I was unsure about.'*

Lecturer 1: female, 2 years experience in higher education

The new lecturers express reluctance to 'keep on asking' for advice, partly they explain this as awareness of the heavy workload of experienced colleagues but they seem to feel a tension between appearing as credible and requesting additional non-formal support. The new lecturers do not appear to be very proactive in terms of managing their own professional learning. For example although they value non-formal opportunities to shadow workplace visits and to observe experienced colleagues teaching they do not always feel able to make these arrangements themselves.

There appears to be very strong support amongst the teacher educators for formal courses which included some MA in education courses but was mainly aimed at the mandatory post graduate course for new lecturers. This may seem rather surprising given that all teacher educators will already have a teaching qualification and some resistance to the course was expressed:

*...I'm doing the Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and at first I thought it's a bit of a cheek because really I've been teaching [in schools] but I must admit it's opened my eyes to a lot of things about Higher Education... that's been quite a surprise how effective I've found that.*

Lecturer 15: female, 2 years experience in higher education

One benefit of participation in the PgC course was seen as a widening of perspective on higher education and developing wider networks with colleagues across the institution:

*...the Post Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education has been excellent as well. At first I was quite sceptical thinking well I know how to teach... that has been absolutely excellent in supporting me in the issues I'm struggling with and also having the opportunity to do that with colleagues from the Health Faculty has also been good in that it's widened my perspective...*

Lecturer 16: male, 2 years experience in higher education

An additional benefit of participation in formal assessed higher education courses was seen as the holistic experience of being a 'student' within higher education. This was seen as giving insight for example into assessment, in this case through participation in an MA in education:

*I was studying on the MA and that started in... the first year I was here. So all the problems about marking students' assignments, what that involved, the time it took to mark them, the moderation time, the turnaround time, all of those things and actually even the awarding of marks and the way that students referenced, all that became more meaningful when I actually went through the process myself with the MA as a learner.*

Lecturer 14: female, 3 years experience in higher education

New teacher educators who had completed the PgC course made frequent mention of the benefits of the course with some reference to scholarship and research activity but mainly with respect to enhancement of learning and teaching and especially of assessment in higher education.

### **Reconstructing pedagogy**

The conceptual category of ‘reconstructing pedagogy’ provides an explanatory spine to the professional development and changing identity of new teacher educators through a complex interweaving involving identity, teaching strategies, subject knowledge, scholarly activity and affective aspects.

New teacher educators interviewed identified themselves spontaneously as ‘teachers’. They often expressed pleasure and satisfaction derived from ‘teaching’ and claimed that their ‘teaching’ was a strength which they had brought with them from school practitioner roles into higher education:

*I've really enjoyed the face to face contact with the students, actually teaching them about the [school subject] and being able to focus in on one subject ... and read articles about that one subject ...*

Lecturer 2: female, 1 year of experience in higher education

*I felt quite comfortable as a teacher because I was used to organising a class, I was used to preparing and all those skills I found really useful.*

Lecturer 14: female, 3 years experience in higher education

In discussing this within the interviews the lecturers often did not distinguish very clearly between school-teaching and higher education teaching, they expressed ‘teaching’ and being a ‘teacher’ in a generic or more boundary-crossing way. They generally expressed a view of their new role as being mainly that of a ‘teacher’ in higher education rather than as an ‘academic’ or ‘researcher’.

Closely related to this, a category that emerged within the analysis was termed ‘teaching transfer’ because it related to the way in which teacher educators felt that they were able to apply prior school teaching experience, skills and understandings to their new role in higher education and it formed a key element of their reconstruction of teaching within their new role and included three components. The first component of teaching transfer is ‘transferable skills and strategies’. This apparently straightforward idea expressed by teacher educators is that even though teaching in school and university are very different in many ways, not least because one involves children and one involves adults, there are at least some common skills and strategies that school teachers are able to bring with them.

*The first term was mainly face to face lecturing which isn't so very different from face to face teaching in the classroom so I found that ok. That was pretty much what I was used to, preparing lectures and delivering them and sort of that kind of day to day work was pretty much the same.*

Lecturer 2: female, 1 year experience in higher education

However this is complicated by the fact that teacher educators also bring their own pre-conceptions of university teaching and of teacher education based on their own experiences. Some teacher educators claimed that in the early stages they tended to rely on didactic lecture styles of teaching because they felt that is what students and colleagues would expect. A second reason given for relying on prepared lectures was due to a lack of confidence in the 'theoretical' subject knowledge base; a lecturing approach seemed less risky than strategies involving discussion.

