

**Learning to become a Vocational and Technical Education (VTE)
teacher in Brunei Darussalam**

Adeline Yuen Sze, Goh

Submitted in accordance with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds,
School of Education

June 2010

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Acknowledgement

It is a great honour for me to acknowledge the generous and unfailing support, thorough guidance and patience of my supervisors, Professor Miriam Zukas and Professor Phil Hodkinson. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity to do my Ph.D study with them. Their knowledge and expertise was invaluable during my research study. Their dedication, professionalism and intellectual rigor has also challenged me to realise the full potential of my research study.

I am also indebted to all the staff in Lifelong Learning department for making my stay comfortable. I would also like to thank my colleagues at the University of Brunei who provided me encouragement and support during my fieldwork in Brunei. Sincere thanks to all the participants who have generously gave their time and insights which provided a rich basis for this research study.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my family who have been incredibly supportive through this process. Personal thanks to my parents who have continuously encouraged me with their wisdom. Mum and Dad, thanks for believing in me. I am also grateful to my sister and brothers who have motivated me to do and be more than I ever thought possible. In so many ways, this study might not have happened without their help and encouragement.

I also wish to extend my sincere thanks to all my friends whom I met in the UK who made my stay an enjoyable experience. Special thanks to Alistair, whose faith and belief in myself kept me going. His support, understanding and encouraging words provided during this research journey has sustained and made the completion of this work possible. Last but not least, I thank my sponsor, the Government of Brunei for granting me this scholarship to pursue my graduate studies at the University of Leeds.

Abstract

This thesis was devised to explore my central interest in finding out empirically how individuals learn to become Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) teachers in Brunei. This study was based on a case study of twelve participants which includes five males and seven females undergoing a one year full-time Post Graduate Certificate Technical Education course in Brunei. Each participant was interviewed twice: once at the beginning of the course and once at the end of the course.

My main empirical findings show that social relationships in learning situations are important with regard to becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. Within different learning situations, individuals were also proactive in taking control of their own learning. In addition, my findings illustrate that most, if not all, student teachers have learned and changed towards the end of the teacher training course.

The process of becoming a VTE teacher could logically be seen as two separate stages; choosing and learning to become a VTE teacher. One of the thesis objectives was also to understand the relationship between career decision-making and learning in relation to the Brunei VTE teachers. Drawing from Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership theory and Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning, I conclude that the two stages are integrated in practice and should be viewed as an on-going learning process called an individual learning journey. Based on my empirical findings, I also conclude that Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) learning theories need to be extended in order to fully understand social relationships, individual agency within learning cultures and to take into account that learning cultures change even within the same learning situation when individual position and roles change. This thesis concludes by identifying some implications for research and practice that arise from the findings of this study.

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Abbreviations

CTE	Certificate in Technical Education
DipTE	Diploma in Technical Education
DTE	Department of Technical Education
FE	Further Education
HND	Higher National Diploma
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MIB	<i>Melayu Islam Beraja</i> (Malay Islam Monarchy)
PGCTE	Post Graduate Certificate in Technical Education
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
QTLS	Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills
SHBIE	Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Institute of Education
UBD	University of Brunei Darussalam
VTE	Vocational and Technical Education
TP	Teaching Practice

Chapter 1 Introduction

My research rationale

This thesis developed from my own interest and inclination to explore how individuals become Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) teachers. Prior to the outset of this research, I was a lecturer who was involved in VTE teacher training at the University of Brunei. I have always believed that individuals will be equipped to teach when they have finished a teacher training course. This has also led me to believe that individuals should be sent on a teacher training course prior to attempting to teach. This was based on my initial assumptions which surround the concept of learning, namely that teachers must hold a formal teaching qualification prior to teaching. This suggests that learning to teach on a course or in a formal setting is the only option for people who want to teach. This is linked to my second assumption that what is learnt on this course will be adequate to prepare and equip the teachers for subsequent future lessons. That is, most of the learning needed to teach will be achieved in the teacher training course.

Logically, there could be two stages involved in the process of becoming a VTE teacher. The first is choosing to become a VTE teacher and the other is learning how to become a VTE teacher. As I progressed with this research through reading the literature and looking at my research data, this simplistic view about becoming a VTE teacher, along with many of my starting assumptions about the nature of teacher training, was challenged and changed. This has led me to a decision to look at these particular issues in detail in relation to VTE teacher training in Brunei. This, I believed, could best be achieved through exploring individual teachers'

detailed accounts of how they chose to become a VTE teacher and their experiences in learning to teach.

This has resulted in me becoming committed to a study that aims to understand each individual teacher's story, rather than the views of a group of homogenous teachers. This is because the latter usually mask the individual learner's identity and individual actions. To do this, I will describe how individuals learn to become a teacher using individual accounts of their biography, their teaching and learning experiences. Due to the nature and scope of my small-scale study, it would be unlikely to have many visible effects on the VTE teacher training system in Brunei. However, it could still be considered valuable by people to whom such a study might be of relevance. Simultaneously, it could also be valuable to a wider group of the academic community, both within and outside Brunei, who are involved and interested in VTE teacher education. I hope the outcomes from this piece of research could stir up constructive debates within the circle of VTE teacher researchers and also inform practice and research involving the teacher training programme. In addition to this, I also hope the outcomes of this research will raise the importance of recognising that a teacher training programme is not a 'one-stop store' where one can obtain all the knowledge to become a teacher; rather, it should be a part of an ongoing learning journey in becoming a VTE teacher.

In order to deal with the issues which were raised at the beginning of this chapter, these are my research questions:

- 1) How can we understand the issue of career decision-making and learning in the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei?
 - Why do individuals choose to become a VTE teacher?

- What factors influenced their decision to join the VTE teaching profession?
 - How do they learn to teach in their workplaces?
 - How do they learn to teach at their VTE teacher training course?
 - Are the two issues linked? Or should they be considered as separate processes?
- 2) What is the relationship between learning in different locations at different stages of an individual's life in the process of becoming a VTE teacher?
- How can we understand the relationship between learning in the workplace and learning on a VTE teacher training course?

Structure of the thesis

The thesis adopts the following structure. In Chapter 1, I have described the rationale and structure of my research. In Chapter 2, I provide a brief overview of my country, Brunei Darussalam, and background information to understand the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. This is followed by Chapter 3, where I reveal some of the relevant literature about becoming a VTE teacher, which is sufficient to contextualize what follows in the subsequent chapters. Subsequently, in Chapter 4, I describe the research methodology. This includes my rationale for choosing the research methodology based on philosophical assumptions i.e. the ontological and epistemological assumptions about social science research. I then describe how I carried out the research, including data collection and analysis. I also include the strategies that I have considered in the presentation of my data, which are reflected in the subsequent three chapters: 5, 6 and 7.

In Chapters 5, 6 and 7, I describe how individuals learn to become a VTE teacher, which is based on my research data. Given that this research was conducted in the Brunei context, I present the chapters in chronological order to illustrate and explain how individuals become a VTE teacher in Brunei. Chapter 5 presents the career decisions of four individuals which led to them becoming a VTE teacher. In Chapter 6, I present detailed stories of three trainee teachers, to illustrate the different ways they learnt to teach during their initial years of teaching. In Chapter 7, I present a detailed story of a trainee teacher, completed by the experiences from the whole sample to illustrate the learning experiences within the teacher training course.

Chapter 8 is a synthesis chapter of Chapters 5, 6 and 7 which discusses and explains the data using the theoretical materials that underpinned my research questions. In parallel to this discussion, I have the opportunity to illustrate the contributions of my research findings to the existing learning theories that I used. Subsequently, Chapter 9 addresses the practical implications of the lessons learned from this research.

Chapter 2 Becoming a Vocational and Technical Teacher (VTE) in the Brunei Context

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide background information to understand the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. In order to do this, the first section introduces the country, Brunei Darussalam, and illustrates the parts of Brunei culture which are relevant to this thesis. The second section provides an overview of the different routes taken by individuals to become a VTE teacher in Brunei. This is followed by an illustration of how the VTE teacher training system works in Brunei.

The country: Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam is an independent Malay Islamic Monarchy in South-East Asia situated on the North-Western coast of the island of Borneo. It occupies a relatively small land area of 5,765 square kilometres, in between the two large Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak. The capital of Brunei Darussalam is Bandar Seri Begawan, which is located in the Brunei-Muara district (Borneo Bulletin Brunei Yearbook, 2007).



Figure 2.1 Location of Brunei in Asia

The country's population is approximately 357,800 (Department of statistics, Economic Planning and Development, 2005) which is made up of local people and foreign workers. The local population comprises Brunei Malays who are the dominant ethnic group of society and who account for about two thirds (67%) of the population of Brunei. The ethnic minorities include Chinese (15%), various indigenous groups (3%) and others (17%).

Brunei, which is led by the 29th ruler, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, achieved its independence on the 1st January, 1984 after being under British protection for about a century (Brunei Tourism, 2005). Although Brunei has been independent for many years, British cultural traces still impinge on many systems of the country. For example, although the national language is Malay, English language is still widely used for official purposes, including education. The effect of the cultural traces can also be seen in the structure of the Brunei education system, which is very similar to that of the British education system, since it upholds a policy

of providing a minimum of twelve years of compulsory education. This includes the Brunei-Cambridge GCE O' level, followed by post-secondary education either at a vocational and technical education college or a sixth form college to study A' levels. Once students have completed their post-secondary education, they can either enrol in the local university or a foreign university.

In recent years, an increasing number of females compared to males have participated in higher education. For example, the number of females participating in the local university has been outnumbering male students since the institution opened, with the gap widening each year (Anaman and Kassim, 2006). Anaman and Kassim (2006) claim that this increase in female participation in higher education contributes to the increase in the female labour force participation in Brunei.

For many people in Brunei, religious faith is an important part of ethnicity and personal identity. For example, all Brunei Malays are Muslims who follow the Islamic faith. The Islamic principles are also evident in the national ideology of Brunei. This national ideology, articulated as *Melayu Islam Beraja* (MIB) – Malay Islam Monarchy (Idris, 1996), has been guiding the progressive development of the nation since the independence of the country. This MIB philosophy incorporates Brunei Malay culture, Malay customs, Islamic principles and recognition of the monarchy system as a way of life of the Bruneian people.

In the country, the MIB philosophy dominates all aspects of life and is also central to the nation's education system (Masli, 2009). For example, Brunei parents use this MIB philosophy as a user guide to help them to bring up their children (Brunei Times, 2009).

Other ethnic groups like Chinese have different cultural traditions and family values compared to the Brunei Malays. For example, research focused on Chinese parental expectations with regard to the academic achievements of their children in many countries has shown that their expectations are influenced by Chinese tradition (for example Li, 2004; Ho, 1994). According to Li (2004) and Ho (1994), this tradition is shaped by the Confucian philosophy which advocates high respect for education, and belief in hard work.

As shown in Chapter 1, the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei could logically be viewed as consisting of two stages; the first is choosing and the second is learning to become a VTE teacher. The following section describes the ways individuals can become a VTE teacher in Brunei, followed by how the VTE teacher training is structured in Brunei, and aims to provide a better understanding of the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei.

The different ways of becoming a VTE teacher

There are several different ways of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. Before illustrating these different ways, this section will describe who a 'VTE teacher' is in order to avoid confusion. Individuals who teach in VTE colleges or teach vocational subjects in secondary schools are called VTE teachers, whilst those who teach in a nursing college or higher technical institutions are called VTE lecturers. I will use the term 'VTE teacher' to describe both these groups throughout this thesis.

According to Mosbi (2005), most of these local VTE teachers are usually recruited after they have finished their professional training or first degree in subjects from a

wide range of technical and commercial areas; for example, engineering, business studies, food science technology etc. In certain cases, some VTE teachers have a Masters degree at the time they are recruited.

Most individuals either choose to apply to become a VTE teacher or they are already bonded to teach. That is, individuals who are 'bonded' are usually students who chose to apply for a government scholarship after their post-secondary education to pursue their further studies in any of their fields of interest abroad. The Brunei Government offers scholarships to students, who must satisfy the minimum requirements set by the scholarship department of the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2008). With this scholarship, the students are required to return to Brunei to become a VTE teacher upon graduation. They will be allocated to teach in either secondary schools or VTE institutions which include the nursing college and higher technical institutions, depending upon their area of expertise.

Due to the existing Brunei policy of recruiting VTE teachers, individuals who are employed as VTE teachers are required to teach at any of the VTE colleges, nursing college, higher technical institutions or secondary schools depending upon their area of expertise for at least one year before enrolling themselves in a VTE teacher training course.

During this first year of teaching, these VTE teachers are given the responsibility of teaching VTE subjects in their colleges, although they do not have any prior teaching experience. The amount of time spent teaching at these VTE colleges before they are enrolled in the VTE teacher training course depends on the quota of students available for enrolment on the course each year. However, every VTE teacher must enroll on the VTE teacher training course within three years from the

start of their employment. The following section aims to illustrate the structure of the VTE teacher training system.

VTE teacher training

Most VTE teachers have to enroll in a VTE teacher training course at the local university. There are two VTE teacher training qualifications offered by the university, namely the Postgraduate Certificate in Technical Education (PGCTE) and the Certificate of Technical Education (CTE), which was upgraded in 2006 to the Diploma of Technical Education (DipTE). These one year full-time teacher training courses aim to improve the teaching or pedagogical skills of the VTE teachers. The modules in the courses are designed based on an evaluation of the curriculum used in the UK and Australia where either the 'general method' approach or the 'special method' approach should be included in the modules (O'Neill, 1998).

The structure of the course is such that student teachers are required to be at their teaching placement every Monday and at the university four days a week. At the university, the student teachers are required to attend lectures and tutorials, participate in discussions and also participate in microteaching. The student teachers are also required to arrange their teaching practice with the college where they were teaching prior to enrolling on the teacher training course. Although they will be returning to their previous college, they don't have the same responsibilities as they did when they were full-time teachers there. The teaching practice is designed this way in order to provide increased opportunities for the student teachers to observe and participate in the educational activities of their college. It

also allows them to access sources of information relevant to their coursework (Department of Science and Mathematics, 2006; Fung and O'Neill, 1998).

During their teaching practice at their college, the student teachers will have to plan, teach and evaluate their lessons. All lesson plans, including self-reflection of their teaching practice experiences after each lesson, must be kept in a Teaching Practice (TP) file which is assessed at the end of each semester. They will be supported and assessed by both their cooperating teacher in the college and the university based supervisors who are also their university lecturers. However, the final grade will be determined by the university based supervisors (Department of Science and Mathematics, 2006). Their cooperating teacher is usually assigned by the college and will have either passed the post-graduate certificate in education themselves or have a few years of teaching experience (Mosbi, 2005). They will serve as a mentor to the student teachers with the responsibility to provide guidance and counsel on teaching methods and techniques.

In order to pass the VTE teacher training programme, student teachers have to pass three different elements of the course: coursework, written exam and teaching practice (Department of Science and Mathematics, 2006). In addition, they are also expected to complete the course by meeting the criteria set by the relevant lecturers and the programme coordinator.

Conclusion

As a developing country, Brunei is keeping up with the ever-changing world market. In response to this, Brunei needs to continue to produce a highly-developed,

competent and flexible workforce which places a huge responsibility on the teaching training programme to produce committed teachers (Jamil, 2000). By providing an understanding of the Brunei culture, the structure of the VTE teacher training system and the different ways in which individuals can become a Vocational Technical Education (VTE) teacher, this chapter provides the basis for understanding subsequent chapters of this thesis.

The next chapter presents a review of the literature which is relevant to the research. Given that there is an absence of literature on VTE teachers in Brunei, I have decided to search for literature on VTE teachers elsewhere. In doing so, I came across a limited body of research on Further Education (FE) teachers in the United Kingdom (UK). The FE sector in the UK is comparable to the VTE sector in Brunei. Both sectors are involved in preparing students for skill-based occupations. However, in deciding to conduct a literature review on FE teachers, I have to be aware of the differences between the context, culture and policy within the VTE sector in Brunei and the FE sector of the UK and the implications of using this literature.

I do acknowledge literature from other countries, but I have engaged with literature mainly from the UK due to three reasons. Firstly, Brunei is a post-colonial country with traces of British culture still impinging on many Bruneian systems. The second reason is that there has not been much research conducted on VTE teachers in Brunei. Lastly, since I am studying for my Ph.D. in a UK university, it provides me with a legitimate reason for using British educational experiences. For these reasons, I have decided to engage with the UK literature regarding what is known about becoming an FE teacher, which will provide insights into what has and has not been achieved in this area of research.

Chapter 3 What is known about becoming a FE teacher

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate an in-depth exploration of the relevant literature regarding becoming a Further Education (FE) teacher. This will provide the rationale and justification for the research questions. The first section of this chapter focuses on literature on FE teachers in the UK. Within this category of literature, research is discussed which relates to the process of becoming a FE teacher. This discussion illustrates one of the gaps found which the research seeks to address. This is then followed by a discussion of the different ways found within the literature to understand career decision-making and learning. Lastly, the final section aims to provide an explanation and justification for the chosen research questions.

FE teachers

In the UK, teachers who work within the FE sector are referred to as FE teachers.

The FE sector caters for students who have finished their 'compulsory education' and who intend to go to a FE college. The FE sector also caters for adult learners who wish to improve their qualifications or gain new skills in their later life. Apart from providing courses which are similar to those in schools, FE colleges also offer a wide array of vocational courses which offer specific job qualifications.

Those who enter the FE teaching profession come from a diverse range of backgrounds. They are expected to have already successfully completed some

form of professional training or have become experienced and established as professionals of another kind, for example, as an engineer, chef or business manager. Thus, FE teachers have to acquire their professional or specialist knowledge first and then the knowledge of how to teach it. Thus, this suggests that having professional knowledge serves as a form of credibility with regard to their role as FE teachers (Robson, 1998, 2006).

There has been a steady growth in academic research within the FE sector, but it is still limited in terms of research on FE teachers. The research on FE teachers which has been conducted ranges from occupational socialization of FE teachers (for example Gleeson and Mardle, 1980; Salisbury, 1994a, 1994b) to the impacts of changing policy, provision on work cultures and professional identity within the FE sector (for example Ainley and Bailey, 1997; Avis, 1999; Avis et al., 1996; Jephcote et al., 2008; Jephcote and Salisbury, 2009; Shain and Gleeson, 1999). There has been a growing interest in 'FE teacher professionalism' (for example, Avis and Bathmaker, 2006; Clow, 2001; Colley et al., 2007; Gleeson et al., 2005; Gleeson and James, 2007; Randle and Brady, 1997; Robson et al., 2004; Robson, 1998; Shain, 1998) and also in the changes to the roles of those working in the FE sector due to the impact of the new managerialism (for example Gleeson and Shain, 1999; Randle and Brady, 1997). However, within the sphere of research on FE teachers, there is still an under researched area which focuses explicitly on the process of becoming an FE teacher, which is of my interest.

Becoming a FE teacher in the UK

In the new reform agenda set out by Lifelong Learning for Initial Teacher Training (ITT) set out in '*Equipping our Teachers for the Future: Reforming Initial Teacher Training for the Learning and Skills sector*' (DfES, 2004), all new entrants to the FE teaching profession were required to gain the appropriate teaching qualifications needed for their role leading to Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status within five years. This initial teacher training for FE teachers is provided by a number of university partnerships and partner colleges.

In most cases, FE trainee teachers are employed as full-time or part-time further education teachers while undertaking their initial teacher training. These FE trainee teachers usually have substantial teaching experience. The initial teacher training course requires FE trainee teachers to attend courses as well as practice their teaching skills at a college. In-service FE trainee teachers usually attend a two-year part-time programme for half a day each week while some trainees usually undertake a one year full-time pre-service training course prior to finding employment in the FE sector (Ofsted, 2009).

Compared with the school sector, there is relatively little research on the process of becoming a FE teacher. Existing research largely focuses on the experiences and learning of pre-service and in-service teachers undergoing FE initial teacher training courses (for example, Avis and Bathmaker, 2006, 2009; Avis et al., 2002a, 2002b, 2003; Bathmaker et al., 2003; Bathmaker and Avis, 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Parsons et al., 2001; Robson, 1998, 2000; Maxwell, 2004, 2009; Wallace, 2002; Lucas, 2007, Lucas and Unwin, 2009).

Given that the process of becoming a VTE teacher could be viewed as two stages which involve an individual's career choice to become a FE teacher and learning to become a FE teacher, there is no study on FE teachers in the UK that has directly addressed the links between the individual's career choice and learning to become a FE teacher. For example, whilst Avis and Bathmaker (2009) did write about the individuals' different trajectories into the FE sector, which reflects on their educational and biographical experiences, they were more interested in using these different trajectories to help them conceptualise individuals' orientations towards pedagogic relations and enacted professionalism. Thus, one of the aims of this research is to examine both of the issues, namely career choice and learning, in relation to Brunei VTE teachers; these topics have not been studied in Brunei either. The literature review seems to split between literature about career decision-making and literature about learning. Thus, the following sections will deal with these two bodies of literature separately, even though the central concern of the thesis will eventually be to examine the relationship between them.

Career choice and career decision-making

Most of the research studying career decision-making within the literature is based on findings using models of decision-making. My intention is not to analyse each of these models; instead, I prefer to highlight the inadequacy of some of these models which provides the reason as to why I prefer one of the models of career decision-making over the others.

A review by Osipow (1990) identifies four main approaches to understanding decision-making, namely: developmental, trait oriented, reinforcement-based (for

example, social learning models) and personality focused. Although these approaches have influenced career guidance practice, they only partially understand the decision-making process. For example, Furnham (2001) identifies a key flaw in the trait theory. He indicates that the problem lies in seeing the individual as being separate from the context within which the decision was made. The major problem which lies within all these approaches is that they are too focused on the individuals making their career choice and they tend to overlook the importance of the ongoing wider social, cultural and contextual influences on the process of decision-making. For example, developmental approaches such as those of Super (1990) and Ginzberg et al. (1951) acknowledge individual changes, but do not satisfactorily address the structural influences on the process of individual career decision-making. In summary, the decision-making approaches originating from the discipline of psychology are greatly focused on the individual making the choice.

Within the career decision-making literature, many researchers based their studies on three models: economic/instrumental rationality models, structuralist models and hybrid models (Wright, 2005; Paton 2007). These models of decision-making usually address two issues: the issue of agency and structure in an individual's decision-making and the importance of rationality in the decision-making process.

According to Wright (2005) and Paton (2007), the economic/instrumental rationality models argue that decision-making is the result of individuals making rational conscious thoughts and calculations following each course of action (Becker, 1975; Friedman and Friedman, 1980). These models focus on individual agency rather than structural influences. That is, in some sense it is quite similar to psychological approaches to decision-making, as these models still tend to lose sight of the opportunity structures. In contrast to these models, the structuralist models (Ryrie,

1984; Roberts, 1984; Gambetta, 1987) see decision as a result of the external structures that are beyond the control of individuals i.e. this model stresses structure over agency. They tend to overlook the fact that individuals also play a role in their own decision-making. For example, Roberts (1984, 2009) explains career choice as being influenced and constrained by external social structures which include employment or 'opportunity structures'. These researches also tend to approach career choice at a macro level (Gorard and Rees, 2002; Furlong, 1992; Roberts, 1993) which looks at social inequalities in patterns of educational and labour market success. For example, Furlong (1992) approached his studies of how young people make their career decisions using a large-scale survey which helped in understanding how and why such patterns exist.

In my view, these models cannot adequately address career decision-making, as they either focus on individual agency rather than structural influences or vice versa. In other words, they don't focus on both agency and structure together. Moreover, from existing literature on career decision-making, it can be observed that there is a danger of over-emphasizing the significance of individual choices and overlooking the social structures (Heinz, 2009; Hodkinson et al., 1996). Based on the results of transition studies in the UK, Germany, USA and Canada, Heinz (2009) argues that in order to avoid misleading conclusions in transition studies, researchers need to take into account both young people's agency and choice, together with the social inequality, institutions and changing opportunities. Similarly, Hodkinson et al. (1996) stated they could not understand how young people transition from school to work if they did not take into account both structural and individual dimensions of careers.

In an attempt to address this issue, hybrid models are used which allow the integration of both individual agency and influences of external structures (Wright, 2005; Paton, 2007). For example, Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership and Gorard and Rees's (2002) concept of learning trajectories aim to accommodate both individual agency and external structures. Although hybrid models allow the integration of both individual agency and the influences of external structures, they either represent a macro or micro account of choice (Wright, 2005; Paton, 2007). This is because different authors within the hybrid models are situated differently on the structure/agency continuum. That is, whilst the careership model presents a micro account of choice and emphasizes unpredictability and differences in individual situations, Gorard and Rees's (2002) concept of learning trajectories presents a macro account of choice and emphasizes structure and predictability more than individual agency.

However, in my view, one advantage of using a sociological careership model over other hybrid models is that it can be used to explore the ways in which individual positions and dispositions can influence decision-making, while integrating the occupational and social structures within these individual choices.

The careership theory was developed by drawing heavily from Bourdieu's inter-related concepts of *habitus*, *capital* and *field* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). It was developed by Hodkinson et al. (1996) based on the findings from research which focuses on the transition of youth from school to post-compulsory education and training. The careership involves three overlapping inter-related dimensions; firstly, the positions and dispositions of the individual, secondly the relations between forces acting in the field(s) within which decisions are made and careers progressed, and lastly the on-going development or transformations (Hodkinson et

ai., 1996; Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997; Hodkinson, 2009). To explain how the first two dimensions of careership work, it is necessary to make a brief digression into Bourdieu's theoretical concepts.

For Bourdieu, individual actions or beliefs are culturally and socially situated. Therefore, any individual would think and act as a person of a gender, race, class, nation etc. living in a particular framework of time. Hence, individuals have subjective perceptions that are located within their objective positions or social structures called dispositions. In describing his key concept 'habitus', Bourdieu writes:

'The strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and everchanging situations:... a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks' (1977, p.72, p.95, cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.18).

This means that individual dispositions are subjective, but are also influenced by the objective social structural and cultural factors in which the individual is located. In other words, individual dispositions are strongly influenced by an individual's social positions. According to Bourdieu, it is through the workings of the habitus that agency is linked with structure. Habitus involves more than the schemata of perceptions or beliefs. These perceptions or beliefs derive from and are part of the whole person (mind and body). For Bourdieu, the mind and body are inseparable.

It is habitus, and its relationship to the field and the capital valued in the field, that determine whether a person will succeed in a field. Bourdieu defines a field as:

'...a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determination they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution

of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.97).

Bourdieu sees the relationship between 'habitus' and 'field' as the basis of 'ontological complicity'. For Bourdieu, 'ontological complicity' means:

'The relation between habitus and field operates in two ways. On the one side, it is a relation of *conditioning*: the field structures the habitus, which is the product of the embodiment of immanent necessity of a field. On the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or *cognitive construction*: habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and with value, in which it is worth investing one's energy' (Bourdieu, 1989, p.44, original emphasis).

Bourdieu uses two metaphors to describe a field: the 'market' and the 'game' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). A field which is like a game is always in flux because the structural relations are not static. Like the game, the field has rules. However, these rules are codified as well as not codified and tacit. This is because the rules are also partly determined by the players of the game who construct the structure of the field through their practices. However, not all players are equal. Referring to the market metaphor, Bourdieu describes the reasons why players are unequal. Firstly, all players are unequally positioned in the field. Secondly, the reason for players being unequally positioned in the field is directly linked with the differing amount and types of capital they possess. This capital is the currency of the field. It is the medium of communication between field and habitus. It also fuels the operations within the field. It is what individuals in the field need to accumulate in order to exert control over it. However, this capital should not be confused with the definition of capital used in political economy such as the human capital theory.

Bourdieu identifies three types of capital: economic, social and cultural. All of them are interrelated and exchangeable. Whilst economic capital is the amount of financial resources which an individual possesses, social capital expresses the

social relations between an individual and others. That is, it roughly equates to who knows you or who you know. In most cases, social contacts can open up opportunities for people which would otherwise be closed. Social capital can help an individual to understand and acquire the relevant knowledge which is needed to succeed in a field. Lastly, cultural capital amounts to the knowledge, understanding, ways of behaving and attitudes needed to succeed in a field.

Bourdieu propounds cultural capital as a feature similar to economic capital in that you are 'born into it' in terms of the values, attitudes and practices of your parents, relatives and your social circle. For example, some children enter education with a love of books and they know how to perform well in the educational system. This is because they have been engaged by parents who have provided them with a set of cultural cues needed to succeed in education. In other words, they have educational cultural capital. Ball et al. (1994) found that middle class parents are more likely to formulate strategies by using their financial resources and social networks to realise the educational aspirations of their children. Bourdieu (1986) describes 'Cultural capital exists in three forms: in the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods..., and the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification which must be set apart...as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications....' (p. 242, original emphasis).

Due to the different amounts and types of capital individuals possess and also because individuals have different and unequal positions in the field, the game is never a 'level playing field'. This is because individuals who can more successfully exploit their capital in a field are in an advantageous position and they have more influence on how the field is structured. That is, they have the say as to what counts

as capital or what counts as success in a field. However capital that has value in relation to one field may not do so in another; that is, it is relational. For example, a student who has cultural capital in hairdressing might not be useful if she wanted to be a farmer. Bourdieu also describes that all fields are interpenetrated by the field of power. This field of power helps to illustrate and retain the significance of broader structural issues such as social class, gender or ethnic inequalities without seeing these social structures as being located externally to individuals.

Based on Bourdieu's notion of habitus and field, the first dimension of Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership theory suggests that individual career decision-making is influenced by the habitus of the individual making the decision. That is, career decisions are a result of individual dispositions which have been accumulated through ongoing life experiences and their interactions with other people within their social network. These individual dispositions are located within the social positions. When writing about issues of social positions, Bourdieu gives dominance to social class. However, other writers like Reay (2005) and Ball et al. (2002) have also written about issues of gender or ethnicity with regard to social positions when looking at the individual's decision-making process. Similarly, Gaskell (1992) has examined the ways in which gender can influence career progression.

Career decision-making is also pragmatically rational (Hodkinson et al., 1996; Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997). That is, individuals make choices which are based on partial information and which are also strongly influenced by others; in addition, individuals also draw on their emotions and their perception of themselves as well as evidence. Hodkinson et al. (1996) argue that this embodied career decision-making is an integral part of individual development. They also add that individuals have good reasons for what they choose to do. That is, they are rational.

These pragmatically rational career decisions are also made in relation to the range of opportunities which an individual perceives to be available and possible, which Hodkinson et al. (1996) call 'Horizons for action' (p.149-152). 'Horizons for action' are established and influenced by the interaction between individual habitus and the available opportunities. That is, how an individual views what is available, possible and desirable is a result of what they know about the employment and also their own personal dispositions which are strongly influenced by their social positions such as class, gender and ethnicity.

In the second dimension, Hodkinson et al. (1996) claim that career decision-making does not only depend on the individual making the decision, it also involves interactions with others in the 'field'. As discussed earlier, individuals have differing resources of capital or power within the field, which results in their differing positions in relation to the field. For example, within the employment field, employers who usually possess more capital can exert their influence on their employees.

In the final dimension, Hodkinson et al. (1996) attempt to look at the longitudinal dimension where career progression is made up of series of 'turning points' and 'routines' in the original version of careership. They used the notion of 'turning points' to describe the period of time where individuals re-evaluate their own career identity, which usually leads to career decisions being made. They later suggested that career turning points may be divided into three types: structural, self-initiated or forced. According to Hodkinson and Sparkes (1997), 'Structural turning points' are the result of external structures of career institutions which usually occur at the end of compulsory education where individuals need to decide what they want to do about their future. 'Self initiated turning points' occur when an individual is primarily responsible for a change usually in response to factors emanating from other parts

of the individual's life. However, at times, turning points are 'forced' as a result of external events like redundancy.

Hodkinson and Sparkes (1997) further suggest that an analysis of turning points cannot be separated from the 'routine experiences' that come before and after which can be positive and confirmatory or they can be contradictory when subsequent experiences undermine an individual's previous career decisions. They further identify three other types of routine: dislocating, socializing and evolutionary routines. Dislocating routines occur when individuals find themselves in a situation which they don't like. They have the desire to return to their previously held identity. Socializing routines occur when individuals confirm an identity that was not originally desired. Lastly, evolutionary routines occur when individuals gradually shift from their previous identity, which may result in an eventual transformation.

In his later work in revisiting the careership theory, Hodkinson (2009) himself questions the value of the longitudinal dimension which consists of a series of 'turning points' and 'routines'. Hodkinson (2009) moved away from this thinking, as he found the concepts of 'routines' and 'turning points' confusing and unhelpful. I will return to this discussion in more detail towards the end of the thesis.

One way of viewing the various literature reviews on careership theory is that learning is an element of what goes on during career decision-making. Furthermore, in my study I am interested in how the student teachers that I was following were learning in both their initial teaching years and in the VTE teacher training course at the university. Thus, the next section looks at detail in the existing literature on learning.

Approaches to understanding learning

Within the learning literature there exists a significantly long debate about the contrasting ways of understanding individual learning. That is, the debate is often about the merits and drawbacks of cognitive learning theories and its opposing situated learning theories (Anderson et al., 1996, 1997; Greeno, 1997). Even today there are still dialogues which engage in how learning should be construed within different traditions (Saljo, 2009; Alexander et al., 2009). Many of these learning theorists based their debates on two contrasting root metaphors of learning, which are commonly known as 'learning as acquisition' and 'learning as participation' (Sfard, 1998). Thus, many cognitive learning theories concentrate on the individual or what happens within the individual mind, whereas the situational learning theories emphasize the context or situation where the learning takes place. These two views present two largely incommensurable ways of understanding learning (Sfard, 1998). Alexander (2007) reasserts that it is 'unnecessary or unachievable' (p.67) to bridge the cognitive and socio-cultural orientations toward conceptual change. However, the aim of this section is not to resolve the debates or bridge these two contrasting pools of learning theorists. Rather, my aim is to identify the limitations of the current literature on learning theories or relevant approaches, which will provide the basis of my argument as to why I prefer to use learning theories which draw on Bourdieu's concepts.

The next sub-section will first provide an overview of the existing learning approaches based on the different views of learning theories. Following this, an argument will be constructed against some of these learning theories which might seem useful, but which have limitations and are therefore still not sufficient to understand individual learning within a situation. As a result of this, there is a need

for a different way to understand the learning of the research participants to become a VTE teacher.

Learning approaches employing 'Learning as acquisition'

In most learning literature which stems from the cognitive psychology perspective, the most desirable learning takes place only in individual minds. Researchers writing within the cognitive approach usually draw upon the acquisition metaphor to conceptualise learning (Sfard, 1998; Mason, 2007). Within the acquisition metaphor, an individual's learning is aimed at acquiring, enriching, changing or accumulating commodities such as concepts, facts, rules, skills or 'discrete items' (Hager, 2004) which will be stored in individual minds. Learning is assumed to be complete once the process of acquiring these items is complete (Hager, 2004). Once completed, these discrete items or commodities can be retrieved when needed and applied or transferred to any new situation (Sfard, 1998). It is clearly obvious that this metaphor views the mind as a 'container' which acts like an isolated empty vessel and it is seen as the prime focus for the storing of 'knowledge as a substance' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Learning as acquisition can be closely related to how Bereiter (2002) describes the 'folk theory' of learning:

'Under the influence of the mind-as-container metaphor, knowledge is treated as consisting of objects contained in individual minds, something like the contents of mental filing cabinets' (p. 179).

This theory of learning suggests that learning is conceived as a 'product' to be acquired, which tends to overlook the 'process' of learning. That is, how learning occurs is not addressed (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009).

Learning as acquisition is usually also associated with Beckett and Hager's (2002, p.96-98) 'standard paradigm of learning'. The 'standard paradigm of learning' is based upon a Cartesian dualism between the body and mind, with the mind being the superior of the two and learning is often 'context-independent' i.e. 'what is learnt is independent and separate from the context in which it is learnt' (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009, p.623). These assumptions have strongly influenced the implementation of academic policies, examination procedures, curriculum and teaching methods. This paradigm has contributed to the shaping of the 'front-end model of occupational preparation' (Beckett and Hager, 2002, p.99), where all individuals need to complete their formal education prior to taking up any jobs. This formal education usually takes place in a learning context which is remote from the workplace, for example, formal educational institutions (Fuller et al., 2004). The 'front-end model' is so called because 'it implies that all of the learning that is needed for a lifetime of practice has been completed' (Beckett and Hager, 2002, p.99).

Since most people have experienced formal schooling, Hager (2005) comments that they have actually been 'schooled' to accept and understand learning as knowledge acquisition as the 'natural' kind of learning. As a result of this, learning as acquisition and its relevant learning approaches have been influential in the educational sector (Beckett and Hager, 2002; Elkjaer, 2003).

Over recent years, the widely accepted learning as acquisition and other related learning approaches have brought about a contested debate regarding their learning assumptions. There are two main contested issues which are central to my concern. Firstly, cognitive researchers whom employ learning as acquisition or the 'standard paradigm of learning' centre their concerns on the individual mind which

Beckett and Hager (2002) argue is philosophically and empirically untenable. They argue that learning engages not only the mind, but the whole person (mind and the body). That is, learning is embodied. Yet, there is another deficiency in which Beckett and Hager (2003) feel that the 'front-end model' has always been deficient, as 'it masks the importance of learning from practice' (p.126). That is, it tends to focus on formal learning which takes place in formal institutions and overlooks the importance of informal learning at the workplace or outside formal institutions. This has been evident in experiences where formal learning courses are unable to provide the necessary robust knowledge required to fully perform competently in the workplace (Hager, 1998).

Secondly, the underlying assumptions of learning as acquisition have also stirred up debates about its context-independent knowledge. Researchers like Rogoff (2000), Lave and Wenger (1991) and Hager and Hodkinson (2009) argue that knowledge is embedded in the contexts rather than being an independent entity which is separate from the context in which it is learnt. Fuller et al. (2004) also argue that learning involves the situation or the context in which the individual learner is located:

'...without a contextualized analysis, the treatment of questions of access to and control of learning opportunities, as well as what is learned and how, is likely to be limited' (p.4).

Following these underlying assumptions of the learning as acquisition metaphor, the next issue which is of concern is what happens when a learner moves from one context to another context or learns something new. Based on the assumptions of the acquisition metaphor, this movement involves the transfer of knowledge from one context to another where it is applied. Learning in school this way is only viewed as being successful when the student is able to recall (transfer of learning) what they have learnt (something) in the test situation (new situation). This type of

learning involves the movement or transfer of 'things' (Haskell, 2001). In a major study on the transfer of learning, Haskell (2001), cited in Hager and Hodkinson (2009, p.619), states:

'Transfer of learning ...is the very foundation of learning, thinking and problem solving (p.xiii)...Despite the importance of transfer of learning, research findings over the past nine decades clearly show that as individuals, and as educational institutions, we have failed to achieve transfer of learning at any significant level' (p.xiii).

If transfer of learning is possible, then the major question is: why have we failed to achieve it? The probable answer is that there is no transfer of learning. In an outline to critique the transfer of learning, Hager and Hodkinson (2009) argue that if both of Haskell's statements were true, it would suggest that people are incapable of learning, thinking or problem solving. They have also identified that writers who write and conduct research about the transfer of learning like Haskell (2001), Schoenfeld (1999) and Bransford and Schwartz (1999) fail to identify much replicative transfer in their empirical studies.

These above arguments stand against the cognitive approaches to learning, which focus on individual minds and which tend to overlook the social dimension of learning and the context. In their seminal book, Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that 'learning is never a matter of transmission of knowledge or the acquisition of skill' (p.115). Thus, in response to the dissatisfaction of the tenets associated with the 'standard paradigm of learning', they advocate an alternative perspective of learning which takes into account more than just cognition, but also the situation where the learning takes place or what Beckett and Hager (2002) call 'the emerging paradigm of learning' (p.146-151). They draw upon the learning as participation metaphor (Sfard, 1998), which is commonly termed as situated learning (Cobb and Bowers, 1999). Learning as participation will be discussed in the following section.

Learning as participation

While the cognitive theorists draw their conceptual understanding about learning from the metaphor 'learning as acquisition', the situated or socio-cultural theorists draw theirs from the metaphor 'learning as participation' (Sfard, 1998). This notion of learning is closely related to Beckett and Hager's (2002) 'emerging paradigm of learning' (p.146-151) which focuses on practice-based informal workplace learning. As discussed earlier, in contrast to the Cartesian dualism between mind and body, Beckett and Hager (2002) draw on Dewey's earlier thinking and claim that learning is embodied, which involves both the mind and body.

The 'learning as participation' metaphor has a very different way of understanding learning compared to the 'learning as acquisition' metaphor. If the learning as acquisition metaphor is about acquiring knowledge, then the learning as participation metaphor is about the 'process of becoming a member of a learning community' (Sfard, 1998, p.6). The participation metaphor has taken more prominence over the acquisition metaphor, especially in workplace learning, as researchers have found that people do not stop learning even after their formal education ends. More importantly, people learn effectively in the real context and this learning is sometimes referred to as 'situated learning' (Brown et al., 1989).

In contrast to the 'learning as acquisition' metaphor, the 'learning as participation' metaphor focuses on the ways in which people learn within the learning context 'through participation in contextual and culturally grounded activities' (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009, p.626). It follows that the process of learning is regarded as an integral part of everyday activities within the learning context. Expressed in another way, what is learnt is socially constructed by the learners within the learning

context and it is usually framed by the culture within the learning context. This suggests that the learning within the participation metaphor is inherently contextual. In other words, learning cannot be considered separately from the context. This is because 'the ongoing learning activities are never considered separately from the context within which they take place' (Sfard, 1998, p.6).

Given that within the participation metaphor, what is learnt is socially constructed by the learners within the learning context, it also suggests that 'what is learnt is now a complex entity that extends well beyond the learner' (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009, p.626). That is, the 'unit of analysis is not the individual but the situated collective activity constructed by individuals' (Mason, 2007, p.2). This inevitably implies that learning does not involve individual minds as separate empty vessels which are filled with a 'substance called knowledge', but involves the whole-person (mind and body) as a part of a group where learning is collectively shared amongst the members (Hager, 2004; Lave and Wenger, 1991).

In view of the fact that individual learners socially construct their own learning within a context, this suggests that learning does not only change the learner, but also changes the learning context (Hager, 2004). For example, instead of thinking that learning only changes the learner, Beckett and Hager (2002) argue that the outcome of this learning also creates a 'new set of relations' in the learning environment. 'This is also why learning is inherently contextual, since what it does is to continually alter the context in which it occurs' (Beckett and Hager, 2002, p.146).

Learning in the participation metaphor is the process of becoming a member in a learning community. It involves the movement within the learning community from

being a newcomer to becoming a full member i.e. from a novice to a professional.

Brown et al. (1989) make this clear by saying that

'...learning is a process of *enculturating* that is supported in part through social interaction and the circulation of narrative, groups of practitioners are particularly important, for it is only within groups that social interaction and conversation can take place' (p.40, my emphasis).

This also implies it is through social relations and membership development that learning is allowed to take place (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004a; Wenger, 1998).

Wenger (1998) concurs with this by saying that 'participation refers to a process of taking part and also to the relations with others that reflect this process' (p.55).

Although 'learning as participation' provides a better way of understanding compared to 'learning as acquisition', it still has several limitations. Firstly, critics of learning theories which employ the participation metaphor like Elkjaer (2003) point out that these theories say too little about individual learning. This is in contrast to 'learning as acquisition' which focuses much more on individual learning. One of the reasons that theories which employ the participation metaphor do not say much about individual learning is because they only focus on the context and individuals seem to be subsumed within it (Billett, 2001a; Hager and Hodkinson, 2009). Secondly, since the participation metaphor is overly focused on learning in one context, it also tends to disregard previous and future learning in other locations (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009). Thus, this is, or could be, the reason why the issue of transfer is seldom addressed within studies employing the participation metaphor.

Whilst the participation metaphor may have its limitations, it provides a better way of understanding the learning of VTE teachers compared to the 'learning as acquisition' metaphor. For example, socio-cultural or situated learning theories which draw on the participation metaphor like Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated

learning and Engeström's (1999) activity theory have been largely used to understand learning within a context such as the workplace. Thus, they may be employed to understand the learning of the VTE teachers in their workplaces; that is, during their beginning years of teaching.