The second component of teaching transfer was 'credibility as a school teacher'. This credibility reveals a fundamental contradiction within the context of professional education that imposes itself powerfully on new teacher educators. At just the time when they might be expected to work hard at gaining their academic credibility and at gaining a grasp of the key literature in the subject discipline, they feel a strong urge to demonstrate their 'professional' credibility.

*When I started I didn't feel particularly confident at all. I was confident in the fact that I came fresh from school and the students would welcome that as I had recent and relevant experience so I was confident in that.*

Lecturer 16: male, 2 years experience in higher education

This credibility as a successful school classroom teacher, they feel, gives them credibility in particular with their students. At the early stages of working in higher education hanging on to their school classroom credibility also provides new teacher educators with some sense of reassurance, that they feel they can get back to a job in a school if they are not successful or happy working in higher education.

A third element of teaching transfer concerns teacher educators' conceptions of 'modelling'. The process of 'modelling' is recognised in the literature on teacher education (Loughran & Berry, 2005; Lunenberg, Korthagen & Swennen, 2007) and it is related to the *layered* nature of teacher education: it is complex because it includes teaching and learning about teaching and learning and often the teacher educators referred to different levels of objective within their teaching practice.

*I think, because I'm a teacher, an effective primary teacher, I use a lot of the teaching and learning strategies I used in school because that's what I do and I'm having to model the teaching and learning strategies with the students that I'm working with.*

Lecturer 9: female, 1 year of experience in higher education

The teacher educators frequently highlight 'modelling' and it certainly appears to be a key aspect of their pedagogy, but there does not appear to be a firm consensus among them on what it actually involves. Their conception of 'modelling' appears to range from a form of role play, with the tutor as classroom teacher and

students as pupils, to a form of explicit reflective learning in which the tutor explains their own questioning and planning into the effectiveness of their practice in adult teacher education.

*'I do a lot of modelling so that they can see what they should be doing, so they can see a teacher in action but at the same time I understand that they have got to.... have a broader view of the subject so there's a conflict there between... modelling and making it explicit for them so they know what I am doing'*

Lecturer 1: female, 2 years experience in higher education

A further element within reconstructing pedagogy was termed within our analysis as the 'academic bump' and it appeared to prevent complacency among teacher educators regarding their teaching practice. The academic bump is the realisation by new teacher educators that not all of their student teachers are highly motivated and proactive learners. The new teacher educators explained that their expectations of students had proved somewhat optimistic especially in relation to motivation, academic ability, key skills, and ability to collaborate effectively.

*I think one of the things I've found really strange coming here is, you expect the students to be a lot brighter academically than they actually are when you get here. The number of them who have problems of different kinds... I hadn't expected that at all.*

Lecturer 2: female, 1 year of experience in higher education

The academic bump appears to have provided part of the stimulus for some new teacher educators to reassess their more didactic initial approach. The new teacher educators turned towards teaching and learning strategies from their school practice in order to respond to student learner needs in the university, again there is within this a strong element of boundary-crossing between the school and university activity systems.

Within reconstruction of pedagogy, despite their belief in the possibility of teaching transfer, the assessment process in higher education, especially marking student work, was strongly identified as a key knowledge gap by teacher educators.

*I've found marking very difficult because course marking for QTS is much, much different from marking for even Year 6. That's been a real difficulty really that I've had to overcome and it's taken me an awful lot longer than I expected it to, so the time management of that and managing to fit it in amongst all the other things that you've got to do.'*

Lecturer 2: female, 1 year of experience in higher education

Workshops on marking student work, provided by the central teaching and learning unit, were valued but this is an area where informal support provided by some teaching teams was found to be particularly helpful in terms of specific subject focus and point of need timing.