Situated learning theories

Much of the writing with regard to situated learning theories originates from Lave (1988), Cobb et al. (1992) and Engeström (1991) trying to understand why school pupils struggled to learn mathematics and science. Within this writing, much focus has been given to issues which are connected with the cognitive mind. For example, Mason (2007) writes about situated or socio-cultural learning, which is primarily concerned with the cognitive processes in the learning of mathematics and science. However, this section will focus on a different strand within situated learning theorizing which focuses on learning within the workplace and non-educational settings.

A really good starting point from which to understand my research data was the work of Lave and Wenger's (1991) 'Communities of practice' and 'Legitimate Peripheral Participation' and the work of Engeström's (1991, 2001) activity theory, all of which are situated broadly within the participation metaphor and have been generally used to understand workplace learning. This section analyses Lave and Wenger's (1991) theorizing in more detail compared to Engeström's activity theory for reasons which will be made apparent in the literature review and later in Chapter 8 of the thesis. Here, I provide reasons as to why I prefer Lave and Wenger's

notion of community of practice to Engeström's activity theory in understanding my research data.

Communities of practice and Legitimate Peripheral Participation

Lave and Wenger's first book, *Situated Learning*, which was written in 1991, arose because they were trying to move away from conventional learning theory. They were concerned with the inability of the conventional learning theory to explain how people learn in new situations without the engagement of formal learning within educational institutions. Using an anthropological approach, they shift their conceptual view of learning from 'the individual as learner to learning as participation in the social world, and from the concept of cognitive process to the more-encompassing view of social practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.43). Following this, they claim that learning is not something which is situated in practice; rather, it is an integral part of the social practice in the world we live in.

Given that Lave and Wenger (1991) view 'learning is an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice' (p.31), it follows that through participating in social practice can be seen to bring about learning. For Lave and Wenger, through participating in these social practices, the learners can be seen as 'learning to belong' to the community. Thus, social relations and belonging is central to Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning theory. As Lave and Wenger describe:

'A community of practice is a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation to other tangential and overlapping communities of practice. A community of practice is an intrinsic condition for existence of knowledge, not least because it provides the interpretive support necessary for making sense of its heritage' (p.98).

In the latter description, Lave and Wenger suggest that there is no need for spatial proximity, but this contrasts with their own illustrative examples in the book which appear to be a close knit group of workers. Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2004a) felt that these descriptions of 'community of practice' are loosely defined and rather ambiguous. The vagueness of the definition of community of practice was deliberate, as Lave and Wenger want to provide a more encompassing definition of what people belong to, as they vary from one to another (Hodkinson, 2004). In response to some of these criticisms, Wenger (1998) tries to define the term more precisely by identifying communities of practice as having three dimensions: mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire.

The contrast between the definitions in Lave and Wenger's (1991) book and those in Wenger's (1998) book suggests that there are two different versions of community of practice (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004a); the narrower version and the wider version. From the wider perspective of community of practice, the argument is that 'we need to belong in order to learn and what it is that we belong to, can be called a community of practice' (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2004a, p.5), which is consistent with their underlying principles of situated learning:

'As an aspect of social practice, learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities – it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person. In this view, learning only partly – and often incidentally – implies becoming able to be involved in new activities, to perform new tasks and functions, to master new understandings. Activities, tasks, functions, and understandings do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relations in which they have meaning. These systems of relations arise out of and are reproduced and developed within social communities, which are in part systems of relations among persons. ... [Learning] is itself an evolving form of membership. We conceive of identities as long-term living relations between persons and their place and participation in communities of practice. Thus identity, knowing, and social membership entail one another'(Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.53).

The narrower view, as exemplified in the illustrated accounts in Lave and Wenger's book, focuses on learning within small tight-knit groups. It is within this narrower view that they based their notion of Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP).

In their book, Lave and Wenger (1991) focus on the process of how newcomers become full members in communities of practice using examples based on craft apprenticeships in traditional societies, namely Yucatec midwives (See Jordan, 1989) and Vai and Gola tailors, which have proved useful for understanding how novices learn. They have also used examples which involve the transformation of 'novices' to 'experts' in socio-cultural settings which include the orientation and subsequent training of the 'naval quartermasters' (See Hutchings, 1993), the 'meat cutters' (See Marshall, 1972) and other learning engaged by people attending Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A). It is clear that LPP is seen as a form of apprenticeship. Rather than focusing on formal instruction or the process of observation and limitation, Lave and Wenger's LPP is a redefined concept of apprenticeship which involves learning as a means of being able to engage with practice defined by the social context of learning.

In LPP, in order for learning to happen, learners have to become a member within that community and gradually move from doing peripheral tasks which require less responsibility to central tasks which usually require mastery in handling the task.

Lave and Wenger (1991) capture this in the quote below:

"Legitimate peripheral participation" ...concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice. A person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a sociocultural practice. This social process includes, indeed it subsumes, the learning of knowledgeable skills' (p.29).

In their examples, most of the newcomers except those who join the A.A. learn how to do their job by being guided by their masters or more experienced practitioners, i.e. the 'oldtimers'. Thus, LPP provides a way to talk about the social relationship between the master and the newcomers and the nature of the social structures which characterize their learning:

“Legitimate peripheral participation” provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts and communities of knowledge and practice’(Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.29).

There is value in using LPP to understand the learning of newcomers in other communities of practice (Fuller and Unwin, 2003; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2003b, 2004a). However, the limitations of Lave and Wenger's LPP in understanding individual learning have been made explicit by critics (see Elkjaer, 2003 and Fuller et al., 2005) and a list of some of the limitations follows. Firstly, although Lave and Wenger (1991) acknowledge the significance of learner identity, the individual learners in their examples appear to be a group of identical individuals who have no personal identity and no life history (Fuller et al., 2005). Secondly, Lave and Wenger acknowledge, but never fully explore, the significance of power relations as part of their theorizing on the continuing operations within the community of practice and the wider context (Fuller et al., 2005). Thirdly, although Lave and Wenger (1991) claim that learners need to participate in order to move from the periphery to become full members in communities of practice, it was not clear as to '*how* learning takes place and *what* is learned through participation' (Elkjaer, 2003, p. 482, original emphasis). Most of the examples they have used in their book seem to learn and fit in well within their community of practice. They did not talk about the issue of individuals '*fitting in*' with their workplace or how they become full members.

Another theory which is based on the much situated learning theory and which is situated broadly within the participation metaphor is the activity theory, which will be discussed in the next section.

Activity theory and expansive learning

According to Engeström and Miettinen (1999), the structure of a collective, artifact-mediated and object-oriented human activity system is made up of 'subject', 'object' mediating artifacts (signs and tools), rules, community and division of labour. Engeström (2001) writes about the three generations of activity theory and argues that the third generation of activity theory needs 'to develop conceptual tools to understand dialogue, multiple perspectives, and networks of interacting activity systems' (p.135). In response to this, the third generation of activity theory takes two interacting activity systems as its minimal unit of analysis, focusing on inter-organisational learning. When an activity system is faced with a challenge, it usually tries to cope with the challenge by changing its original activities. This challenge usually arises from the contradiction of an activity or activities within the system or across systems. In response to this challenge, the normal activities or practices within the system have to be reconsidered and renegotiated in order to reach a new equilibrium, thus resulting in 'expansive learning' (Engeström, 1999, 2001, 2004). The purpose of this expansive learning is to enable substantial changes within a learning organization i.e. organizational transformation:

'The object of expansive learning activity is the entire activity system in which the learners are engaged. Expansive learning activity produces culturally new patterns of activity. Expansive learning at work produces new forms of work activity' (Engeström, 2001, p.139).

Although Engeström's activity theory aims for organization transformation, Fuller and Unwin (2004) argue that Engeström tends to overlook organizational structures which influence organizational learning. In contrast to Engeström's concentration on organizational learning, drawing on Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning theory, Fuller and Unwin's (2004) conceptualization of expansive – restrictive approaches to apprenticeship concentrates on people and their learning. That is, their focus is on identifying features of the work environment 'which influence the extent to which the workplace as a whole creates opportunities for, or barriers to, learning' (p.131). This introduces a discussion on the implications of either overlooking the structural character and overemphasising the individual, or vice versa. However, before this discussion, I would like to discuss the rationale for choosing communities of practice over activity theory.

Communities of practice or Activity Systems

My main interest is to follow a small sample of individuals through their experiences to see how they have learned to become VTE teachers, which will be explained in the methodology chapter. Based on my reading of the literature review, this seems likely to involve issues that deal with membership and social relations. Therefore, Lave and Wenger's (1991) type of thinking seems to be a reasonable starting point rather than Engeström's (1999, 2001) activity theory. This is because Engeström's activity theory doesn't give me as effective a handle on the learning of individuals as does the work of Lave and Wenger, which at least focuses on individuals and social relations. Engeström's activity theory seems better suited to larger scales of focus than smaller scales of focus for e.g. large organizations. It sits on a model for

enhancing incidental learning and it is a theory of organizational learning for learning organizations.

Alternative approaches to understanding learning

It was illustrated that cognitive theorists draw on the root metaphor of the acquisition metaphor, while situated learning theorists draw upon the participation metaphor. However, both of these theories are concerned with either the individual mind or the contexts in which learning takes place. This entails that, when learning approaches focus on individual learners i.e. acquisition metaphor, they tend to disregard the fact that learning involves the mind and body and they tend to lose sight of the location where learning takes place. In contrast to the acquisition metaphor, learning approaches which focus on the learning situation which employs the participation metaphor, individual learners tend to disappear (Evans and Rainbird, 2002; Hager and Hodkinson, 2009). For example, much of the current theorizing about learning at work like that proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991), Engeström (1999, 2001) and Wertsch (1998) prioritises the social dimension of learning and tends to marginalize individual learners within the learning situation. For example, as discussed earlier, Lave and Wenger did acknowledge the importance of individual learners within their illustrative examples. However, the individual learners in these examples seem to have no personality, which somehow also overlooks individual biographies and agency. Similarly, the 'subject' in Engeström's writings (1999, 2001) is seen as a part of the activity systems, but beyond the activity systems, the biography and identity of the 'subject' appear to be absent. This could be because it is rather difficult for theories which employ the participation metaphor to integrate individuals within the context. Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2003a) write:

'Much workplace learning literature, drawn from a predominantly participatory perspective, focuses primarily upon the workplace itself. At a conceptual level, most writers acknowledge the significance of locating individuals within activity systems and/or communities of practice. But often, individuals are conceptually acknowledged, while their individual, personalized and detailed perspectives are underplayed' (p.5).

Although it might be challenging to address individual learning within a broadly situated or socio-cultural perspective, researchers like Billett (2001a), Billett and Somerville (2004), Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2003a) have managed to integrate individual learners within the learning context.

Given that 'learning is not merely situated in practice – as if it were some independently reifiable process that just happened to be located somewhere; learning is an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world' (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.35), this suggests that individual learning is an integral part of the context (Brown et al., 1989). Thus, both the individual learners and the social practices within the situation in which they are learning should be taken into account when understanding learning. This is because there are implications when either one of the two is overemphasized or underplayed.

Fuller and Unwin (2004) understand the implications of overemphasising the structural character and the environmental features of the organizational context or overemphasising the individual:

'...in our view, an overemphasis on the structural character and environmental features of organizational context can underplay the role of individuals' backgrounds, prior attainments, attitudes, wider experiences and agency, whereas an overemphasis on the individual can divert attention from the influence of the organizational and wider institutional context in which learning at work occurs'(p.133).

When addressing this issue, they developed the concept of 'learning territory' which means that every individual has a range of learning opportunities which make up

their learning territory. However, the character and scope of the learning territory influences how an individual views the opportunities and barriers to learning at work. Although Fuller and Unwin (2004) acknowledge the extent to which individuals 'elect to engage' (Billett, 2004, p.121) in a learning environment depends on individual biographies and dispositions to learning, they did not write about individual learning. Rather, their prime focus is to understand the expansiveness of a workplace learning environment, with much focus still on the structural character.

In Billett's approach to integrate both individual learners and learning situations, he argues how participating in and learning through work can be understood in terms of the reciprocity between the extent of workplace affordance and the way individuals elect to engage (Billett, 2001b). That is, he talks about the fact that workplace affordances are shaped by the norms, practices and affiliations of the workplaces (Billett et al., 2004) and individual agency in learning is the result of individual values, subjectivities and identities. I agree with Hodkinson et al. (2003b) that Billett (2001a) still sees the individual and the workplace as being separate and mutually interacting and independent from each other. Following Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion that learning is an integral part of their social practices, this suggests that individuals are an integral part of their workplace, but are not separate from their workplace. In addition, Billett (2001a) focused greatly on the workplace practices and did not explore in detail individual biography which contributes to their learning. In his recent research, Billett (2008) identifies 'how individuals' dispositions arise through socially-shaped life histories or ontogenies' (p.149) which shape how individuals engage in work and learning. Even so, similar to other authors like Lave and Wenger (1991), Engeström (2001) and Beckett and Hager (2002) who focus on the context of learning, Billett (2001c) did not talk much about the wider social,

cultural and structural influences on workplace learning (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2003a).

From the above discussion, it follows that a learning theory is needed which is able to keep in view both the individual learners and the social practices in situations where they are learning in order to understand learning. This learning theory should also adequately address the issues found within the participatory approaches to learning. Thus, the next section turns to look at a learning theory by Hodkinson et al. (2008) which draws on Bourdieu's two core concepts of habitus and field. Hodkinson et al. (2008) attempt to integrate individual learners within a broadly situated or socio-cultural perspective using a theory of learning cultures and a cultural theory of learning which articulates with each other.

Theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning

The theory of learning cultures emerges out of a major empirical study of learning within English Further Education colleges called Transforming Learning Cultures in Further Education (TLC). Within this study, they identified the shortcomings in the existing learning literature. In responding to the limitations of the current perspectives of learning in the literature, Hodkinson et al. (2008) developed a theory of learning cultures which articulates with the cultural theory of learning. Their theory is heavily drawn on the socio-cultural tradition which uses culture as their core concept. They view 'culture as being constituted – that is produced and reproduced – by human activity, often but not exclusively, collective activity' (Hodkinson et al., 2007a, p.419). The fact is that culture exists at places where there are people. Since human activity or human participation in any locations

exists in all forms which can usually be called informal learning, it implies that any culture can support learning (Hodkinson et al., 2007a). Although culture is seen to be constituted by human actions, it does not literally mean that humans are free to act. Their actions are neither totally determined by their culture nor are they totally free to act.

Hodkinson et al. (2007a) draws on Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus, which were discussed earlier in the careership section, to develop a theory of learning cultures and a cultural theory of learning. The advantage of using Bourdieu's concept of field and habitus is that they are able to integrate the subjectivist (agency) and objectivist (structure) interpretations of culture. Since the theory of learning cultures is drawn from Bourdieu's concepts, a learning culture can be understood using Bourdieu's field of force. A learning culture should not be mistaken as a context in which learning takes place; rather, 'it stands for the social practices through which people learn' (Hodkinson et al., 2007a, p.419). Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of field, it allows the understanding of these social practices as a product of wider social, cultural and structural influences, whilst keeping the particular site where learning takes place in view, which most participatory learning approaches tend to exclude. That is, the factors that influence learning within a context can originate and operate beyond the site. Subsequently, the theory of learning culture provides a way to locate issues of power relations within and beyond the site.

Although a theory of learning culture is able to overcome some of the limitations of participatory perspectives, it still shares with Engeström's activity systems which tend to overlook learners' agency and individual learners (Hodkinson et al., 2007a). Hence, there is a need for a cultural theory of learning to incorporate individuals and

their learning (Hodkinson et al., 2008). A cultural theory of learning takes a more holistic approach, integrating individuals by drawing on Hager's (2005) 'embodied construction' and 'learning as participation' to propose a third metaphor: 'learning as becoming' (Hodkinson et al., 2008, p.40). Rather than thinking of learning as reconstructing what is already in the mind, Hager and Hodkinson (2009) argue it is better to think that learning constructs the person and the person constructs learning. Put differently, what is learned becomes a completely integral part of the individual (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009); Hodkinson et al. (2008) claim that individuals are always 'becoming'. This means that when individuals move from one place to another, they continue to learn and adapt to the new place.

Although Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning culture and cultural theory of learning provides a way of understanding learning when an individual moves from one place to another, it does not directly address the issue of whether learning in different locations at different stages in an individual's life are linked or not linked with each other. That is, whether individual learning in one location influences subsequent learning in another location within the context of an individual's life. Similarly, research on workplace learning usually concentrates on how learning takes place within each context, but seldom looks at the relationship between learning in one context and subsequent learning in another context. In addition, most literature in the learning field seldom addresses both issues of career choice and learning together. Although existing work on transitions like Zukas et al. (2008) and Clark et al. (2007), amongst others, did look at the relationship between individual learning in one context and subsequent learning in another context, none of them actually addresses both career decision-making and learning together, except Bowman et al.'s (2005) research on the transition of Master's students into and out of a course. However, although they looked at both of these issues

together, they did not write in detail how individuals learn within their workplace. In addition, there is still a very limited amount of literature in the learning field, as well as FE teacher literature which focuses on both career decision and learning together.

Research questions

Reviewing this literature has highlighted the issues which can be explored in the study. To recap, firstly, no empirical research has been done on the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. Given that, logically, the process of becoming a VTE teacher could be viewed as two apparent stages, how individuals choose and how they learn to become a VTE teacher, none of the published literature on becoming a FE teacher in the UK has addressed the links between career choice and learning. Thus, one of the aims of this research is to examine both of these issues, career choice and learning, in relation to the Brunei VTE teachers. Reviewing the two bodies of theoretical literature on career decision-making and learning also raises significant theoretical issues. That is, can the two different theoretical approaches be incorporated to help us understand career decision-making and learning? Thirdly, as illustrated in Chapter 2, the training of VTE teachers in Brunei is relatively different. It involves working in a college for a year, followed by learning full-time on a one year VTE teacher training course. However, as argued earlier, a very limited amount of research in the learning literature focuses on the relationship between learning in different locations at different stages in an individual's life. This is yet another gap that I wish to address in relation to Brunei VTE teachers: are these different stages best understood as discrete learning stages? Or is there a way of understanding these different stages of learning?

Chapter 1 illustrated that my central interest is to look at how people become a VTE teacher in Brunei, which could be seen as two stages in the literature, i.e. how individuals choose and how they learn to become a VTE teacher. I am also interested in how these two stages are interrelated. The learning stage also involves two stages, i.e. learning in their beginning years of teaching and learning on the VTE teacher training course. Thus, there could be three stages involved in becoming a VTE teacher. Based on my central interest and the issues found in the literature review, these are my research questions:

- 1) How can we understand the issue of career decision-making and learning in the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei?
 - Why do individuals choose to become a VTE teacher?
 - What factors influenced their decision to join the VTE teaching profession?
 - How do they learn to teach in their workplaces?
 - How do they learn to teach at their VTE teacher training course?
 - Are the two issues linked? Or should they be considered as separate processes?

- 2) What is the relationship between learning in different locations at different stages of an individual's life in the process of becoming a VTE teacher?
 - How can we understand the relationship between learning in the workplace and learning on a VTE teacher training course?

Chapter 4 Methodology

Introduction

Whilst the research questions proposed at the end of Chapter 3 outlined the topic researched, this chapter aims to explain how the research was carried out. This research study is framed within an interpretive framework with a position of a relativist view of the world. Given that this is the case, I am committed to write for readers who share a similar basic 'belief system' (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). This also suggests that I cannot write for those who are unconvinced by the assumptions of an interpretive belief system. Having an interpretive belief system, I base my research on non-foundationalist principles, which I will discuss after this introduction. Consequently, I seek the reader to judge the research from within the interpretive belief system.

This chapter begins with a discussion on the methodological rationale for choosing a case study approach located within the interpretive framework. Next, the empirical strategies throughout the entire research process are outlined, which include data collection, data analysis and data interpretation in order to demonstrate methodological consistency and coherence within an interpretive framework. This is then followed by a discussion of the criteria which I feel is important in keeping the quality of my research. Finally, I will discuss the writing approach that I took when writing this thesis.

The research approach

From the research questions in Chapter 3, it is apparent that my central interest is to understand the process of individuals becoming VTE teachers in Brunei. In tackling this interest, I have located my research within an interpretive paradigm for reasons which will be made apparent in this chapter. Within this interpretive paradigm, I am committed to use a case study strategy in order to carry out this research. The rationale for using this interpretive case study approach are discussed and justified in this section.

Choosing the Interpretive approach

In doing this research study, I have gradually come to adopt what is often described as an interpretivist position in relation to my research. This position comes from reading the literature review and from my engagement with one particular methodology course taught by my two supervisors, Zukas and Hodkinson, which focuses on some of the methodological issues which have helped to clarify my thinking. The course introduced me to ways of thinking and also introduced me to reading literature which I found useful and convincing when carrying out my research. This led me to reach the decision to adopt the interpretivist position. Below is a discussion as to why I have chosen to adopt this position.

There are fundamental differences between standard conventional positivist research and interpretivist research. These differences lie primarily at the philosophical level about how people view their world. That is, positivist researchers operate under different ontological and epistemological assumptions from

interpretive researchers. Due to the difference in philosophical assumptions between the positivist and interpretivist stance, there are continuous debates between the two opposite communities of researchers. Even today, positivist assumptions still hold a hegemonic influence over the research community and general public perceptions e.g. policy makers.

Sparkes (1992) pointed out:

'My point is *all* researchers make assumptions of some kind or other in relation to issues of ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology and that these assumptions tend to cluster together and are given coherence within the frameworks of particular paradigms' (p.14, original emphasis).

This implies that all researchers do not arrive at a research process as empty vessels. Rather, Sparkes (1992) argues that their 'ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions which have methodological implications for the choices made regarding particular techniques of data collection, the interpretation of these findings and the eventual ways they are written about in texts...' (p.14). In a similar vein, Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue that researchers have different basic belief systems, which Patton (2002) calls 'paradigms' (p.69) that represent a particular sets of lenses for seeing the world and how we make sense of it. This subsequently shapes how we think and act in our research process.

Researchers usually link the philosophical roots of quantitative research to the positivist paradigm, i.e. positivist position and qualitative research are usually linked to the interpretive paradigm i.e. the interpretivist position. Positivist researchers are essentially external-realists who work on the ontological assumption that the 'reality' to be investigated exists independent of the individual mind (Sparkes, 1992; Smith and Hodkinson, 2002). That is, they believe that there is an 'objective' truth out there. They therefore assert a value-free framework and emphasise measurement

using 'prescribed methods (techniques) within a formalized process of investigation often called the scientific method' (Sparkes, 1992, p.23) to discover this objective reality. That is, the epistemological assumption for positivist researchers is that knowledge is something which is hard, objective, tangible and immutable facts which demands the researcher who has an allegiance to methods used in natural science to take an observer's role (Cohen et al., 2007).

Thus, positivist researchers aspire to discover this truth which exists outside the individual through a detached objective, what Putnam (1981) calls the 'God's eye point of view', to see the world from nowhere in particular. It thus follows that they have to adopt an unbiased and detached stance in order to get nearest to the 'reality'. Therefore, positivist researchers not only attempt to use a set of techniques to discover this reality, they also make sure the correct application of these techniques matches the criteria of objectivity, validity, reliability and generalisability. In other words, they are interested in prediction and control. That is, they assume that there are general patterns of cause and effect that can be used as a basis for predicting and controlling natural phenomenon. I do not intend to engage in the debates against the positivist research which can be found in Smith, (1989, 1993), Lincoln and Guba (1985), Guba and Lincoln (1989) and Phillips (1990). Rather, I would prefer to concentrate on explaining and justifying my reasons for choosing the interpretivist position by illustrating these assumptions as shown below.

On the contrary, interpretivist researchers hold very different philosophical assumptions compared to positivist researchers. Interpretivist researchers work on the ontological assumption that 'truth' or social reality is socially constructed by individuals (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). They attempt to construe the world from the participants' point of view in constructing the social reality. That is, interpretivist

researchers are interested in understanding phenomena through accessing the meanings participants assign to them. Interpretivist researchers are also relativist; that is, 'truth' is relative to these researchers. In other words, although two researchers might be researching the same learning phenomena, they will construct or negotiate meanings which are relative to them. This is also because researchers are socially positioned and they bring with them their life history (Hodkinson, 2004). For example, I believe my previous experiences working as a VTE teacher trainer in Brunei, my reading and my thinking while studying for my UK Ph.D. course as well as collecting the data have influenced the way I think about research and about 'truth'.

Given that relativists construct reality, this suggests that social reality exists in individual minds. Thus, the only way to access this reality is through subjective interaction. Expressed simply, a relativist chooses a subjectivist position. Wilhelm Dilthey argues strongly that reality cannot be separated from individual minds and concludes that:

'For all people, lay people and social scientists alike, what actually exists in the social world is what people think exists. There is no objective reality as such, which is divorced from the people who participate in and interpret the reality...From this perspective, human beings are both the subject and the object of inquiry in the social sciences, and the study of the social world is, in essence, nothing more than the study of ourselves' (Smith, 1983, p.35 cited in Sparkes, 1992, p.25).

Thus, there is no separation of the mind and reality i.e. 'the knower and the process of knowing cannot be separated from what is known' (Sparkes, 1992, p.27). This also implies that the researcher does not hold a detached stance from the research subjects.

In explaining constructivism, Guba (1990) sees it in a different way. He sees that reality can only be seen through a window of theory i.e. reality is value-laden, which results in as many constructions as possible (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003a). Hence, there is neither a single truth nor theory free knowledge (Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Hodkinson, 2004; Smith and Deemer, 2003). Amongst other qualitative researchers, Denzin and Lincoln (2003b) also argue that no value free position is possible in social science. Thus, instead of looking for one universal reality, qualitative researchers search for the most appropriate or reasonable explanation.

For interpretivists, the 'God's eye point of view' of the world is impossible. That is, it is not possible for the researcher to adopt an unbiased and detached stance in order to get nearest to the 'reality'. This is because the researchers themselves are the primary research tool (Ball, 1990). They are the data gatherers who must shift and select the data or construct stories of the issues based on their own decisions. This implies that a relationship always exists between the researcher and those being researched.

The relationship which is central to understanding the practice of interpretive research is called reflexivity. Reflexivity implies that the research will affect the research participants, as well being affected by them. My presence in the research settings and the interviews held with the research participants implicitly change the settings compared to the situation if I was not there. Thus, the questions asked in the interview with my research participants would have caused them to think. Similarly, their responses would inevitably trigger some of my thoughts and result in subsequent questions. Thus, it is impossible to understand and interpret social realities objectively without being subjective. That is, qualitative researchers can

never completely be objective or, as Ball (1990) puts it, 'Qualitative research cannot be made "researcher proof"' (p.167).

Since my intention is to have an in-depth understanding and interpretation of the process of becoming a VTE teacher with regard to a small number of individuals i.e. how individuals choose and how individuals learn to become a VTE teacher, I find the philosophical assumptions of the interpretivist position convincing and appropriate to address my interest. From a standard conventional positivist research position, the issue of using a small scale study might be seen as a limitation. However, within the interpretivist research position, this is not seen as a limitation which will be made apparent in the next section. From this interpretivist position, I chose to conduct a case study.

Case study strategy

Given that the case study approach is used as a means of inquiry, it is important to note that it is not because it is among the many methods of inquiry from which a selection can be made, but rather because of the interest of the researcher in the individual cases (Stake, 1995). In his own words, Stake (1995) argues that a 'Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of object to be studied' (p.86). This implies that a case study strategy should be chosen with the understanding that it could help to maximise or optimise the comprehension of a case under investigation within its context, rather than for the purpose of generalisation beyond the case. Below are some of the reasons why I have chosen to use a case study approach. The strengths of the case study approach are also considered when selecting this approach.

Since I am interested in understanding how individuals become a VTE teacher, which includes how they choose their teaching career and their subsequent learning in different learning contexts and different stages of their life, this will involve examining, highlighting and presenting the complexities of the interrelationships between the individuals and the different contexts. Stake (1995), who has written extensively about the case study and who tends to write along the lines of qualitative research, describes a case study as 'the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances' (p.xi). Along the same line of thought, Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001) write about the use of case studies in engaging with complexity due to their capability for in-depth understanding of what is to be studied. Therefore, a case-study strategy was thought to be the most appropriate approach.

Latching on to the previous point regarding the capability of case studies to achieve an in-depth understanding of how the individuals in my research learnt to become a VTE teacher, they can also identify the nuances which are often missed in a positivist or scientific approach that are helpful during the interpretation and writing of rich 'authoritative written accounts' (Wolcott, 1994, p. 10) of the individuals. This also helps to illuminate the idiosyncratic within each individual account when compared to other accounts within the research study (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001). Simultaneously, through the process of comparing the participants' accounts, it can also illustrate the similarities and differences in the experiences of these participants.

Case study strategy is also useful for examining contemporary phenomena with theoretical assumptions and facilitating theoretical development (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001). As illustrated in Chapter 3, this study is a theory-driven research

of a contemporary phenomenon i.e. individuals learning to become a VTE teacher. Therefore, a case study strategy will be useful for my research study, as it allows the use of existing theories to understand the complex realities which can help to 'generate new thinking and new ideas' (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001, p.8) or facilitate 'theoretical development' (p.8).

A case study strategy can be used to explore a single case or multiple cases (Yin, 1994). Since I am interested in understanding individuals learning to become a VTE teacher, I have opted to focus on one or two case studies of VTE teacher training programme. However, limited time and resources meant that those initial plans had to be scaled down. Thus, I decided to concentrate on one case study with a small number of samples.

In most qualitative case study approaches, the findings are not generalisable in the conventional sense (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001; Stake, 1995). This is because a qualitative case study approach lends itself to a small sample (Silverman, 2002) which cannot represent the population. Moreover, qualitative case study data is in non-numerical form and 'there is no way to establish the probability that data is representative of some larger population' (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001, p.10).

At the beginning of my research when I decided to adopt the interpretivist position using a qualitative case study strategy, I was realistic about what a small scale study could achieve. The purpose of my research study was not to generalize. Rather, it aims to provide a richer and authentic understanding using rich and thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the chosen case (Hodkinson, 2004; Silverman, 2002; Stake 1995). So, what is learned in this study can still be 'useful' in other similar settings. This

'usefulness' is one of the issues used to establish the trustworthiness of my research findings.

What I have done is a case study of how a group of individuals become VTE teachers in Brunei. This might seem as a limitation as I can comment only on aspects of how these individuals learn which I could evidence through my data. However, this can also be an advantage as I have grounded my argument in the complexities of concrete experience rather than just abstract theorisation.

In order to understand the learning of the individuals in their learning situations in my research study, I relied only on the interview data of these individuals due to the limited time and resources I had. Due to how I have collected my data and the nature of the data, my research participants' perspectives are central to how I made sense of the learning situations. Thus, this has also influenced how I have analysed my data.

However, if I was given more time and resources, I would have liked to stay in the field longer so that I could observe my research participants in their workplaces as well as the university learning sites. In addition, I would have liked to interview their cooperating teachers or their mentors, their lecturers and the people they worked with in their workplaces in order to get their perspectives that might have helped me to gain a better understanding of the learning situations. Nevertheless, I have provided a theoretical understanding of how individuals become a VTE teacher in Brunei. This understanding can be used to help to make sense of how individuals in other contexts become a VTE teacher.

I have illustrated how and why I have come to adopt the interpretivist position using a qualitative case study strategy in my research. In the next section, I will provide an overview of my sampling strategy.

Sampling strategy

I have decided to concentrate on a single case study of one group of Post Graduate Certificate Technical Education (PGCTE) student teachers. The decision to select samples from this group of PGCTE students was mainly based on ease of access, as I was one of the members of staff involved in teaching the course prior to my research study. This allowed me to have prior contact with my colleague who was the coordinator of the PGCTE programme at that time, which helped me by providing easier access to conduct my fieldwork with this group of student teachers. Prior to conducting my fieldwork, I asked the coordinator of the PGCTE programme for a list of the cohort of full-time in-service student teachers who would be participating in the PGCTE course in one of the later years of the first decade of the 21st century. For each of the nineteen participants, I obtained information about: age; gender; ethnicity; subject discipline and institution i.e. what and where each of them was teaching prior to this course. This information was used together with the interview data in constructing the individual accounts found in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. To this end, I developed my sampling strategy around a number of participants based on a few practical and pragmatic guidelines.

Firstly, the participants must be accessible. This was not an issue as the participants were all studying at the university site where I would be conducting my fieldwork. Secondly, the participants selected must be willing to be interviewed

during the time allocated to them. Thirdly, there must be a variety of participants. That is, they should reflect a balance in gender and a range of criteria such as age, ethnicity, and subject discipline and whether they were bonded or applied to become a VTE teacher. Fourthly, the number of participants must be practical due to my limited resources. I also had to consider the time needed to interview and transcribe the interviews. In summary, the whole sample was planned to reflect as wide a range of participants' backgrounds, based on the aforementioned criteria, as possible and a balance in gender, within the obvious limitations dictated by the research scale. After pragmatically selecting the participants based on the guidelines, I ended up with thirteen participants from the whole cohort of nineteen students. However, I decided to drop one of the participants after the first round of data collection, as the participant was not very responsive. That is why there are only twelve participants listed in Table 4.1 on the next page.

Research methods

There are no right or wrong research methods (Silverman, 2002); rather, there are more or less useful ones. The research methods used in this research are consistent with the qualitative case study methodological approach. This section will explain why and how I have undertaken my fieldwork, followed by an outline of the process I followed to analyse my data.

Data collection

Prior to my data collection, official letters were sent to gain access to the university learning site at which the research was going to be conducted. On arrival at the university for the purpose of data collection, I met with the Dean of SHBIE at that time to confirm his permission for me to interview the students. In line with qualitative case study research strategy, I have used interviews to get as close as possible to my research participants' experiences. In this section, I will discuss why and how I have used interviews as the primary source to generate data.

Table 4.1: Samples

PSEUDONYM	GENDER	ETHNICITY	TEACHING AREA	ALLOCATED/ APPLIED
Michael	Male	Malay	Engineering	Allocated
Phillip	Male	Chinese	Engineering	Applied
Sheryl	Female	Malay	Domestic Science	Applied
David	Male	Malay	Engineering	Applied
Anna	Female	Malay	Engineering	Applied
Amanda	Female	Chinese	Computing	Applied
Greg	Male	Malay	Business Studies	Applied
Andrew	Male	Malay	Domestic Science	Allocated
Mary	Female	Malay	Nursing	Allocated
Faith	Female	Malay	Business Studies	Applied
Pam	Female	Malay	Business Studies	Applied
Sarah	Female	Malay	Business Studies	Applied

Interviews

Interviews are one of the most common types of data collection in qualitative studies (Robson, 2002). Mason (2002) calls it 'qualitative interviewing' as it is usually 'used to refer to in-depth, semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing' (p.62). Along the same lines, Rubin and Rubin (2005) see the goal of responsive interviewing as being to gain a 'deep understanding of what is being studied, rather than breadth' (p.35) whilst Burgess calls interviews 'conversations with a purpose' (1984, p.102).

Semi-structured interviews were used. There are several reasons for using semi-structured interviews in my research. The method ties in with my ontological and epistemological position with regard to how I view research (Mason, 2002). In relation to my ontological position, since I am interested in individuals' experiences in learning to become a VTE teacher, semi-structured interviews provide me with a way to (re)construct the social reality of these experiences. Whereas, my epistemological position, which is directly linked to my ontological position, suggests that only through interacting with my research participants, talking to them and listening to them in order to gain access to their accounts, will I be able to generate data (Mason, 2002). Stake (1995) and Robson (2002) suggest that the interview acts as a primary means of accessing the experiences and subjective views of the actors, which provides a shortcut to seeking answers that would provide multiple realities.

Semi-structured interviews also allow some flexibility in wording and in the sequencing of questions during the process of interview (Robson, 2002; Kvale, 1996). It also allows the researcher to leave out and add new ones, depending on

the interviewee's responses, in order to follow up the answers given by the interviewee (Kvale, 1996). This flexibility in interviews is needed in order to deepen understanding, as well as generate rich descriptive data. In addition, Rubin and Rubin (2005) suggest that interviews can help in dealing with 'the context; the complexity of multiple, overlapping and sometimes conflicting themes and paying attention to the specifics of meanings, situations and history' (p.35) in order to get that depth of understanding, as discussed earlier. Hence, the interview allows me to understand and learn more about the context of my participants with regard to them becoming a VTE teacher.

During the first meeting with the selected participants, I sought their agreement to participate and arrange possible dates and they were informed of the purpose of the study. This first meeting also assisted me in building a 'trusting relationship' with the research participants in order to 'yield a trustworthy report' (Rossman and Rallis, 2003, p.159). Forms of consent were given to them to fill in. Prior to beginning each individual interview session, I reconfirmed again the contents of the consent form. Their consent was sought regarding the use of a digital recorder. Interviewees were encouraged to give detailed answers to open ended questions (see Appendix A). An interview schedule with topics and issues to be covered was prepared in advance. Since I was once an 'insider' within the VTE teacher training programme, this interview schedule helped me to 'tame' (Sparkes, 2002) my subjective experiences. Two sets of interview schedules were prepared, one for the first round of data collection and the second for the second round of data collection. For the first round of data collection, the questions were grouped into categories in order for:

- a) The interview to enable participants to provide an account of their familial background and their early lives; matters of special interest included how

and why they became a teacher and how their previous educational experiences influence them during their learning to teach.

- b) The interview to also encourage participants to tell and share their experiences during their initial teaching years at their college; specifically, their learning to teach experiences.
- c) The interview to also seek to discover the participants' learning experiences and expectations of the teacher training programme at the beginning of the course.

The fieldwork was conducted in one of the later years of the first decade of the 21st century from August to the following May. As discussed, there were two rounds of data collection. This was one of several strategies designed to help establish credibility of the research findings by gathering data over a period of time rather than in a one-shot manner. The first round of data collection was carried out between September and October, as I wanted to establish the participants' initial experiences and expectations of the teacher training programme at the beginning of the course.

Interviews were carried out with the thirteen participants at the university site. All interviews were conducted in the English language instead of *Bahasa Melayu* (Malay), the local language. The assumption was that none of the interviewees would have difficulty with the use of English, as they had acquired English language education locally and nearly all had travelled abroad, mainly to the United Kingdom, for their tertiary education. Their understanding of English made it unnecessary for the research questions to be translated into Malay. However, it is common practice in Brunei for people to code-switch from one language to the other in ordinary conversation, even in a formal situation. This allows them to better express their experiences which they could not have fully explained in English. This was

reflected in the interviews conducted. All the interviews conducted in the first and second round of data collection were approximately one hour in duration. They were digitally recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim.

The second round of data collection started in March and was completed by April. Second interviews were scheduled with only twelve participants as I decided to drop one of the participants, as mentioned earlier, since this participant was not very responsive during the first interview. The second interview questions (see Appendix B) were derived from the analysis of the first round of interviews. They served as follow-up questions to take the interview to a deeper level by asking for more detail (Rossman and Rallis, 2003) which also included questions that enabled the participants to share their learning experiences from their teacher training course. Thus, the second interview schedule consists of general questions for all participants and follow-up questions for individual participants. The second round of interviews was carried out at the same place i.e. the university learning site. In total, twenty-four one hour long interviews were carried out, excluding the interview with the thirteenth participant.

Documents

Key documentation from the university was collected from the coordinator of the PGCTE teacher training programme. This included information about the structure of the VTE teacher training system. These documents helped to me to better understand the context and to confirm my own knowledge of the VTE teacher training system.

Throughout the fieldwork, I kept a research diary of my field notes in order to record my consolidation of thoughts, insights and impressions after each of the interviews. Field notes were also used with interviews when writing 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) which are necessary for 'thick interpretation' (Denzin, 2001, p.117).

Data analysis

The process of data collection and data analysis was cyclical. Each stage of data analysis helped to inform the subsequent data collection. In practical terms, analysis was ongoing during data collection (Robson, 2002). That is, for qualitative studies 'there is no particular moment when data analysis begins' (Stake, 1995, p. 71). In my research, preliminary analysis was done during the first round of interviews. This helped me to refine the questions for subsequent interviews. This early analysis also provided me with an overview of the patterns in the responses which progressively helped me to focus upon specific issues. The interview data was approached with reference to Wolcott (1994) and his three-stage process of description, analysis and interpretation. It also involved stages similar to those of Moustakas's (1990) 'heuristic analysis' which involved initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication and creative synthesis in order to achieve an in-depth understanding of the interview data.

Drawing from Guba and Lincoln's (1989) version of the 'hermeneutic circle', my data analysis also involved moving between the parts and the whole. Since the whole is made up of the parts, an analysis of the parts will help to construct the whole. Subsequently, seeing the whole will further illuminate the parts (Moustakas, 1990; Rossman and Rallis, 2003). Neither the whole text nor any individual part can be

understood without reference to one another, and hence, it is a circle. For this reason, Hollway and Jefferson (2000) assert 'meanings could only be understood in relation to a larger whole' (p.69).

Case studies of individual participants were written up for each interviewee using a largely descriptive process which aims to present a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of each of the individual case studies. Writing each descriptive account involved immersion in the first and second interview transcripts in order to construct a three-dimensional overview of each individual, including their historical background. This involved me (re)listening to the interviews in detail in order to 'stay close to the data' in an attempt to 'not getting it all wrong' (Wolcott, 1994, p.347).

Wolcott (1994) notes:

'Qualitative researchers need to be storytellers. That, rather than any disdain for number crunching, ought to be one of their distinguishing attributes. To be able to tell a story well is crucial to the enterprise [academia]. When we cannot engage others to read our stories – our completed and complete accounts – then our efforts at descriptive research are for naught' (p. 17)

For this reason, the prime task of writing these accounts is not just to produce a story of the individual, but rather to know the person in relation to the ways they learn to become a VTE teacher. Subsequently, comparisons were made to look for issues of agreement and differences. The purpose of doing this was to identify patterns across these twelve case studies. Newman (2003) and Stake (1995) assert that data analysis should search for patterns in order to understand the research data. Gradually, themes and issues started to emerge from the data. Simultaneously, analyzing my data also involves contextualising the data within a broader analytical framework by turning to a recognized body of theory within the

same research field. Here, theory is used as a 'thinking tool' (Hodkinson et al., 2008) to link my case studies with broader issues.

In order to strive for methodological coherence, researchers like Silverman (2002) and Mason (2002) assert that the nature, the focus and the analytical strategy of the study should be consistent. Given this is the case, I have framed my case study research about the individuals learning to become VTE teachers within an interpretive paradigm and using a holistic analysis i.e. seeing both parts and the whole as important in analysis.

My own previous experience as a VTE university lecturer also helped to facilitate and strengthen the process of analysis and interpretation. I also had to be realistic about the analysis of my research data, as there is no clear distinction where analysis ends and interpretation begins (Wolcott, 1994). However, I believe that, through careful description, analysis and interpretation of my research data, I can provide a credible finding to show how individuals learn.

Ethical issues

My fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the BERA revised ethical guidelines for educational research (2004) to ensure that all the participants were fully aware of the purpose of my research data. The participants involved in the research were fully informed of the research study with regard to the purpose of the study, what the study entailed, how long it would last, and who would be involved. The participants were also fully aware that their consent was voluntary. They were free to withdraw

this consent and to discontinue participation in this research at any time if they so wished.

A written consent form was provided to all the participants stating the details and purpose of my research data including an assurance of anonymity (see Appendix C). It was also stated that all the interview data would be kept confidential. The data was only available and accessible to myself and my Ph.D. supervisors. It was not shared among the participants. Pseudonyms were used to protect the anonymity and the confidentiality of all participants. Pseudonyms were also used for the participants' workplaces i.e. educational institutions where they were working.

I was also aware of the possibility of identification of the participants due to the small sample that was used from this group of student teachers. In circumstances like this, I have tried to report in ways that I believe help to eliminate any possibilities of identification. I have also made sure that the research participants were only interviewed during their free time to avoid any disruption to their studies. No deception was used to elicit interview responses.

Judging the trustworthiness of this research

Since interpretive research is based on non-foundationalist principles, i.e. there is no one single truth on which to base the findings of the research; it can produce multiple possible interpretations of the same situation. Similar to other qualitative research, in this case there is also no foundation on which I could base my research findings; hence, the engagement of this discussion about the issues or criteria which I felt was important in order to maintain the quality of my own research, as I

progressively conducted and wrote it. However, before illustrating the criteria used in my research, I would like to engage in a discussion of the criteria needed to judge qualitative research. This is to illustrate that there is no one universal list of criteria for judging qualitative research.