*In many ways I think some of the professional development activities that we conducted...as part of regular [subject specialism team] meetings when we have discussed teaching and learning issues in relation to the students, those have probably actually been the most useful aspect of professional*

*development...they were much more timely in a sense, they kind of came because they tended to relate to the structure of the year...they came when I needed them...*

Lecturer 10: male, 4 years experience in higher education

Teacher educators also felt that they initially lacked information and understanding of assessment terminology, marking procedures and of the purpose and procedures of assessment boards and again departmental level support was particularly valued. Heads of department recognised assessment as a key issue and reported varying levels of departmental activity to support new teacher educators in this area. However they cited time constraints as limiting the support possible and relied on the standard second marking process as a key process for induction. The perceived lack of knowledge in the area of assessment appears to have caused high levels of anxiety amongst new teacher educators and in addition some reported spending excessive amounts of time struggling with the marking of student work.

The new teacher educators reported spending large amounts of time on preparation for taught sessions and this introduces an element of scholarship to underpin their reconstruction of pedagogy. The new teacher educators use the term 'teaching knowledge', and consider this to be a strength that they bring with them, based on their recent practitioner experience.

*I was confident in my subject knowledge on one level, in terms of the actual knowledge of teaching and how to teach and the subject knowledge of my area which was [school curriculum subject] but I was also aware that there were glaring gaps. My teaching experience has been predominantly in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 so my knowledge with the Foundation Stage with teaching children under the age of 7 was actually quite poor so I didn't feel very confident there.*

Lecturer 16: male, 2 years experience in higher education

They also describe a more abstract theoretical nature of knowledge accessed as part of 'preparation' for teaching. However in some cases their references to web-based resources and to being 'up to date' point towards much of this preparation being focused on strategic and good practice professional documents rather than more specific underpinning research papers or scholarly texts:

*'A lot of reading I tend to do tends to come from websites and government articles. So I'm keeping abreast of changes and things that are going on.'*

Lecturer 3: male, 4 years experience in higher education

In this sense then the effort put into preparation was still at least in part a process of seeking credibility as a school teacher practitioner by knowing current policy and 'best practice'.

The analysis of teacher educator comments related to the complex area of 'scholarly and research activity' brings together a wide range of scholarly activity from personal reading in preparation for teaching across to writing for published research projects. To some extent interviewees may have underestimated their engagement because of their personal judgements on what actually constitutes or might be claimed to be scholarly and research activity. Heads of department appeared to be confident that new teacher educators were

engaging in useful and relevant scholarly activity to support their teaching and showed a tendency to sympathise with a lack of explicit research and publication activity which they blamed on workload pressure.

The core category of ‘reconstruction of pedagogy’ revealed in our analysis is expressed in figure 1 which summarises the tensions, lecturer responses and outcomes emerging from the analysis. The existing identities of new lecturers as teachers, being thrown in at the deep end in terms of teaching activity, the institutional focus on student evaluative feedback, and the professional body and inspection process focus on school practice, all help to explain the priorities of the newly appointed teacher educators to establish and maintain credibility as ‘school’ teachers rather than to focus on developing other possible practices and identities such as that of a researcher.