The continuous debate among qualitative researchers regarding how to judge their research has resulted in a list of different criteria. Smith and Hodkinson (2005) prefer to think of criteria

'...not as abstract standards but rather as socially constructed lists of characteristics ...[which] is not a well-defined and precisely specified lists; to the contrary, this list of characteristics is always open-ended, in part unarticulated, and always subject to constant interpretation and reinterpretation'(p.922).

The aforementioned 'lists of characteristics' have been derived from the different perspectives of qualitative researchers with regard to judging research (Sparkes, 2001). Qualitative researchers like Clavarino et al. (1995) talk about using scientific criteria within the qualitative research context. Silverman (2000) comments 'I believe that the criteria I have selected are equally appropriate for quantitative studies' (p.11-12) which suggests that qualitative and quantitative research could be judged from similar criteria.

However, Leininger (1994) argues that qualitative researchers who support the view that qualitative and quantitative research could be judged from similar criteria do not see that the two types of research are drawn from different underpinning philosophical paradigms. I agree with Leininger's point of view that qualitative researchers should have their own set of judgment criteria.

'The first principle to uphold is that quantitative and qualitative paradigms have different philosophic premises, purposes, and epistemic roots that must be understood, respected, and maintained for credible and sound research

outcomes. Both qualitative and quantitative paradigms have entirely different philosophic assumptions and purposes that lead to different goals, different uses of research methods, and the need for different criteria to fit with each paradigm' (Leininger, 1994, p.101, original emphasis).

This directly implies that standard criteria such as objectivity, reliability, validity and generalisability are inappropriate to judge interpretative research. Sparkes (1992) argues that there can be no one universal approach in judging qualitative research:

'...they [qualitative researchers] do *not* hold to the view that propositions do not have property of being true. They simply insist that judgments of truth are always relative to a particular framework, paradigm or point of view' (p.34, original emphasis).

Smith and Hodkinson (2009) argue for an 'appeal to time and place contingent lists of characteristics' (p.35) since qualitative researchers are faced with 'relativism'. There have been ongoing debates (see Smith and Hodkinson, 2009; and Hammersley, 2009) on the issue of relativism of 'anything goes'. In response to these debates, Smith and Hodkinson (2009) argue:

'We are faced with relativism, but not a relativism of anything goes or where all claims to knowledge are equal to all other claims to knowledge. To define relativism as anything goes is to advance a straw position, so to speak, because no one believes all things are equal...we all make choices or have preferences.... After one gets past this unhelpful idea of 'anything goes', what relativism announces is no more than the obvious point that as human beings we are finite, but that we cannot call upon something outside of ourselves, independent of our interests and purposes, as a foundation on which to vindicate our choices' (p.35).

This suggests that researchers should judge their research based on similar interest and purposes. Smith (1993) expresses the same view by saying:

'What researchers come to consider the pertinent facts in any given situation at any given time is decisively shaped by particular interest, purposes and values that they bring to that situation. This means that, if researchers are able to resolve their disagreements, it is because they have come to share similar interests, purposes and values. It is in this sense that interpretivists argue that the task of reaching agreement is not an epistemological one; rather, it is a practical and moral one that involves a willingness to engage in

a free and open exchange of reasoned arguments over why one researcher's interpretation is more appropriate than another researcher's interpretation' (p.119).

Hence, I am committed to write a thesis in which I encourage readers to share in my interests, purpose and values and which 'rings true' (Fetterman, 1998, p.21; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001, p.12) to them who could share or at least recognize my interests, purpose and values. For this reason, in order to maintain the quality and trustworthiness of my research, I considered issues of credibility, rigor and the usefulness of the study as discussed earlier, coupled with issues of ethical dimensions.

In order to maintain the credibility of my research, my task is to render the stories of my research participants' worldviews as honestly and fully as possible through interpreting an adequate understanding of these stories. That is, I hope to tell the stories as close as I can to my understanding of how individuals learn to become VTE teachers in Brunei, which is plausible and believable. Subsequently, if researchers conduct research within a similar setting, their explanations should not be drastically different from mine i.e. they should be connected and consistent with research in similar settings. Smith (1984) notes:

'For interpretive inquiry, the basis of truth or trustworthiness is social agreement; what is judged true or trustworthy is what we can agree, conditioned by time and place, is true or trustworthy'(p.386).

To aim for rigor or robustness in my research is not the same as aiming for replicability of my research findings. Rather, I have established rigor in my research findings through a coherent methodology i.e. the use of case studies within an interpretative framework. In addition, I have also made clear my decision-making process at every stage of the research process in this chapter i.e. to illustrate the

rationale for my actions while doing my fieldwork, in order to establish rigor in my research.

Ways of writing qualitative research

'The question is not whether we will write the lives of people – as social scientists that is what we do – but how and for whom. We choose how we write, and the choices we make do make a difference to ourselves, to social science, and to the people we write about' (Richardson, 1990, p.9).

Given that the way we choose to write and those people for whom we write our research have an implication on the outcomes of the research, it suggests that language is an integral part of the whole research project. For qualitative researchers, language is central to depicting social reality. Since qualitative researchers have been criticised for their non-foundationalist approach to research, they are faced with a 'crisis of representation' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003a, p.25) as there is 'uncertainty about what constitutes adequate depiction of social reality' (Richardson, 1990, p.12). Miles and Huberman (1994) show their concern:

'The reporting of qualitative data may be one of the most fertile fields going; there are no fixed formats, and the ways data are being analyzed and interpreted are getting more and more various. As qualitative analysts, we have few shared canons of how our studies should be reported. Should we have normative agreement on this? Probably not now – or, some would say, ever' (p.299).

This 'crisis of representation' still remains with us today. In referring to the 'ninth moment', Denzin and Lincoln (2005) write:

'Qualitative researchers in the next [ninth] moment will face another struggle, too, around the continuing issue of representation. On the one hand, creating open-ended, problematic, critical, polyphonic texts, given the linearity of written formats and the poststructural problem of the distance between representation and reality(ies), grows more difficult' (p.1124).

Given that the qualitative researcher creates the social text describing the experience, the link between the social text and experience has also act as a trigger point for the ongoing crisis of legitimation (Sparkes, 2002). My concern here relates to three central questions: what is my purpose for writing this research, who are my prospective or potential readers and how can I present my research data in order to depict the reality as plausibly as possible? In order to gain an insight into presenting my research data, I turn to researchers who tend to focus on writing strategies for qualitative researchers like Van Maanen (1988), Sparkes (2002), Richardson (1990) and Wolcott (1994).

Van Maanen (1988) and Sparkes (2002) both describe the traditional realist tales as conventions that resonate with certain conventions of the 'scientific tale'. The author in the conventional form of realist tales seemed invisible and usually writes in the third person. 'The realist tale tends to be author-evacuated' (Sparkes, 2002, p.51). These are aimed at enhancing 'experiential author(ity)' (see Sparkes, 2002, p.41-44). As a result, the realist tales tend to use the passive voice to construct authority and objectivity in order to illustrate the fact that the author is trying to distance the disembodied self from the research findings i.e. trying to minimise subjectivity. However, the issue of subjectivity should not be seen as a disadvantage, as it is regarded by positivist researchers. This is because:

'...knowledge is always partial, limited and contextual, there is no escape from subjectivity. Subjectivity is constructed in specific contexts; it is not eternally fixed' (Richardson, 1990, p. 28).

In response to this, Richardson argues that as qualitative researchers we should write as 'situated, positioned authors' who should not give up the responsibility of authorship in our texts. Since all knowledge is partial and situated, 'there is no view

from “nowhere”, the authorless text. There is no view from “everywhere,” except for God. There is only a view from “somewhere,” [a view from] an embodied, historically and culturally situated speaker’ (Richardson, 1990, p.27).

In addressing these issues, Van Mannen’s (1988) ‘confessional tales’ offer space for the researchers to foreground their voice and discuss the problems and dilemmas that they encountered. That is, the confessional tales appeal to a personalized authority which allows the reader to identify with the researcher, at a more personal level (Sparkes, 2002). On one hand, this can be dangerous as there is a possibility of the researcher being too self-absorbed. On the other hand, this can be regarded as an opportunity for the researcher to self-reflect and ponder on the challenges which might lead them to correct any mistakes that they have found. Thus, this can also help to enhance the credibility of the research findings. In addition, it also serves as a rhetorical purpose in allowing the reader to know the embodied position of the researcher. In the introduction and in parts of this chapter, I have adopted elements of a confessional tale so that the reader is aware of my presence, and of the importance of this presence in the construction of the findings i.e. to remind the reader that they are engaging with my personal construction of the data. In addition, it also serves as a reminder of my personal presence of my embodied self and my personal positioning in authoring this thesis (Sparkes, 2002; Richardson, 1990).

Both realist and confessional tales have their advantages and disadvantages. I am not trying to engage in a discussion on which tale is better, but rather aim to illustrate that confessional tales should serve as a ‘symbiotic relationship to the realist tales’ (Sparkes, 2002, p.59). Writers like Richardson (1990), Wolcott (1994) and Sparkes (2002) have provided more insights into writing strategies in qualitative

research. Richardson (1990) sees narrative as an approach and powerful access to display the human experience in relation to time, which is also strongly supported by Wolcott (1994). Thus, with all this in mind, I turn to the questions illustrated below to help me to determine how I would like to write my research:

1. What is the purpose of my research?

The purpose is to understand the meaning of the experiences of individuals in learning to become a VTE teacher and to 'create' or 'construct' a particular view of this reality using an interpretative approach, as discussed earlier. Thus, using thick description will be an appropriate approach to illustrate the story of the individuals in three-dimensions. However, this description should be kept separate from interpretation which involves theory. This is to prevent the breaking of the narrative flow.

2. Who are my audience?

The main potential reader for my Ph.D. thesis will be the academics who will be examining my work. Other readers would be researchers who share similar interests and purposes as myself. Thus, it is important to write in a way which links my arguments to the evidence provided for the purpose of evaluating my research findings.

3. Which way helps to illuminate the meanings in my research data?

I have used realist tales to represent my research data. In Chapters 5, 6 and 7, I have used two variations of realist tales to tell the stories of my research

participants. In Chapters 5 and 6, I have used one variation of the realist tales; that is when I am telling an individual story, I blend the quotes into the running italicised text because I don't want the story to be disjointed and broken up. I have also made clear with speech marks using direct interview quotations which aren't my words. I have included participants' interview responses to preserve and report what the participants have said in order to provide a rich account of each individual participant. When I have finished telling an individual story, the running italicised text returns to normal text which shows that it is my commentary about the individual story. The commentary is written at the end of the story to avoid breaking the narrative flow with my comments in order to allow the readers to get as close as possible to the experiences of the individuals and to communicate directly with the stories. Wolcott (1994) does this through the strategy which he called 'passing on "raw" rather than "cooked" data' (p.13). In Chapter 7, I used two types of realist tales. When I am telling an individual story, I use the first realist tale similar to what I did in Chapters 5 and 6. When I ceased telling an individual story, I revert back to the conventional way where instead of placing the commentary at the end of each story, the commentary is closely embedded with the interview direct quotations where the quotes are indented. In Chapter 8, there is an effort to minimise the use of data. If data is used, it usually involves a minimal use of direct interview quotes. I have included a short personal story using the first type of realist tale to illustrate the arguments that I want to make.

Richardson (1990) writes 'Writing is not simply a true representation of an objective reality, out there, waiting to be seen. Instead, through literary and rhetorical structures, writing creates a particular view of reality' (p.9). Thus, the above listed questions serve as a rhetorical structure for me to tell believable and plausible

stories which are strongly supported and evidenced and are a valuable interpretation of individuals becoming a VTE teacher

Conclusion

I have adopted a methodology which is congruent with the interpretative framework in which I have located my research. The following chapters will chronologically present my research findings. The first purpose behind me presenting my research findings in this way is to reflect the consecutive stages of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. The second purpose is to help the reader to progressively see the building up of arguments in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 which lead to the synthesis Chapter 8. I begin the next chapter by exploring how individuals decide to become a VTE teacher.

Chapter 5 Becoming a Vocational Technical Education (VTE) teacher

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate and explain how participants in my study decided to become VTE teachers within the context of their earlier lives and previous experiences. In analysing the research data, I have used several conceptual tools introduced by Bourdieu in order to understand and make sense of my research data. In order to illustrate the complexities involved in their career decision-making, I intend to narrate the stories of four research participants in an attempt to describe their earlier lives until they joined the VTE teaching profession. This is then followed by a discussion of the complexities involved in the career decision-making of individuals with regard to becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei.

Michael's story

Michael is a working class male who was in his late twenties at the beginning of the course and has taught for almost 3 years prior to joining the VTE teacher training course. He is of Malay ethnic origin. His father is a retired postman and his mother is a housewife. He is the youngest of seven siblings. Being in a big family where his father earned a limited income, they experienced financial hardships when he was younger. 'We can be considered life was not easy at that time when we were younger. Enough to eat...during that time, it was tough. We had a difficult life.' Despite having gone through the hardship, Michael was pleased with his family's achievements. 'But now we are okay. At the moment, everyone is okay. My sisters

have graduated from [named university] and both of my brothers who are studying abroad will be graduating soon'.

When Michael was younger, he didn't enjoy school. He did not do well in his O' level exams and he had to repeat a year. He managed to pass the second time and was accepted into the sixth form college to study A' levels. Subsequently, he decided to apply for a local university course after completing his A' levels. 'I didn't do well in A' levels, so my grades were not good enough to apply for any twinning courses offered in [local university]'. His grades only allowed him to apply to a very limited choice of courses at the local university and teaching was one of the courses. He had also applied to study a Higher National Diploma (HND) engineering course at a local higher technical institution. 'I was offered in [local university] as well but I chose HND engineering course because it was a new course. I applied to study in [local university] although I didn't want to become a teacher during that time. So I chose to study at the [named higher education institution].'

'During my HND years, I realised that what education is really all about. We are forced to do our coursework. If you don't do your coursework, you won't pass. However, I found it enjoying doing my assignments. More assignments, more understanding, and more hands on. The course that I chose suits me well. That is why I did well in my HND. And that's why I got the scholarship to UK.' His studies and his social activities all started to come together. He was also active in student societies and he achieved good HND results. As a result, he was offered the chance to study for his university degree abroad under the sponsorship of a higher technical institution where he previously did his HND, provided he becomes a lecturer at this institution when he graduates.

He accepted the scholarship offer although he did not want to become a lecturer then. 'Personally during that time [of signing the contract], I did not want to become a lecturer. When I got the scholarship as long as I get to go overseas, it will be fine.' He knew he had to be a lecturer. He said, '...but for the sake for wanting to study abroad, that's the reason why I took the bond. But then again as you know more about engineering and because what you learned is basically is not what you are going to teach. You are educated to become an engineer. That's why your mindset is to become an engineer, not become a teacher.' Michael wasn't settled to become a teacher after he graduated from his engineering degree. 'When I came back to teach at first, I wanted to become an engineer as I have graduated from an engineering background. That's what everyone wants their career to become an engineer. Maybe during your first year and second year [of teaching] you are tempted to go elsewhere.'

In the first year and second year of teaching, Michael did not feel like continuing the course. He was determined to leave his teaching job, but he couldn't. 'First and second year, I applied to [private company], I was offered a job but I could not be released from my bond which is a 5 years bond. I applied for two times and after that I quit. [The private company] was willing to wait for me for five months but I couldn't be released from my bond.' Having been rejected twice from his application to move to the private company, Michael gave up applying. However, he said, 'I am giving myself a chance to teach these 5 years. I will decide after 5 years. At the moment I am happy with my work.'

Michael's working class background with limited financial resources or in Bourdieu's terms, economic capital, influenced his career decision making to become a VTE

teacher. In order to expand on this understanding of the significance of social class, I will contrast Michael's story with Phillip's story. Phillip's story shows that his dispositions to career decision-making were different due to his different class background. In addition, Phillip's ethnicity also plays an important role in his career decision making.

Phillip's story

Phillip is a Chinese male in his late twenties. He was teaching engineering at the same higher education institute as Michael prior to joining the teacher training course. He was brought up in a family where his father is a businessman and his mother was a teacher, but later sought other professions.

Phillip's parents were involved in his studies. They would encourage the habit of reading story books at home. Phillip said, '...reading is a very big part of us. We used to have stack of encyclopaedias, my parents used to promote us to read...'

Phillip's parents wanted the best for him. 'They never have to worry although I did go for tuition in Malay. Maybe that is quite common for Chinese but in the end, the teacher said, "you don't need this class" but my mum insisted but still I got an 'A'. So in a way they were quite lucky. They never push me with rewards or anything.'

Since he was young, Phillip had always strived to aim for the best in his studies. 'I am quite self-motivated. A bit kiasu [competitive]. So yeah pretty much since beginning. Not kindergarten, but during primary classes. If I got number 5 in class, maybe I have to aim higher.'

He has elder sisters who were equally as competitive as Phillip. His sisters were high-flyers in their studies and hold high ranking jobs in their respective fields. Phillip said it was partly because he was surrounded by his competitive siblings that he had grown to become competitive himself. 'Maybe my sisters set the benchmark. Perhaps. My elder sister got 1 A and 3 Bs in A' level. My second sister got 2 As and 2 Bs and I have to get 4As. I wouldn't think it is a huge factor that drives me but it is part of it.'

During his early life, he was exposed to different schooling environments which included a fee-paying private English school and also a public school. 'Well primary school, I was in [named] school class of forty ...after that I moved on to [named top public school] for seven years all the way to A' levels. In the end because I am the kiasu [competitive] type, I came up as the top student. So different culture [named private English school] ...more friends speak in English ...very different environment but I think I did well in there. I find [named private English school] more competitive because you have students from other countries, foreigners they are a bit more kiasu [competitive], [named top public school] is all local students. This is why I came up to be the top student. So very different experiences but after I went into [named university], coming back to cream of the crop among the world, was also very competitive.'

Phillip has high career aspirations. He was certain about what he wanted to do. He chose engineering for his degree course because he said, '...it's probably down to my personality. Cos' from young, I am not really sociable. Don't really hang out with friends. I am not alone cos' I have close friends. I am more interested in anime objects compared to other people. Probably due to that I like maths and I like physics. Why not engineering?' He talked about the labour market in Brunei as one

of the contributing factors in his decision to study his chosen degree course. 'I could have chosen mechanical engineering actually. Before that my first choice was aeronautical engineering around Form 5. Okay, I realised job prospect is not very good unless I want to work in NASA or Europe so why not civil or mechanical but at last I chose [a type of engineering].'

After he finished his A' levels in Brunei, his parents sent him to further his studies at one of the top universities in the UK. He graduated with an excellent result from his course. When he applied to study his engineering course, he was not entirely certain about his future job, but he talked about one of his university lecturers who inspired him. 'Actually to be honest, when I first applied to do [a type of engineering] engineering, I have a rough idea what it was but at that point, I didn't look at myself becoming a [type of engineering] engineer yet. Just get through it and see what it is. But in this course, there was this lecturer, [named professor] who actually was quite famous... in creative design. Basically he would give us a real life design. This client wants a building over this railway station and he would ask us in groups to brain storm. A paper, marker, brainstorm, and go in front to present. Those sort of approach, I think it was combination of all this. I really enjoyed that and the inspiration came from him and it was very appealing, I was attracted...'

Upon graduation, Phillip did not return to Brunei to work. He stayed on to work in an engineering consultancy firm where he learnt to carry out designs and projects for his clients. Phillip wanted to gain his professional membership within three years. However, he realized that due to the type of work that he was involved in within the company, it would take him seven years to achieve his membership status. 'I was stuck doing some projects which was not really to my liking but not much choice that was what was given, so you do it. I think in a way, I mean you could say in a way,

perhaps technically, the challenge is not like what will it be like if I work as a [type of engineering] engineer but then on the other hand, you look at the sort of projects. There is not much challenge either. So for me I think what really attracted me to teaching at the beginning was actually the research component of the job but I realised cos' when I was working in UK, I have the opportunity to mentor some work attachment students. I thought it was quite satisfying what engineering is all about. The students took interest in me. Something worth pursuing and the satisfaction is there.' He continued saying, 'I realise that maybe academic work is more suited to what I want especially in Brunei. Brunei, we are still in a very developmental stage. A lot of work has to be done in engineering. So for me, why not just try my luck apply to [name higher education institution] and that is how I ended up teaching. Almost by mistake, an accident?' He also decided to return home to Brunei for personal reasons. He said, '...home is always home and that is why it is good.'

When he returned to Brunei, he looked at the job prospects in his engineering field. He said the jobs available did not appeal to him. 'I think at that point even now, I think the private sector in [a type of engineering] engineering...the competition is very bad. So the amount of projects that I could potentially get involved in is actually very limited. So another choice would have been [named public centre] but I thought that I should try [named higher education institution] first because of the flexibility. I can research whatever I want to do. If I work in [named public centre] or private sector, I will still have the same problem as I had before like I might not be doing work that I actually enjoy.'

There are two issues in Michael's and Phillip's stories which are significantly different in their career decision-making. One of these issues is the influence of

their social class on their career decision-making. Michael, who was brought up in a working class family, spent most of his early life in public schools. His story hints at his family not having much involvement in his studies. Michael's career decision-making was largely constrained by a lack of 'financial resources' due to his working class family, or in Bourdieu terms, economic capital. His story also hints that the acceptance of the scholarship offer which bonds him to become a VTE teacher was partly due to him wanting to study abroad and partly due to his lack of economic capital. Michael knew that he would not have the chance to study overseas if he was to depend on his family. He felt that his choice was 'right' as long as he got the chance to go overseas to study, but didn't realise the extent to which it would restrict his own career aspirations later. Michael's decision making is similar to Reay et al.'s (2005) findings on a group of working class UK students making their degree choices. They found that working class individuals' dispositions to decision-making are often based on financial issues.

On the contrary, Phillip had a different trajectory in becoming a VTE teacher. Being brought up in a middle class family, his middle class parents had high expectations of his academic performance, as well as his career aspirations. His parents' dispositions towards Phillip's learning showed they valued education and knew what it meant for Phillip to do well in his studies. For example, he was sent to fee paying private English schools where he could compete with other students. He was also sent to a tuition class, although he said he didn't need it.

If we view these stories through some of Bourdieu's concepts, it is clear that both Michael and Phillip have some form of educational cultural capital. However, the educational cultural capital is significantly different for both of them. As discussed in Chapter 3, some children know how to succeed in education because they have

been engaged by parents who provided them with a set of cultural cues to succeed in education. Following this reasoning, Phillip is more likely to know how to succeed in education compared to Michael. Unlike Michael, Phillip's middle class parents also had the economic capital to fund his studies, which subsequently allowed him to pursue his own career aspirations. That is, his career decision-making was not constrained like Michael.

However, while working in an engineering company in the overseas, Phillip realised that his job did not provide him with the research opportunities he sought. In order to fulfil his interest in research, he returned to Brunei to search for a job which would allow him to achieve his goal. He talked about the labour market, as well the job prospects linking his career progression and career interests. Having this knowledge allowed Phillip to consolidate his career decision in becoming a Vocational Technical Education (VTE) teacher. In comparison to Phillip, Michael did not have these opportunities to make these decisions.

Within Brunei society, ethnicity and religious beliefs are also important underlying issues in the career decision-making of individuals. Michael is of a Malay ethnic origin and Phillip is of a Chinese ethnic origin. Both have a different set of religious beliefs, different set of family values and different backgrounds. It is not clear from the evidence how significant these issues of ethnicity and religious beliefs are in these two stories, as this is a dimension for which I don't have much evidence. However, there are many stereotypical conceptions about placing education as the highest priority within Chinese families in different countries. Li (2004) and Ho (1994) claim that these conceptions are largely attributed to the values shaped by Confucian philosophy. For example, Phillip's mother insisted that he should go for tuition although he said it was not necessary. He said his mother's actions were

common among the Chinese people. His story also hints that his ambitions and career aspirations are both rooted in his parents' determination for him to succeed in a respected profession, which is common among Chinese parents in other countries. According to Li (2004), immigrant Chinese parents expect their children to secure a well-respected profession in order to live a quality life or to aspire to be middle class. These expectations usually fit with their Chinese cultural beliefs and values, as mentioned before.

Apart from social class and ethnicity, there are other factors which also play a part in influencing an individual's career decision-making in becoming a VTE teacher. I intend to compare Sheryl's story with the previous two stories to highlight one of these factors.

Sheryl's story

Sheryl was a female aged 28 at the beginning of the course. She is of Malay ethnic origin. Unlike Michael and Phillip, Sheryl completed her degree in a [named country] University. She was teaching vocational subjects related to domestic sciences in a secondary school prior to joining this VTE teacher training course.

Sheryl said she was influenced to become a teacher by her family. 'It comes in me that I like teaching. I like to share what I have with other people. That's me. I think it comes from the family. My dad is a teacher and my mum is a teacher. My sister is also a religious teacher. So I think it comes from the family. I have started teaching when I was in Form 6 during my holidays at a tuition school.' Sheryl has always wanted to teach since a young age. She recalled when she was in primary 3 [Grade

3], 'We were given a task by miss [named] at that time. She said she will give us a task. "I will give you a week. What is your ambition? What do you want to be and next week you would have to come to be that person" I was daydreaming. I asked my mum, "Should I be a doctor? What if I be like you?", "Okay" my mum said.'

Sheryl is the eldest in her family. Her parents were very involved in her studies even during her time at university. 'My parents were really strict because I am the eldest. I know they want the best for me. They sent me to tuition schools.' She was sent to fee-paying private English schools until her parents decided to move her to an all girl Arabic Boarding school which catered for students who wanted to train to become religious teachers. However, Sheryl did not enjoy her schooling experience there. 'I was feeling very down and I talked with my dad, so he asked "What do you want to do now?" I told him that I want to stop and move to another school'. So her dad sent her to a fee-paying private English school where she completed her O' level studies.

Sheryl was funded by her parents to do her A' levels and university course overseas. When she was asked why she chose a domestic science course at her university, she replied, 'My parents were in control. When I finished Form 6, actually we were given a form to apply any university. I applied for teaching in [named university]. My parents sent a form to [another named university] for me to do [name of a course]. When I returned after finishing my Form 6, I received a letter from [named university] offering me to study [named course].' Sheryl said her parents applied for a place on a course in food sciences for her because they thought that the job prospects in this field were better than other jobs. Sheryl was afraid to let her parents know about her application and obediently followed her parents' decision.

Upon graduation, she returned and applied to study teaching. She was only called up for an interview after two years of waiting. While waiting for the reply, she worked in private companies and also taught part-time at night. Sheryl wanted to continue her studies. 'I told my mum that I wanted to apply for a teaching certificate at the [named university]. She said I should work first and find my own money then carry on from there. However, for the two years working in [named private company], I was really packed with work and I didn't have any time for part-time study. At night, I had to go to teach at a private tuition school.'

Sheryl also talked about how her mother and teachers from her previous schooling experiences influenced her in becoming a teacher. She saw her mother as her teacher role model. Most of the teachers who had influenced her had a similar characteristic to her mother, which is patience. 'Like my mum in teaching, I observed her teaching just to know how she taught. She was totally different how she reacted in school and how she reacted at home. She has the patience in teaching the students. "Is this my mum?" All her students tell me that "You have a great mum. A good listener...."'

Sheryl said she became a mother prior to gaining the teaching job. When asked how she felt after she was finally able to teach, she said, 'I was very happy. Teaching at last. I had to go through an interview. I was posted to [a town] to teach. I have been teaching there for three years now. My sweet memories experience was when I started teaching, I got pregnant. So in a way, it is rezeki [a gift from God]... in my first year of teaching with a baby in my tummy. I have two kids now... I teach my own kids and I don't send them to any tuition school.'

Clearly Michael and Phillip are males and their perspectives on becoming a VTE teacher are very different to Sheryl's. That is, gender also plays a part in influencing the career decision-making of individuals in becoming a VTE teacher. Sheryl's decision to become a teacher was partly due to her upbringing by her parents, who were religious teachers. Compared with other stories, Sheryl's story shows that her parents appeared to be much more strongly religious than other parents. Being religious teachers themselves, Sheryl's parents appeared to uphold the strong tradition of the importance of religion and their commitment to the Islamic faith, which seems to be the central force in their life. This subsequently led them to send their daughters, i.e. Sheryl and her sister, to an all female Arabic school to pursue a career as a religious teacher. In relation to their strong religious faith, Sheryl's story also highlights that her parents' commitment to upholding the nation's philosophy, *MIB* (Malay Islamic Monarchy), in all aspects of their life acted as a user guide to help them to bring up Sheryl and her sister.

Sheryl's middle class parents had the economic capital to send her to private schools like Phillip's parents and to later fund her university studies. Apart from providing the economic capital to fund her education, they also provided Sheryl with the right 'resources' or in Bourdieu's terms, cultural capital to be successful in becoming a teacher. That is, Sheryl's mother was her role model. Sheryl's story also hinted that her working mother provided her with the perception or idea that it was acceptable to be a working mother, since her mother demonstrated to Sheryl that teaching is a profession which would provide her with the opportunity to combine employment and family responsibilities. This information and the implicit knowledge about teaching helped consolidate and shape Sheryl's decision to become a teacher. It was also possible that Sheryl's previous part time teaching experience at tuition schools influenced her decision to become a teacher.

Although Sheryl did not explicitly make any reference to marriage or domestic work when describing her decision to become a teacher, this does not necessarily mean that she did not think about these issues. She talked about having a child prior to becoming a teacher and also associated her pregnancy with teaching. This was closest to Gaskell's (1992) description of how young women see a career or job in the context of their family and domestic labour. Yong (1994) also found that a large percentage of his pre-service female trainee teachers in Brunei found teaching an attractive profession because they would get paid during their maternity leave. Sheryl's story also suggests that, amongst the other things that her life revolves around, motherhood with its associated domestic life and her teaching career are likely to overlap. Although Michael's and Phillip's stories might not associate their teaching career with their domestic lives, it does not mean that their teaching career and domestic lives do not overlap with each other. This suggests that this overlap is more likely to happen with women than with men (see Hodkinson et al., 1996).

In Sheryl's story, I have shown that social positioning relates to more than social class and ethnicity; it also relates to gender, which I took for granted in the first two stories because I was concentrating on the issues of class and ethnicity. However, in all three stories, the significance of the broader social positions of Michael, Phillip and Sheryl within their different classes, ethnicities and genders were directly linked to the ways in which they orientated themselves in their career decision-making. That is, their dispositions to career decision-making were socially positioned. As illustrated in Chapter 3, Bourdieu claims that individuals are all differently positioned within a field. Their difference in position is linked to the different amounts and types of capital each individual brings to that field. In order to show how social position and capital influences the decision making of individuals, I will illustrate this interrelationship through Amanda's story.

Amanda's story

Amanda is a Chinese female in her late twenties at the beginning of the course. She was teaching in one of the VTE colleges. She spent all her schooling years, college years and university education in Brunei. Amanda came from a working class family where her late father used to work in a market and her mother is a housewife. Amanda is the youngest among three of her siblings and she said her siblings were not high achievers, except for one of her sisters. 'I did not have much interest in studies when I was younger. I think one of the reasons is because during that time, one of my eldest sisters went to [named country] to study. Because in our family, there are only two of us who have finished our studies, you see. My eldest sister stopped her studies until form 3. So there was no one in the family that would study with me. Because of that I think.'

Amanda was not enthusiastic about her schooling years, which she mostly spent attending state schools. She did not have many high career aspirations. 'I don't have any ambition really.' Even when she chose her degree course at the local university, 'I didn't think about the course, I just took it'. In her decision making to become a VTE teacher, she didn't have much advice or guidance from her mother. 'I discussed with my mother but she didn't know anything so she said "if you find that [teaching] boring, why don't you try something new". I should say I never thought about my ambition. For me after I have graduated, whatever the job I get, that is it. I don't say "I want to become this or that", I don't think about that.'

When she graduated from her computing degree from the local university, she found herself applying for any jobs which would earn her an income to survive. She tried applying for positions in several banks, but was rejected. She was jobless for four

months or more. Towards the end of those four months, Amanda received a phone call from the Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) employer. "I just received a call from [VTE employer]. They asked me whether I am interested to teach in the technical colleges. If I do, I will have to go there [VTE employer] to pick up the forms to fill in and hand it in.' The VTE employer did not only call Amanda. Amanda said, 'I think they actually called up all of my friends doing [named course] during my batch. I think they called all of us. They contacted us. I think during that time there was a lack of computer teachers.'

Amanda also tried to apply to become a teacher in secondary schools while waiting for an interview with the VTE employer. She said she just wanted to try as she wanted a job as soon as possible. 'I have no reason for choosing teaching. If the banks have offered me a job at that time, I would have gone for it. I don't have any ambition really.' However, not long after she had handed in the form to the VTE employer, she was interviewed by the people who called her. Amanda admitted that she did not know much about the teaching job when she was interviewed. 'When I went for the interview for my teaching job at [VTE employer's office], they asked me one question, "Do you know how many technical institutes are there in Brunei?" I told them I have no idea that there are such technical colleges in Brunei.'

On the contrary to what she had said earlier about her lack of ambition, she said she applied to teaching partly in order to fulfil her late father's wish. Amanda recalled that her father asked her sister to apply for a teaching degree, but her sister didn't do so. 'Maybe sometimes I felt like I wanted to stop [teaching] during my first year. I still can go on but maybe I am thinking of my father who wants us to be teacher. Maybe it is also very difficult to get another job.'

Amanda, being a daughter of working class parents, didn't have much economic capital to begin with. Amanda's career decision-making to become a VTE teacher was partly influenced by her lack of economic capital. However, her situation is different from Michael's. Amanda was not bonded like Michael. Instead, she just wanted any job in order to increase her financial resources or in Bourdieu's terms, economic capital. Amanda was also unable to receive any proper advice from her working class mother. This is because her mother lacked cultural capital in relation to the employment field, as well as the teaching field. Compared with Amanda, Sheryl's mother, who was a teacher, was clearly central to her emerging career aspirations i.e. her parents provided her with a set of cultural cues to become a VTE teacher, or in Bourdieu's terms, embodied cultural capital.

Unlike Phillip, Amanda's working class Chinese parents did not make high demands or expect Amanda and her siblings to be high achievers. It is possible that Amanda's parents are still influenced by Confucian values and beliefs where sons are expected to be high achievers compared to daughters. Following this, most Chinese parents tend to be more concerned with their sons' education than their daughters. This is because sons have an important role in the family lineage and have familial financial responsibilities. Thus, they are expected to be high achievers in their education and career. This finding is similar to Chinese parental expectations in other countries like the UK (Sham and Woodrow, 1998). Even so, her father wanted Amanda and her sister to become teachers. Amanda's decision to become a teacher was also to fulfil her late father's wishes.

The influence of gender in career decision-making is not so significant in Amanda's story compared to Sheryl's story. Compared to Sheryl, Amanda did not make any reference to marriage or domestic life when describing her career decisions.

However, this does not imply she was not thinking about such issues. Rather, these issues were not dominant in her career decision-making. This reinforces the views of Hodkinson et al. (1996) and Ball et al. (2000) which suggest that the degree of overlap between domesticity and career varies within the female population.

At first glance, Amanda appears to have the least cultural capital in relation to becoming a VTE teacher. That is, she lacks knowledge and information about the teaching profession and she showed no awareness of the difference between teaching within VTE or secondary schools prior to becoming a VTE teacher. However, Amanda's university credentials had provided her with cultural capital which was valued in the VTE employment field. Her university course also added value to her social capital. That is, the VTE employers knew about her through her university, thus increasing her chances of gaining the teaching job. In a way, her social and cultural capital helped her to become employed as a teacher. It was also due to her lack of economic capital that she decided to teach, as it was the first available job.

Amanda's story illustrates the complexities of different issues in terms of the social positions and capital resources which are involved in her career decision-making. Isolating each of these issues would not be possible if the aim is to understand the whole process of career decision-making.

The significance of positions, dispositions and capital in becoming a VTE teacher

If following the work of Hodkinson et al. (1997), which looks at the career decisions of young people through a Bourdieusian lens, then the following are some of the

issues that arise. The four stories illustrated the significance of social positioning through class, gender and ethnicity with regard to influencing individuals' career decision-making. For example, Michael's story demonstrates how his social position as a working class male influenced his career decision-making. There is similar evidence of the significance of ethnicity shown in Phillip's story. Gender was also significant, as shown in Sheryl's story. However, social class, gender and ethnicity do not work alone, as illustrated in Amanda's story; they are interrelated and interlocked with each other. Ball et al. (2002) and Reay et al. (2005) produced similar findings on how UK students' career decision-making is influenced by their social background i.e. class, race and gender. Apart from individual social positions, individual positions in the field where career decisions are made are also significant in the career decision-making of individuals. For example, Amanda's position as an unemployed graduate was also important. Amanda could have chosen any other job, but she chose teaching because it was the first available job. Being a predominantly working class female, she wanted any job as soon as possible in order to generate an income to survive. Thus, this resonates with Bowman et al.'s (2005) research on Master's degree trainees where it was found that the positions of these trainees in the employment field and their positions within social structures may reinforce each other.

Through individual position(s), he or she develops what Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) termed dispositions, which Bourdieu collectively termed habitus. As discussed in Chapter 3, the dispositions of individuals are influenced or mediated by their own individual biography and their developing identities, which are usually strongly influenced by their position(s) in the world. These dispositions are usually a range of tacit attitudes to life which orientate individuals' thoughts and actions. Individual dispositions also play a significant part in the decision-making process.

For example, Phillip's dispositions in career decision-making with regard to becoming a VTE teacher are probably deeply rooted in his ethnic Chinese cultural expectations for a male to succeed in a well-respected profession. The dispositions also mediate both individuals' perceptions of the opportunities which are available and within their perceptions of the appropriateness and their actions to act on them. Michael's working class dispositions in career decision-making were apparent within his perceptions of appropriateness. That is, Michael felt that it was practical to accept the scholarship offer to go abroad at that time because he knew his parents would not be able to finance his education. He was aware that his choices were constrained by economic realities and all he wanted was to study abroad. Thus, dispositions play a significant part in the process of career decision-making.

As indicated in the stories, individuals' career decision-making is influenced by the different amounts and types of capital they possess. For example, Michael's and Phillip's stories reveal the significance of economic capital, where lacking it constrains career choices. In Amanda's story, a lack of economic capital encouraged her to accept the teaching job in order to earn a living, although she didn't aspire to be a teacher. We saw in Sheryl's story that her work experiences as a part-time teacher and being brought up in a family where her parents were teachers helped developed her cultural capital which was of relevance in her choosing to become a teacher. It was clear that her mother was central to her emerging career aspirations. Expressed simply, they furnished her with a set of cultural cues which subsequently influenced her decision-making to become a teacher.

However, the full sense of individual capital can only be grasped as part of a field theory. Central to the field theory is an understanding that a field is made up of an

interaction of unequal forces. Within the career field, every individual influences the relation of force, but their influences are unequal. This is because all individuals are positioned differently within a field or field of forces due to the amount of capital they possess in relation to those fields i.e. their positions in the field are also important and are closely related to an individual's capital resources. Within the career field, the individuals making the career decisions are not the only group of people involved in the decision-making process. The career decision-making of the individuals is also determined through interactions with 'others' in the field, 'others' being employers or anyone involved in the VTE education field. These 'others' usually had more cultural capital in the employment field than the individuals applying for the teaching job. They were the ones who determined what capital counts as valuable in relation to the employment field. Unsurprisingly, my participants are not the most powerful individuals within the employment field. Following on from this, the possibility of them gaining a teaching job is also strongly influenced by the capital resources that they possessed which have value in the VTE education field. For example, Amanda's capital such as her credentials had value in the VTE education field. This subsequently opened up possibilities for her to enter the teaching profession. She might not have gained her job if the VTE education employers did not think her credentials or university qualifications were useful.

In other words, those who have the potential to make the most of their capital in a field will have the power to exert influence over how the field is structured. Thus, VTE education employers have more power in terms of influencing how the field of employment is structured. Thus, the value of capital belonging to individuals like Amanda within the field of VTE education is dictated or commanded not only by individuals within the VTE education field; rather, it is commanded by relations with

a larger field of power. The three aspects of a field, individual capital, the 'others' within it and the structure of the field, are interrelated with each other, which implies that each of these aspects will make no sense if they are considered in isolation.

We have seen the significance of position, disposition, capital and field in career decision-making. In addition, Hodkinson and Sparkes (1997) claim that career decision-making is pragmatically rational. As discussed in Chapter 3, Hodkinson et al. (1996) claim that individuals are said to be making pragmatically rational decisions when they are being rational during decision-making and the decisions made are pragmatic. That is, individuals make choices which are based on partial information and which are also strongly influenced by others. In addition, individuals also draw on their emotions and their perception of themselves as well as evidence. These pragmatic rational decisions are also made within 'horizons for action'. That is, an individual's dispositions to perceptions of the appropriateness and the availability of opportunities are linked with external opportunity structures to form these 'horizons for action'.

In my research, most, if not all, individuals make career decisions in ways which are pragmatically rational. They make decisions which are embodied and positioned. They react to opportunities which they view as appropriate. Their decisions are usually influenced by other people. They also have reasons for their career decisions. That is, their career decision-making was rational.

Michael's perception of his working class position in the decision-making process, combined with an understanding of his lack of economic capital, led him to 'choose' to take the scholarship to become a VTE teacher, as he viewed this offer as an opportunity. His decision to take up the scholarship was partly pragmatic and partly

rational. He knew if he was to depend on his parents, he would not have the opportunity to study abroad. Without thinking of the later consequences, he saw the scholarship as an opportunity for him to pursue his further studies abroad. In a way, Michael was proactive in taking up the scholarship, which he could have turned down. Michael's perception of what options were available to him at that time also served as a boundary to his opportunity structures, which subsequently influenced his elimination of other career choices.

Amanda's story illustrates that her decision was pragmatically rational. Her story also showed that chance is important to her, which is similar to research findings informed by careership (Hodkinson, 2009). Amanda's position as a computer graduate from the local university opened up employment opportunities for her. She did not have to work to find her teaching job, but was called up by her employers and offered a position. This event only happened because she studied at the local university, giving her the cultural and social capital which eventually led to her employment. She took an active decision to take up the teaching offer; that is, she took the initiative to react to it. Amanda also took up the offer as she was in need of financial resources. She also thought about fulfilling her late father's wishes to become a teacher.

Sheryl's decision to become a VTE teacher was also pragmatic and rational. Being around her parents who are teachers influenced her decision to become a teacher. Although Sheryl's parents wanted her to be a food scientist, she was proactive in saying no and worked towards her teaching career aspirations. Lastly, Phillip's decision to become a VTE teacher was also pragmatically rational. For example, he decided to apply to become a teacher because he wanted to do something which

was research related. He also thought about the prospects of being a teacher compared to other engineering jobs.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the significance of individual positions, dispositions and capital in career decision-making. It also demonstrates that individuals' capital involved in career decision-making with regard to becoming a VTE teacher depends on the position of individuals' families in relation to the teaching field and also their own positions in relation to the teaching and VTE employment field. It also shows that individual career decision-making is the result of the interaction between the individual and the field where decisions are made. In addition, individuals also make decisions which are pragmatically rational. They also play an active role in their decision-making. That is, in all the stories, individuals are agentic in making their career decisions. As discussed in Chapter 3, the career decision-making of individuals is viewed as the first stage in the process of becoming a VTE teacher. The next stage involves the individuals learning in their workplace, which is illustrated in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 Learning to teach: the beginning years of teaching

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I narrated the stories of four individuals to show that the interplay of the issues of class, ethnicity, gender and capital play a part in an individual's decision to become a VTE teacher. In Brunei, student teachers are required to work as teachers for at least one year prior to entering the VTE teacher training programme. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the different ways individuals learn to teach in their beginning years of teaching within their workplaces. In order to do this, I intend to narrate three stories from my research participants: Mary, a nursing tutor, Andrew, a home science teacher and Pam, a business studies tutor, in order to illustrate the contrasting ways each of them learn to teach at their workplaces.