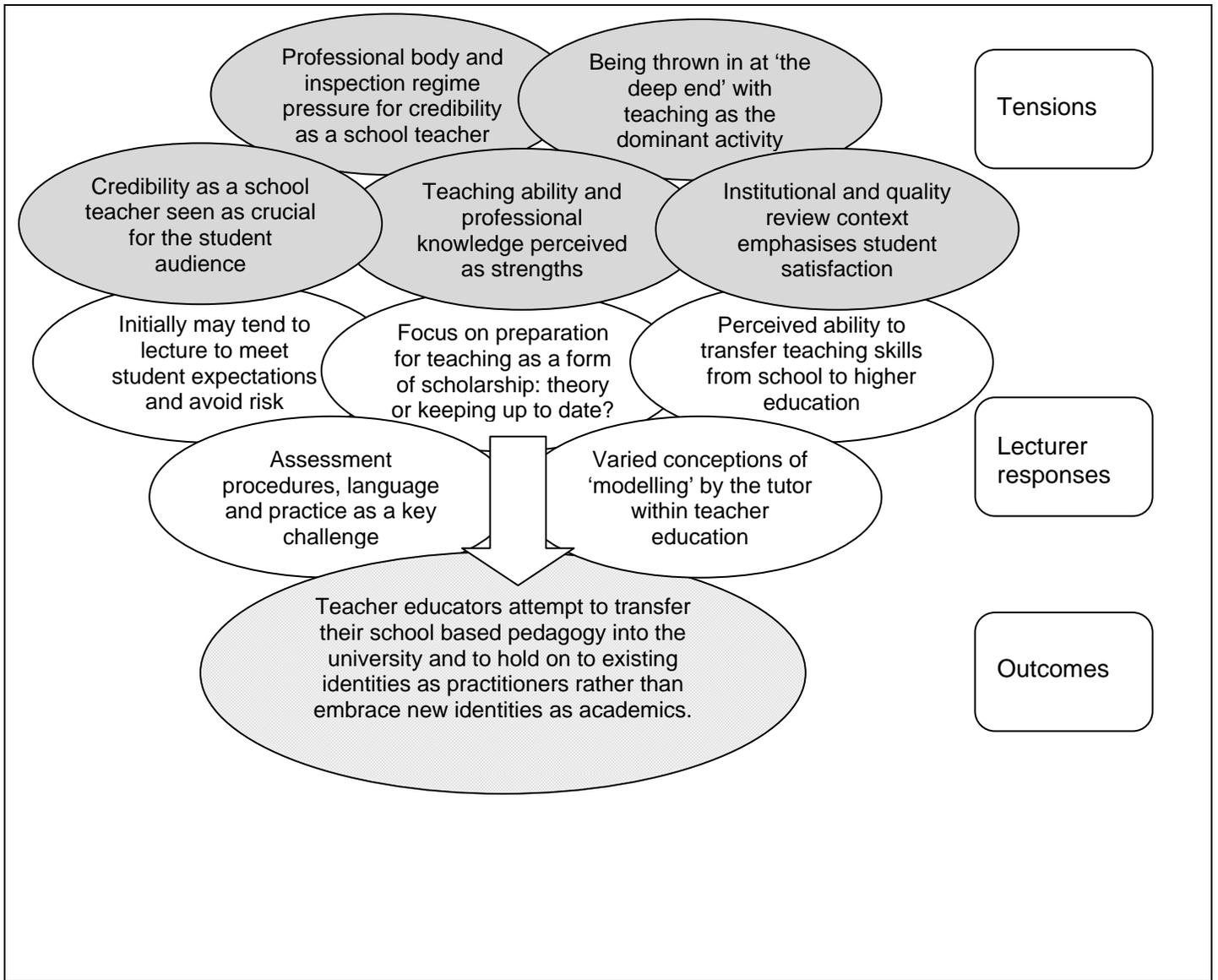


Figure 1: reconstruction of pedagogy by new university based teacher educators

Overall an underlying belief in the possibility of 'transfer', the use of 'modelling', the tension between abstract theory and procedural knowledge, and the drive to maintain 'credibility as a school teacher' all form significant influences on the teacher educators' emerging pedagogy for initial teacher education. Our analysis highlights the tensions within the workplace that create complex influences affecting the new lecturers in varying personalised ways. Within this diversity of response to their workplace the new teacher educators are building their practice and identity within higher education.

## Discussion

In this study the induction experience of the new lecturers in teacher education appears to be a rapid immersion into work, with particular emphasis on teaching. The analysis suggests that within the case study institution new lecturers in teacher education experience challenges to their existing identities as school teachers. They appear to be building new identities as teachers in higher education, basing their teaching at least in part on scholarship but most often without seeing themselves as becoming active researchers or academics. They experience uncertainty within themselves, the department, their teaching teams, and the educational partnership, concerning the value of more abstract theory in relation to practitioner knowing. They do not express a confident sense of 'disciplinary ways of thinking' (Pace & Middendorf, 2004). The new lecturers consider practitioner knowledge to be a strength that they bring to their new role, but they also invest huge efforts in preparation for taught sessions. This apparent paradox reveals their struggle with and emerging understanding of what knowledge is valued within their subject discipline. The contradiction (Engestrom, 2001) that they experience within their professional field, between the value of practice and of abstract theory, appears to be a key characteristic of the workplace environment and is one that increases the confusion of the new lecturers. The new lecturers focus primarily on their teaching in higher education and do not appear to value strong links between research activity and teaching. From the perspective of a 'profound connection' between practice and identity (Wenger, 1998) this appears to constrain the priority they give to scholarship and research activity.