Mary's story

Mary is a Malay female who is a nursing tutor in a nursing college in Brunei. Mary studied for her nursing diploma at the same nursing college at which she was teaching prior to joining the VTE teacher training course. Due to her excellent performance in her studies, she was awarded a scholarship to pursue her nursing degree followed by postgraduate studies abroad. She was bonded to teach in the same nursing college upon graduation. Both Mary's parents used to be teachers and most of her aunties are teachers. Mary said she was partly influenced by her family to become a teacher. Although Mary chose to be a nursing tutor, a part of her still wanted to be a clinical nurse.

When Mary started teaching in her college, it was in the middle of a semester. She said she was supposed to be attached to a mentor, but she arrived during the examination period when most of the senior teachers were not available. She felt lost at the beginning and didn't know what she needed to teach. 'I was lost in a way like where should I start? Where is the curriculum? And I was roaming around asking around. I felt a sense of lost.' She wanted guidance. 'I was hoping that when I started my teaching, hopefully there will be someone designated to mentor me and secondly, I wish to be introduced. Like induction into the school system like the organization. I appreciated the discovery learning, find it yourself but you know like, you want to be welcomed...it is nice for you [the administration in nursing college] to be more welcoming in a way....'

Despite not having a mentor and feeling challenged at the beginning of her teaching years, Mary said she learned to teach through trial and error in her lessons and also through observation. 'I was able to get access to observe my senior colleagues. So that has helped me at least where to start, what to teach and what is the curriculum and the depth of a topic I should teach.' Mary also tried to find other opportunities where she could learn to teach. 'I make my own initiative to come to some of the colleagues that I know being said like they are good teacher. So I go to see how they teach and especially like the subjects that I know which they are going to give me. So I will focus the attention on those teachers who use to teach that [subject]. I sit in a few classes with them. I even co-teach with these teachers and then it is how I adopt some of the info. I rely most on the curriculum.'

Mary encountered most difficulty when working with her senior colleagues. She said, '...with the high expectations have thrown me off board. They [senior colleagues] said "those who have Master's degree must be prepared". That is not a

very friendly welcome for me and I was new and needed time to adapt. They just straight away gave me a coordinator position. I think because I am one of the youngest amongst my colleagues who got my Master's [degree] at the very young age and I went straight, diploma, bachelor and straight to Master's and that could be unacceptable for some people. Because they believe that she [Mary] should be having experience first and then go to study abroad like us [senior colleagues].'

Mary felt that she should be given support in learning how to teach, as she was not equipped with teaching experience. 'I did tell them that I am very junior in teaching here. Give me certificate level to teach. I wanted my exposure to cert level. I am making them know that I have this limitation that I am not equipped with teaching experience. I didn't think that I had given an impression that I know everything but they thought that being a master's degree prepared graduate you should be knowledgeable'. Mary found it hard to get help from her senior colleagues. '...as simple as asking "Can I refer to your notes?" because I was supposed to teach what they used to teach. I wanted to refer to their notes as a baseline as I didn't know what scope should I teach and I will be adding some of my own notes. For me, if someone uses my notes, it is most welcome. Because the way I think, one day we can integrate new knowledge together. But some of them [senior colleagues] said that their notes are lost. Some of them feared of being criticized about their notes. But I am not here to judge. They were like me before, they were new teachers before. They should be sharing their notes rather than keeping it.'

Despite the lack of support from people around her at work, she took it as a positive challenge. '...some people challenge you that way and that in fact in a way intimidated me and that makes some people put up their wall but then when I work, I have to say I have to accept this as a challenge. I should take this positively. If I

turn back, that is my loss. I would not be moving forward. I take this as a challenge one at a time and I think that was one of the toughest thing that my adjustment to the college at the beginning.'

Mary was fortunate to have colleagues who were about the same age as her. 'It was nice for me to have a buddy system which we established between us [junior colleagues]. In a way it is easy for us to share resources like access to books because we cannot afford to buy a lot of books. We thought why not we have one book to share among us because how our system works is like we are doing cross teaching.' She was also able to learn to teach from her junior colleagues through cross teaching whereby every tutor needed to teach the same subject at least once. She felt comfortable in this group, as she was able to socialize and learn from them by observing their classes. 'I just followed my friend learning how to teach from the few observations in the past...I think my second year improved because I learned how to teach from my ex PGCTE-ians [those who have completed the teacher training course] and that really helped me.'

Mary stressed the benefits of her own teaching and learning through working collaboratively with her colleagues in carrying out co-teaching, especially in lessons which involved problem based learning. In her first few lessons, she was asked to provide advice and guidance to her senior colleague when carrying out problem based learning strategies with the students. 'I joined with another colleague and we are supposed to deliver a lesson using PBL [Problem-based Learning] format because they knew that I was from [named University]. So I am a PBL prepared teacher. For the first few couple of classes, I was an observer to see my colleague perform the PBL classes. My colleague got the wrong idea about PBL.' Mary went on to say how she helped her colleague to conduct PBL lessons. 'That was my first

few weeks. I was doing that with my colleague and I started doing some of the teaching.'

Although she was new to the teaching profession, straightaway she was given a coordinator position in charge of in-service student nurses. These in-service nurses had been working in the hospital's clinical settings. Mary knew them when she was a student. 'They [in-service students] saw me like "Can we really call her a teacher? She is tiny. She is even younger than us", I get that sort of impression. I feel intimidated by the older students but then I say ok. The way I can tackle this is that I should regard them as we are learning from each other. I have the theory. You share with me your experience. They appreciate that...' However, Mary said she was quick to close the gap between her and these nurses. She made it clear that they could learn from each other rather than feeling intimidated by each other. She was glad that her students agreed to share their clinical experiences with her. Mary was also able to learn the current nursing trends through sharing knowledge with her students. She also tried to update herself through reading journals to see what was new in the nursing field.

Being a nursing tutor, Mary had to supervise her students at the hospital. Her students were attached to one ward during their clinical placements. The clinical nurses in this ward were jointly responsible for supervising these students. Mary said she struggled, as she lacked clinical experience to supervise her students. She also felt her clinical competence was challenged by the nurses. However, Mary had to build a kind of rapport with these nurses, as she had to collaborate with them in supervising her students. 'In a way my clinical experience is very limited...when I tried to apply it and to show my students, it is quite limited and my undergrad degree has prepared me a lot of practical experience only as a student. But it is very

different when you are a nurse in the hospital. You have the authority like you can plan A to Z, head to toe for the patient, but I am groomed strongly founded in theory. The theory is useless if you don't know how to show hands-on. What makes me feel deficit. I believe that when I teach students, I need to apply all the knowledge experience into what I am talking about. Otherwise like the students find that "Can I really trust this teacher? She is not a practitioner". It is kind of a worry because it is like our credibility as nurse tutor and clinical tutor is different. Clinical tutor teach mainly the hands-on part. They are the clinician there, whereas the nursing tutor, they are more academician. So sometimes we go supervising students we are being challenged by our competence like "Can you really teach students like the nursing skills?'

Mary also felt that she was not able to demonstrate her clinical nursing skills to her students. 'I knew like why I need my students to learn certain skills, why it need to be done that way, but can I really show them? Especially when I find the equipments or machineries in the hospital are ever changing very fast. So sometimes even like medication, I used to tell them [students], there are three kinds of beta-blocker. When they [students] go there [clinical settings], they would say "Teacher, there is no such thing as that dose, it has been expired." I said okay. "I need to be updated"; "I need to be proactive and take initiative in learning this kind of thing". My contract with my students is that we need to learn mutually from each other but it is quite challenging....'

Despite the challenges Mary faced at the clinical wards, she was able to learn to reflect on her own clinical competence. She was able to share the problems that she encountered while supervising her students with her colleagues back at the college. 'I think especially with the exposure like being able to supervise students in

the clinic and you see if students are not functioning as what we have expected, you bring it back to the college and brainstorm what was happening... We have a clinical joint committee to oversee problems arising in the clinical settings where we brainstorm.'

Being exposed to several different clinical settings abroad when she was a student provided her with management skills learnt at the clinical placements. In a way, Mary described how the exposure to overseas clinical settings had equipped her with experience and allowed her to share that experience with her students. She said, '...it is nice for me to share that multicultural diversity because I have been to [named country] for my one year programme abroad in nursing. Also in my second year and then I shared with them the differences in the health care systems in [named country] and in the [named country] and it was nice to show them. Even though we have a different system, I always emphasize to my students that we should adopt suitable strategies for our culture and reinforce it with what we have.'

Her own student experiences had also influenced how she approached her own students. '... [Teaching] helps me to become a reflective practitioner cos' in nursing we need to reflect on whatever we do. We are accountable for whatever actions the impact on our patients. The outcome is determined from what and how we set the planning...I don't want my future generation nurses be conquered by fear who just take orders and stuff. I want them to be assertive nurses. In order to do that, I want to contribute something in how to develop these students to become empowered person. So in a way that has motivated me to teach....' She also said, '... if I see my students do what I have done before when I was a student, I kind of know what they have in their mind. I can reason why my students behave in that way. That way I could empathize what they are going through problems...I tried to help my

students, not that I can provide solutions straight away but I tried to make them think whatever actions will determine whatever the outcomes and because I was elected as one of the counsellor in the college, it has helped me. What I have experienced during my own school years, it is like reflection in the students.'

Towards the end of her beginning years of teaching, Mary said she became more confident in her teaching. 'I would say especially my confidence and competences have grown over the two years. Especially the first time, what I did was something like copy and paste. You see what people do, you just do it...now, I feel that I am more selective. I can think for my own. So I feel like I am more empowered....'

A few issues stood out when Mary described her workplace learning. Firstly, much of her learning is self-initiated. Although she was not given a mentor when she first begun teaching, she continued to find other ways or opportunities to learn to teach. She succeeded in getting help in her teaching through building rapport with her junior colleagues, which she called her 'buddy system'. Apart from getting help from this buddy system, Mary's learning was also largely influenced by her own past student experiences.

Secondly, a recurring theme in Mary's story with regard to her learning is her informal relationship with other people in her workplaces such as her junior and senior colleagues. On the one hand, her relationships with her junior colleagues provided her with support in her quest to learn to teach. She was able to exchange ideas and teaching resources with them. In addition, she was able to learn to teach through cross-teaching with them. On the other hand, her relationships with her senior colleagues were rather discouraging as she did not receive enough support

from them. She felt they were indifferent to her because she possessed a higher educational qualification than them. Her higher qualification gave them the impression that she should know it all. Although Mary had the knowledge in theory, she still needed help in teaching. At this stage, instead of being discouraged by her senior colleagues' negative responses, Mary took them as a challenge. Apart from her junior and senior colleagues in the workplace, Mary also constructed learning relationships with her in-service students, as well as her other students, whereby they could exchange experiences with each other. This provided Mary with an insight into the latest culture and trends within the nursing world.

The third issue in Mary's story is the fact she was able to learn informally through co-teaching, cross-teaching and collaborating with her colleagues. In her story, she talked about having to co-teach with her senior colleagues using problem-based learning strategies. She was asked to co-teach because her senior colleagues knew that she was trained and had problem-based learning experience. Mary did not realise that being able to co-teach with an experienced teacher alongside her was a powerful learning strategy. It also showed that her senior colleague had accepted her and did not totally exclude her from the workplace. Apart from learning through co-teaching, she was able to learn to teach through cross-teaching with her junior colleagues. In addition she learnt to supervise her nursing students at the clinical wards through informal discussions with the joint nursing committee.

She had to work alongside and collaborate with the clinical nurses in terms of her students' supervision and assessments. Collaborating with experienced clinical nurses might have threatened Mary's skills competence, but it opened up an opportunity for her to learn how to supervise and judge her students' clinical skills. Working with these clinical nurses made Mary felt that she was lacking the nursing

skills to teach her students. This raises the fourth issue, which is her nursing skills competence. She found herself in an unusual position: lacking in skills, but required to supervise. She recognized the importance of having clinical experience, as it partly contributed to the credibility of a nursing tutor. Despite lacking the clinical skills, Mary used her prior nursing knowledge to teach her students. Mary's past student experiences also influenced the way she approached her students. In addition, she also used her prior nursing knowledge when teaching her students.

At first glance, drawing on Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory on legitimate peripheral participation, Mary's learning seemed to be very much marginalized. However, she actually moved from the periphery to the center of the workplace community by doing her job. Despite having no mentor, experiencing discouraging relationships with her senior colleagues and lacking clinical competence, Mary kept on going. She did not give up, but instead she took charge of her learning. Being proactive, she constructed ways to learn such as having a buddy system to support her learning. She had also constructed learning relationships with her students in order to gain insights into current clinical trends. She also did not realise that being able to co-teach, cross-teach and having to collaborate with people around her actually opened up learning opportunities for her.

Andrew's story

Andrew is male and was in his early thirties at the beginning of the course. He is of Malay origin. Andrew was a home science teacher in a secondary school for almost three years before he joined the course. He comes from a large family where his

father is retired, but used to work in the public sector, while his mother is a full-time housewife.

Andrew enjoyed his schooling experiences. He spent his early schooling years in Brunei and later went to study for a National Diploma (ND) course in a technical college. When he graduated from his ND course, he was offered a scholarship to pursue his Higher National Diploma (HND) at the UK. Upon graduating with an HND, Andrew was offered another scholarship to continue his degree, on the condition he agreed to be a teacher when he graduates.

Andrew found that he liked teaching. He said, '...because there is just something in teaching that I really like. I don't know what it is but I just like to teach, you know...probably it is something to do with my personality. I like to stand out...I talk a lot. But I think it is teaching also challenges me intelligently in a sense that we have to think of what we have to prepare.'

At the beginning, Andrew was disappointed that he was posted to teach in a secondary school. He thought he would be teaching a subject more related to his degree at his previous technical college. 'When I came back, they posted me to a secondary school which is like different. I still teach the food aspect but then again, I am teaching home science. It's got like needle work which I didn't study in the first place. I was quite disappointed. I was really disappointed.' He had to teach home science which consisted of two parts: food and nutrition and needle work. He said he didn't mind teaching food and nutrition as it was related to his degree course. However, he felt challenged when he had to teach needle-work as it was new to him. '...I still have to learn and everything is new. The needle work is very new to me. I have to learn from scratch back to square one. It is quite difficult for me. That

is why I didn't want to go to teach in a secondary school.' Although Andrew was faced with challenges and disappointments, he had to fulfill the job requirements because he was bonded to teach.

There was an official mentor-mentee programme for new home science teachers in Andrew's school. Andrew was appointed a mentor who was very cooperative and supportive. 'She is very cooperative. She wanted to teach me everything she knows because she was about to leave Brunei...She is from [named country]. All she wanted me to do is to absorb everything she teaches. Morning is my teaching period and in the afternoon, I learn from her. She teaches me. It is like teaching and studying also at the same time. It is challenging but it is really fun, because it is like a new thing. It is really nice.'

Initially when he began teaching, he observed his mentor in her lessons. He was not asked to teach straight away. '...it was quite okay because I got my mentor. So when I first came in, I didn't teach straight away teach, you see. I was given a week of some sort of orientation period where I followed where my mentor goes, whatever she does. So I learned there from her. The way she teaches, the way she approaches the students, I learned from my mentor. When I first came into the class, I would say I was not fully prepared for it. At least I got some basic ideas on how to teach. It is not really planned, it's go and teach.' His mentor made sure he learned the skills needed to teach the students needle-work. 'I can make blouse. I can make skirt. That is why it is really fun teaching, it is new to me. At the same time you get new skills. I learn this in the first year. The first week I became a teacher, my mentor asked me to do an apron. It is actually a simple one. I managed to finish it in just one day. Because she really pushes you, you see. It is really nice.'

Although Andrew was learning these new skills, he was concerned about his teaching. He didn't like the fact that he was lacking in necessary skills and yet he needed to teach his students. 'I would say the fact that I was given a new subject which I have no idea of and I am teaching home science which includes the needle work part. I think it is not fair for the students because it's new to me. It's new to them. It's like blind leading the blind. Of course I was given some basic ideas and you know before I still think I need to improve on them. That is what I don't like... I still see myself lacking in those skills and it is not fair for the students and it is not fair for me because I need to spend more time...'

In Andrew's school, there were only two home science teachers at that time: his mentor and himself. Apart from receiving help from his mentor, Andrew was also helped by other teachers in the home science teachers' committee. 'I also get help from other people like 30 home science teachers in Brunei'. Within this committee, he was able to discuss teaching matters with other home science teachers. '...we do have workshop sharing sessions and when it comes to exam time, we do have meetings on how to mark the practical papers...' In addition to from receiving help from this committee, Andrew's learning was further supported and encouraged by activities organized by the committee. '...we do have some things like competition among the new teachers on projects. They give us projects to do and the senior teachers will mark our projects. Just to know how far we understand and how skillful we are in doing the work. Things like that, so we are monitored as well by the committee. So it is a good thing. So that [competition] actually improves a lot in our teaching. Most of the time is needlework. Almost everyone says that cooking is no problem cos' they cook all the time at home. Needle work is quite a problem for us. Even the senior teachers, you see. So the junior teachers have more problems. We usually do projects on needlework like garments.'

Andrew enjoyed teaching in his school. He 'clicked' instantly with his colleagues at his school. Apart from enjoying his time learning new skills, he also enjoyed being in the school. He said he got along well with his colleagues. Being enthusiastic and active, Andrew was appointed as the assistant head of extra-curricular activities section at his school in his second year of teaching. He was in charge of the management of the clubs in the school. 'I really love my colleagues. We click instantly. I really like them. They got loads of activities in that school...my first year, I didn't involve much in [extra-curricular activities section], I was the committee [member]. In the second year they saw how enthusiastic I was about it, so they put me in [extra-curricular activities section]. So I was the assistant head of [extra-curricular activities section]. It is really nice in that school.'

Andrew also mentioned that one of his secondary school teachers had influenced the way he taught. '...I really like my geography teacher. I really like the way she teaches because I think she uses a lot of teaching aids...You know, usually geography teachers just teach and provide handouts and there is no actual visualizations with what is going on, but for her, I remember we studied volcano. She made a volcano and we did something about sea shore. She brought us to the sea to see the nature of erosion. It was really nice. She made us visualise the whole thing. I bring a lot of teaching aids. It is really nice. Being a home science teacher, you can eat your teaching aids. When you bake cakes, you can bring sample of cakes. You can teach how to make this kind of cake...I think that's how I learn from the geography teacher. To bring more teaching aids so that the students can see and to give them practical so that they know how to do it....'

Andrew's story highlights an important point about formally structured support, namely the fact that he was guided by a mentor who dedicated her time to him. Andrew's relationship with his mentor was different from other traditional mentor relationships where the mentor does the job, and the mentee observes and does smaller, less important tasks. Andrew's mentor actually allowed him to practice needle-work alongside her. Put simply, his mentor did not only provide guidance on how to teach, but also taught him needle-work skills on a one to one basis. It involved a two-fold process. In addition to receiving support from his mentor, Andrew obtained support from another type of formal structure; his home science teachers' committee. Being a member of this committee allowed him to interact and experience informal learning through discussions.

Apart from formally structured support, Andrew was able to access informal support from his colleagues. He built good relationships with his colleagues which partly helped him to 'fit in' within the workplace community. As a result of these relationships, Andrew had many opportunities for informal learning with his colleagues.

Despite the fact Andrew was initially disappointed and felt challenged when he first began teaching, he continued to stay motivated in learning the new skills. He did not give up; instead, he kept on learning to teach. He learnt quickly and he was able to successfully finish a task given to him by his mentor, even though he was only in his first week. He actually enjoyed teaching as he felt supported by his mentor and his colleagues. In addition, he also learned to teach based on his past student experiences at school. He mentioned how his school teachers at school had influenced the way he teaches.

On the whole, Andrew felt welcomed and was motivated to become a home-science teacher. Both his formal and informal relationships at his workplace and outside his workplace, his mentor, his colleagues, and teachers in the resource committee had clearly helped to move him from the periphery to the center of his workplace community. In addition to these relationships, Andrew was also willing to take on the challenge to learn new skills.

Compared to Mary, who had the specialist knowledge, but lacked the practical skills needed to teach her subject, Andrew had only part of the subject knowledge he needed to successfully teach his subject i.e. he only had subject knowledge relating to food nutrition, but not to needlework. In addition, he did not have practical knowledge of needlework. Both stories illustrate the fact that there were different gaps between the knowledge they brought from their prior experiences and what they needed to teach.

Pam's story

Pam is a female in her late twenties at the beginning of the course. She is of Malay origin. She taught business related studies for two and a half years at a VTE college before she joined the teacher training course. Besides teaching, she was a group coordinator and was responsible for administrative jobs. She did not start out to become a teacher. She worked in the private sector for a year after she graduated from the local university.

Most of Pam's relatives are teachers. Pam talked about her father wanting her to become a teacher. He was not happy when he found out that she applied to study a

business course at the university. Pam said she was partly influenced by her family in becoming a teacher and partly influenced by her previous teaching experiences, since she was working as a part-time teacher at a private tuition school. She felt motivated to teach after she saw that she could actually help students who had already failed several times to succeed in their exams.

When Pam first started teaching, she encountered many challenges which almost led her to leave her job, but she decided to stay on. 'In the first year, I was frustrated. I felt like going away to apply somewhere else. Like I said, it was because of mentorship. I was hoping that somebody could help me, provide me with something like what should I do, how should I do, how should I teach, but I didn't get it.' However, there were times when Pam had contemplated leaving. '...sometimes I think am I going to stay in this school. If it was not because of the students, I would say they were the ones who motivate me to teach actually.' However, she felt that her students were different from her initial expectations. 'I didn't know anything about technical education, where the students came from. There was a difference. When I did my A' levels, there was a slight competition. Competition was everywhere. But here [technical education], the students are not keen to compete.'

Pam had a mentor, but she did not receive much help from her mentor. She said she was left to learn to teach on her own. She would take the initiative to ask her mentor for guidance, but did not receive much help. Whilst Pam felt that she was not supported by her mentor, she still managed to observe her mentor's teaching. Her mentor would also observe her teaching. Pam also found other ways to learn to teach such as receiving feedback from students. 'I came up with this idea. I asked

the students "How you feel? Do you really understand?" I am not scared if they give me a negative comment. For me, that is the truth for me to improve.'