There also appear to be tensions between institutional strategic requirements, which include a focus on research activity and the pressures within the professional field, which includes a punitive inspection regime, to be a credible school teacher. The management of this balancing act is left to line managers through their implementation and mediation of the induction and appraisal policies, through work allocation and by setting expectations and creating cultures for scholarship and research. The need for new lecturers to be proactive in managing their induction and professional development is acknowledged in policy documents and is recognised by line managers but does not appear to be communicated or enacted to a great extent by the new teacher educators. The interview data analysis did not find evidence of assertive professional development planning amongst new lecturers, for example whilst some hinted towards future research activity they did not describe convincing plans for developing this. The general position of 'feeling new' means that the new lecturers do not appear to be in a position in which they are likely to adopt an assertive approach to their own professional development amid the corporate approach with its rhetoric and apparatus of support.

Overall the new lecturers are seeking credibility through knowing and reconstructing their pedagogy but they pursue this within a complex and confusing context that involves considerable amounts of boundary-crossing and uncertainty. They focus on teaching and on developing knowledge, with an eye on the students as their key audience, in relation to credibility as practitioners rather than as researchers. Within the case study workplace context the experiences of the new teacher educators encourages them to hold on to their existing identity as school teachers.

## Conclusions

There has been an emphasis in previous investigations of academic induction on professional learning through non-formal activity and the importance of the quality of everyday social interaction amongst lecturers (Trowler & Knight, 2000). This study supports that view but suggests that if the wider context, including the particular influences within specific subject disciplines or professional fields, is not taken into account then such workplace learning may lead to reinforcement of conservative perspectives and an uncritical acceptance of taken for granted assumptions. In this case study the unintended impact of the workplace context is that it encourages new lecturers to hold on to their identity as a school teacher rather than develop a new professional identity as an academic. The conclusion to be drawn is that departments of teacher education need to critically consider the impact of their particular workplace environment on newly appointed lecturers.

The findings of this case study suggest that newly appointed lecturers in teacher education may need to be supported to adopt a more critical stance towards their emerging professional identity, their existing practitioner knowledge, the existing practices of their department, and the institutional, professional body and wider socio-political context of their role. The support for developing such a stance appears likely to be found through non-formal networks because, as Henkel (2000) argues, it may largely be expressed as resistance to institutional centralised policy and may be associated with research activity. Membership of strong subject discipline research networks both within and external to the institution are possible forms of support to encourage the development of critical perspectives. The new teacher educators appear to be overwhelmed with work during their induction period and it appears that their institution needs to match its rhetoric of support and development with staffing resources that enable some protected time for new lecturers so that they are able to focus more systematically on their professional development including scholarship and research activity. In addition teacher educators appear to need some role models on which to base their own emerging identities as academics. The department needs to ensure that 'paradigmatic trajectories' of identity development (Wenger, 1998), including an appropriate element of scholarship and research, are provided as a guide for new teacher educators to support their professional development planning.

Organizational structures, the formal learning architecture (Dill, 1999), and formal support for research-capacity building may be useful in supporting academic induction. There appears to be a potential role for a postgraduate course, or an alternative collaborative project, for the new lecturers in helping them to build networks with colleagues in other subject disciplines in order to gain a more critical perspective on their own context. Such formal processes of support during induction may provoke professional learning but there appears to be a danger that they may also unwittingly encourage a passive approach among these new lecturers in terms of taking responsibility for their own induction and professional development. New lecturers in teacher education need to be encouraged to shape their own development, to pro-actively plan for their scholarship and research activity and to see more clearly how that will link to their teaching. It is likely that less explicit support and resource incentives, especially time for collaborative scholarship, will encourage highly valued informal activity and help to build communities of practice. Developing this *fuzzy* learning architecture, not formal but deliberately nurtured by the organisation, is a difficult area of strategy in which the institution and department must not become too intrusive (Seely Brown & Duguid, 1996). It might include encouragement of collaborative practitioner research activity (Hussein, 2007), perhaps through small-

scale funding, and encourage non-formal support, such as writing groups or special interest groups. It might begin with formal mentoring especially for research and academic writing but when that becomes 'contagious' (Mullen & Hutingger, 2008) and less formal it seems likely to have the most impact on professional learning.

Overall the study has illustrated that there is a need to understand and address the induction and workplace learning of lecturers in particular professional fields and work contexts at more than one level. This concurs with the wider workplace learning literature (for example Evans, Hodkinson, Rainbird & Unwin, 2006) in calling for enquiry and action at the wider level including the institutional context, the individual level, and perhaps most importantly, at the level of the department or workplace team and other non-formal networks and communities of practice.

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