Pam said she also tried getting help from some of her senior colleagues, but they were unhelpful as well. She felt that her senior colleagues were indifferent to her due to her being higher qualified. Pam explained that most of her colleagues are Higher National Diploma holders and she has a degree. Because of this, Pam said they assumed that she should know more than them. Pam said she didn't agree with them and stated that, although one of her senior colleagues had a Master's degree, she still asked Pam for help. 'Even my senior staff she is a Master's degree holder, she even asked me to help her with the accounting lessons before she taught the students...'

In relation to this, she opined that her senior colleagues probably felt that she was competing with them. She said they were reluctant to be observed by her. 'I was hoping that every time I teach, my mentor is there. But what to do, lack of staff. I have to develop on my own. The thing is that the staff is reluctant to be observe because the principal advised me at that time, "You can ask permission from the senior staff while they are teaching", but they are reluctant to be observed. Actually if they take it professionally, that is, I wasn't trying to observe their weaknesses but I wanted to learn something.'

Adding to Pam's challenges, she had to teach three subjects because there was a lack of staff. She recalled having problems teaching them. However, Pam managed to continue to learn to teach, despite the challenges and difficulties. She mentioned several times that she tried learning to teach by reflecting on her previous schooling experiences. 'I didn't have any idea of teaching when I first started teaching. I recall

back...I remember I used to have a teacher [name], I don't know whether she is still around now. In A' levels, her teaching was effective because she could come up with one special formula for accounting and I am still using it now...even now, I share with my colleague in my school...it still sticks in my head....' She continued by saying how her previous experiences helped her with her teaching. 'When I was still in [name of university] that time, I also engaged myself with food selling. Every July when they have the selling bazaar, I will sell sotong [cuttlefish]. I have also helped my sister to manage her food stall. So I thought I should bring my students to experience the real world. I brought them to [name of a place] to ask them to sell something. It was really fun. It was really worth it. I told them "Every transaction should be recorded, purchase and sale. I want to know your profit and loss but they made a loss".' Pam also really appreciated her one year of working experience. 'I learned a lot during my working experience. I could share it with my students such as working organisations and finance because I was teaching them finance at that time....'

Although Pam did not think she got along well with some her senior colleagues, she managed to work with one of them. 'I like to seek help from one of my senior staff. I am close to her. She is my best friend now [named person]...she is very good in teaching because she has more than 30 years of teaching experiences.' Apart from receiving help from this senior colleague, she also worked with other junior colleagues, who were new as well, in learning how to prepare assessment papers. 'I discuss with my colleague, the new staff at that time, and then we prepare the paper and then we give it to the mentor to check and verify.'

By the end of her second year of teaching, Pam felt that she had changed. 'My teaching has changed over the two years. At the beginning, I was not quite

confident in my teaching. First year and second year I learnt from my mistakes. So I tried my best to improve my teaching myself. Whatever it is, I must try to do something. There is a difference in the way I deliver a topic in my lesson.'

There are several issues which could be drawn out of Pam's story. First, although Pam was given a mentor, she wasn't receiving the help and guidance she felt she needed to teach. She was feeling frustrated. However, she had the initiative to search for other alternative ways to learn to teach like observing her mentor's lessons. Put simply, she took charge of her learning.

She took the initiative to seek support from her senior colleagues, but they were not willing to help her as they were indifferent to her due to her being higher qualified. However, she was seen helping her senior colleagues. Although Pam felt that she did not fit in the workplace, subtle ways like being able to help others at her workplace could be seen as a way of fitting in.

Pam also fostered informal relationships with one of the senior colleagues who was willing to help Pam. She provided Pam with informal support which kept Pam going in her job. Pam was able to seek help from her and even described her as her 'best friend'. Pam was also able to work with one of her junior colleagues which provided her with a sense that she was not alone in learning to teach.

Instead of learning through legitimate peripheral participation, Pam's learning appeared to be marginalized from her workplace. Although she found it difficult to fit into her workplace, she did not give up. Rather, Pam continued to persevere and developed strategies to locate ways to improve her teaching in order to overcome

the difficulties and challenges. She tried other ways such as using her prior experiences which included her student and work experiences and business skills to teach her students. As time went by, she gradually became more fully established by doing her job. She was assigned to be a group coordinator and was also made responsible for some of the administrative tasks.

All these were possible because Pam had decided to make a positive constructive decision to continue with her job. For Pam, rather than seeing her weak informal relationships with her colleagues as a barrier to her learning, she regarded them as motivation to find alternative ways to learn.

How individuals learn in their workplaces

The three teachers were all newcomers to their workplace. All faced difficulties and challenges when they first started teaching and they struggled with their first year of teaching. Their experiences were similar to Lacey's (1977) description of the 'plunge' where 'The first year of teaching is like the first swim across the deep end of the pool...' (p.128). Lacey (1977) was describing the first year of teaching experienced by new teachers who had been in teacher training. However, Mary, Pam and Andrew's situations were far more difficult than those experienced by Lacey's new teachers. They did not have any teacher training prior to teaching in their workplaces. Despite the lack of teacher training, they still continued to learn how to teach by actually doing the job and felt they changed after their initial years of teaching.

All of them drew on how they had been taught. That is, they brought their prior schooling experiences to the workplace. For example, Mary used her own past student experiences in conducting her PBL sessions with her students. Andrew and Pam also drew on how they were taught during their schooling experiences.

The workplace learning of the teachers also revealed the importance of prior knowledge and skills brought to the workplace. The stories also showed that, for some of the teachers, there are gaps between their basic prior knowledge and skills and the skills needed to teach their subject. For example, Mary had basic nursing knowledge, but lacked the clinical knowledge to teach her students. However, Andrew's story represents a larger gap between what he could teach and what he was expected to teach. Andrew only had part of the subject knowledge he was expected to teach. That is because he graduated as a food technologist, but he was expected to teach sewing as well. Pam was expected to teach a subject which was in line with her subject knowledge. She utilized her prior business skills which she had learned both through work and through her family business in the workplace. Thus, she did not experience what Mary and Andrew experienced. This suggests that different types of gap exist for different individuals, which reinforces the significance of the prior knowledge and skills of individuals before they begin teaching in their workplace

The stories of these individuals also confirm that factors such as dispositions and attitudes are significant aspects of workplace learning, which influences how they manage difficult or challenging situations in their new workplaces. All were faced with different types of situations which led to some wanting to leave their workplaces. However, as we have seen from the stories, they were proactive in creating learning opportunities such as building learning relationships with their

colleagues in order to continue to stay in the job. For some, like Andrew, the transition to the workplace is rather smooth. However, he had to learn new skills and he chose to continue learning through his mentor. Pam and Mary chose to stay on to find other ways to learn to teach. These stories support Billett's (2001b) argument that individuals must themselves choose to engage with the available learning opportunities. Even in situations where there are no learning opportunities, individuals must also take responsibility for their own learning to create learning opportunities. For example, although at times Pam felt like leaving her job, she took a positive constructive decision to stay. This finding concurs with other workplace learning research (Fuller and Unwin, 2003; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004b) that demonstrates that individuals bring prior skills and knowledge and personal dispositions which influence the way they approach their learning at work, that can contribute to their work success and also facilitate their participation in performing their work tasks.

Apart from the importance of individual prior knowledge and skills and individual dispositions to the workplace, the workplace situations also plays an important part in influencing workplace learning. The stories showed how different situations can influence individual learning. Andrew felt supported by his workplace colleagues and his mentor. He was also involved in collaborating with other home science teachers outside his workplace. His workplace situation is very similar to some of the features of expansive learning environments for secondary school teachers identified by Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2005) which draw on Fuller and Unwin's (2003) conceptualization of expansive-restrictive approaches to apprenticeship.

Pam's workplace situation was different from Andrew's. She felt that her learning was not supported and was hindered by her senior colleagues. Her senior

colleagues had high expectations of her, since she was higher qualified than the rest of them. Instead of providing her with support, they expected her to know it all and they were reluctant to provide any guidance. In a way, Pam's senior colleagues were exerting their influence to create boundaries and inhibit Pam from participating in the workplace. Thus, this demonstrates that access to opportunities to participate in workplace activities is not afforded in similar ways to all who work in the workplace (Billett, 2001b).

At first glance, Mary's workplace situation appears to be similar to Pam's. She felt that she was not supported by her senior colleagues and she was not given a mentor. However, as we saw from her story, she was actually learning through engaging in learning opportunities through team-teaching and co-teaching, which provided powerful learning strategies for teaching. Her colleagues recognized her prior skills as helpful in carrying out the PBL session, which could have indirectly facilitated Mary's motivation in learning to teach. Hatton (1985) describes team-teaching as a training technique which 'requires shared responsibility by two or more teachers for all pupils at level of planning, implementation and evaluation' (p.229), while co-teaching involves two or more teachers who teach and learn together in an activity in which all co-teachers share the responsibility for the students' learning (Roth and Tobin, 2002). Mary was also allowed to engage in learning opportunities with other working groups like the clinical nurses outside her workplace which supported her learning.

Besides the actions and dispositions of their senior colleagues, the participants' relationships with their mentors and their junior colleagues also influenced their learning. In Andrew's workplace, they followed an official mentor-mentee programme for newcomers to the workplace. In this programme, his mentor was

helpful and provided him with guidance. Andrew's mentor also taught him how to sew. Unlike Andrew, Pam's mentor did not support her learning. Whilst Andrew and Pam had mentors, Mary had no mentor at all, although she said she would have preferred to have one. In my view, whether these teachers had or did not have mentors, they still continued to learn. However, mentoring proved useful and valuable to those like Michael who had no prior basic knowledge and skills in teaching i.e. sewing. Informal learning relationships were also significantly helpful, especially in Mary and Pam's situations. For example, Mary built informal relationships with her junior colleagues, with clinical nurses at the clinical settings and also with her in-service students, which supported her learning.

In summary, individual actions and dispositions to learning in their workplace are influenced by past experiences, prior knowledge and skills, and personal values. However, this only provides a part of the understanding of individual learning. From the data, it can be seen that the different situations provided different learning opportunities. The actions and dispositions of individuals around the teachers, through their workplace practices, also influenced the learning within the workplace. That is, individuals' learning in their workplace also depends upon 'the receptive or expansive' nature of the new workplace (Hodkinson et al., 2004). This concurs with Billett's (2001b) argument:

'Learning through participating in work can be understood in terms of how the workplace support or inhibit individuals' engagement in work activities and access to both the direct and indirect guidance. These affordances are constituted in work practices... However, while acknowledging the salience of contributions afforded by workplaces, it is also necessary to account for how individuals elect to engage with workplace activities and guidance also shapes the quality of their learning' (p.3).

Drawing on the above discussion, this suggests that opportunities for learning in the workplace depend on the dispositions and the positions of the new teachers in their

workplaces, as well as the practices within their workplaces. In conclusion, the complexity of individuals learning within their workplaces demonstrates that if we isolate and understand only one of the issues discussed above, we cannot fully understand how individuals learn in their workplace because all the issues are interlocked and interrelated.

Conclusion

I have described in some detail how three teachers learnt in their workplace during their beginning years of teaching. All these individuals set out to achieve similar objectives which were to become established experts in their workplace. Although they have similar objectives, the data highlights some of the different ways and different trajectories that they followed in order to learn to teach. The discussion in this chapter highlights a salient point which concurs with other studies like Hodkinson et al. (2008) that we should keep in view the individual learners, as well as the workplace practices in social situations in which they are learning in order to understand individual learning.

Chapter 7 Learning to teach: VTE Teacher training course

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I illustrated how three individuals learned to teach at their institutions of choice during their early years of teaching. This chapter examines the learning experiences of a group of student teachers in a one-year VTE teacher training course. In the previous two chapters the data shows significant variations between the student teachers; however, the data I gathered with regard to their learning on the course are fairly similar. To avoid repetition, I intend to introduce one story to give a sense of what was going on and then amplify the issues with illustrations from the whole sample using selected quotations.

Sarah's story

Sarah is a Malay female. She was in her late twenties at the beginning of the course. She graduated in the UK in hospitality and tourism. She did not intend to become a teacher when she graduated. Prior to becoming a teacher, Sarah worked within the hospitality field abroad. She liked the interaction with people and being able to help people. After being in the job for a while, she decided to return to Brunei to settle down. At the time she returned home, there were not many job opportunities in her field of interest. She then decided to apply to become a teacher, as she thought teaching would be a job which would still allow her to continue her interaction with people.

Sarah had been teaching for almost four years prior to joining the teacher training course. In her first year of teaching, Sarah had a mentor who helped her in planning and preparing for her lessons. In addition to being supported by her mentor, Sarah learned to teach by doing the job, and receiving feedback from her students and her mentor. Sarah described learning at her workplace as very much dependent on self-initiative. She was encouraged to challenge herself by fulfilling her desires of wanting to help her students. That is, she said she would do anything to improve her teaching. This is reflected in her desire to enrol on the teacher training course.

Sarah enrolled on the teacher training course partly because it was a requirement to secure her teaching job and partly because she wanted to improve her teaching skills. 'Well, obviously parts of the condition, I would still take it because I wanted to learn not only to do with. I want to know what my alternatives are. I want to be in a position, if possible an occupation where not only I have to learn by myself, meaning working on the job. Also take the time out to really learn full time in what is related to what I am doing. It is a very good opportunity, honestly for me. At least I know what I am doing now. I can improve and how I can change. I get boring in my lectures. It shows and it is not fair for my students. I think it [lack of teaching ideas] plays quite a big role in my interest in taking this course.'

At the beginning of the course, Sarah thought she would struggle with student life due to the fact that she had left university a while ago. However, Sarah enjoyed being a student again because she was able to interact with teachers from other institutions who were on the course. 'What I have learnt is that student life is still fun. I have learnt also to mingle with other people from other institutions who are the same level as me. They [her peers] are also teaching.' As Sarah progressed in the course, she said she learnt different approaches which could directly or indirectly

help her with her future lessons. Sarah learned to teach by relating what she had learnt on her course to her previous teaching experience. She said that she was glad to have a few years of teaching experience prior to joining this course as it provided her with something to which she could relate. 'I have hands on experience. So it is easy to correct what I did before. I know where I went wrong in terms of progress. That really helps but if I had it [the course] earlier on at the beginning, it would also be good but it would be so difficult to imagine how the learning environment would be. So if I did the course first and actually went to teach in the institution, I think it wouldn't have more of an effect than as it would have now. I think now it [course] has more effect in what I am doing.'

Although Sarah enjoyed being a student, she was concerned about having less control of her work compared to when she was a teacher. 'From what I am learning, I think it is okay but it is a matter of me fitting in and going back to the student life like meeting deadlines. That is just my concern. I am struggling to meet the deadlines [for assignments] but whereas working [back at the college], it is easy. You have more flexibility. You have more control but here [university], I guess meeting the deadlines. You have to do the research...Just that element of that control is very little now. I still need to get use to being a student. So when the assignment needs to be done, I will try to do it but it is very difficult....' She also felt that her university lecturers were controlling how she approached her studies. '...there are times when they want to control you. They want to know what you are doing. Kind of shaping you more. I can see the reason why but from my view, I think it will be better if we are left independent. "Here you go and that's it", one, it makes us appreciate the responsibility. We take more initiative. If there is too much consideration, then you know we tend to slack off a bit, "Oh, he or she will understand" and in terms of reading materials, "Oh, I know he will give it to me".

That is when we take it for granted here.' She continued by saying, 'We don't like to be guided. We know what we need to know. We don't say we don't appreciate their help because we do appreciate, but just give us a bit more space so that we can appreciate it more. We will face our own consequences at the end of the day.'

At the university, Sarah enjoyed the tutorial sessions, as there were only a few students in each tutorial. It allowed more chances for participation in discussions. 'Tutorials are more enjoyable. We are in smaller groups. In tutorials, we are able to discuss more. Where as in the lectures, we have to sit there and listen. It is the tutorials that we look forward to because better opportunities where we can talk. It is not strict. For lectures, if you missed it, you have to do your own reading. But in tutorials, it is based more on either discussions or activity work. You have to look at other people's views so I guess the method of learning is a different way rather than listening all the time but learning from your colleagues, that is more enjoyable.'

Apart from tutorials, Sarah found microteaching sessions useful. Sarah said microteaching provided opportunities for her peers and her to practice their teaching skills. In these sessions, Sarah was able to learn to teach through observing how her peers taught.

Sarah enjoyed being on the course with her colleagues. She did not mingle with other university students apart from her peers on the course. Sarah's group of friends motivated her. 'I am still absorbed in our group. I don't really pay much attention to the rest. It is fun and enjoyable. You look forward to seeing each other. It is because you have to be serious in the lectures. In tutorials, we get to joke around and have some fun.'

What Sarah likes most about the course is, '...the interaction with the colleagues, we learn from each other. How we are able to use our experience to relate to a given situation or given scenarios, I learn more from my colleagues. I learned obviously from lecturers. It was more enjoyable and easy to take in when we have colleagues doing the same thing with you. That is the fun part.' In addition, she said, 'it is enjoyable and I think it is fun because of the people that is in the course. They dominated more than the whole thing. What is in my mind are colleagues. The course that I am going through such as the surrounding environment, I don't think has much impact on me.'

Every Monday, Sarah would attend her teaching placement, which was also her previous workplace. During her time there, Sarah would try out newly learnt teaching methods. With the new teaching methods, Sarah saw a change in her and how she managed her lessons. She found the course '...very useful. What [named lecturer] has taught us, I would give it a go. I would actually try it out what he had taught us...there had been some good responses luckily. I know this is another approach I can try on my students. It is benefiting them. I am getting more attention. I get their attention before but sometimes you get them drifting away. Now I would say, I would be more in control of the environment than I was before. Before, it was just totally passive. I can get them to react now. I find it more enjoyable. When I learn something, I want to apply it. Students can also see that I am trying something new. I think two works together.' Sarah also talked about how she used her teaching strategies that she had learnt on the course. 'I tried to use that [teaching strategies in [named institution]]. I am also bored using the same strategy and you can see it on their faces. I apply what I have learnt. The learning experience from here has helped me to strengthen my weaknesses and use other alternatives based on what I have learnt. So it is useful. You can see here what went wrong, what is a

good strategy and use it there.' Although Sarah appreciates what she learnt, there was a difference in teaching practices at the university and her teaching placement; for example, with regard to lesson plans. Sarah had not used lesson plans at her workplace before. As a student on the course, she said she had to prepare her lesson plans when she was doing her teaching practice.

At her teaching placement, Sarah had a cooperating teacher. However, she felt that her cooperating teacher was not appropriate as she had specialised in a different subject. In addition, her cooperating teacher was busy and did not spend much time with her. As a result, Sarah did not receive much help from her cooperating teacher.

Sarah appreciated the chance to be able to attend the university four days a week and be at her teaching placement one day a week. At times she would feel that she was a student herself, while teaching her students at her teaching placement. 'Sometimes, although I am the one standing there and the students are there, I still feel that I am still here [university] being a student. In a way, it is fun because the students are also enjoying it like "she [Sarah] is not like restricting"'

While Sarah was at her teaching placement, her university assignments and assessments always reminded her that she was still a student. She said, 'There are some student aspects in there but mostly a teacher though. For the moment, I think when I am teaching is when I step into the classroom. When I am out of the classroom, I still see myself as a student because I have to remember there are assignments that I have to do. I have to make sure some of my work is done.' She also had to write lesson plans which she felt were a burden to her initially. 'In [named institution], we don't use lesson plan. I think we can benefit from lesson plans if you use it...I tend to find myself drifting away a bit from my lesson plans. But

if I stopped halfway in the lecture, I can refer to it. Not to say it is not useful. It is useful. It's now becoming positive. It [lesson plans] used to be a burden.'

Being a student herself, she developed the ability to sympathise with her own students more compared to her attitude before she joined the course. Hence there was a change in how she saw herself and how she managed her students. 'You sympathise with them [students] more. At least you are not static in that situation and in that mindset. If you are in that institution, you stay in the same momentum, but if you change roles, it keeps you more alert. You appreciate what you have here [university] and what you have there [teaching placement].' In relation to this, she said, 'I think I can change while I am there [teaching placement] and if I am in front of them [students]. Before I joined [named university], it was more of an authoritative figure. I am here, your students are there, but after going through all these experiences as a student, I can see myself change. I am more flexible. I am more understanding. I can see their reasoning better. So I am more lenient but because of the situation that I am here [university], I am a student. So at times, if they are out of hand, then I would use my authority as the lecturer. However, if they are okay and easy to handle, it is an okay relationship.'

Towards the end of the course, Sarah felt that she gained a lot from her experiences. 'I think I have learnt quite a lot...I think we have gained quite a lot obviously from the lecturers and from the experiences. We went through with the exercises and the assessments given to us. Even though some are repetitive, we still gain something from it. So I think I am more knowledgeable and hopefully more skilled. Now I would say, I would be more in control of the environment [her lesson] than I was before. Before, it was totally passive depending on the topic. I can get my students to react now and I find it more enjoyable.'

Learning at the university site

At the university site, student teachers attended lectures and met regularly with their peers during tutorials. During tutorials, they had to participate in activities like group work, group discussions and microteaching. Most student teachers, including Sarah, appreciated the chance to study with teachers from different institutions. Relationships among the student teachers were clearly seen as an important issue when learning at the university site. Most learned better through informal discussions with their peers than just listening to their lecturers in the lectures. Even Greg and David, who were both sceptical throughout the course, enjoyed learning with their friends and gained from the course.

Greg: '... the only difference here is that we are learning and then learning from our friends which is good because during [one of the modules], I can see how my friends are teaching. If I have a chance to do something else, a different module, maybe I will do what they are doing. It is good to see them doing all those [methods of teaching]. ...some of my peers are very very good in teaching when I compared with my teaching....'

David: '...there are new things that we know. For example, there are actually different methods of teaching that we can actually do in our class. Some are quite difficult to do in our class, but we learn it anyway. We are given the task to do. For example, they [lecturers] are giving us activities to do in the class, with other colleagues, so that is what makes it interesting.'

Sarah also felt a sense of belonging to a group of students who were all learning to teach and 'doing the same thing'. She could relate to them better. They were like a support group to her and had more influence on her studies than her lecturers. Similarly, most of the other student teachers valued their friends within the course. They wanted to belong to this community of friends, as Faith described it '...we are a small group, we work well together. Whatever risks that happen, we learn to overcome that. We are actually a very close knit happy family I guess...' Apart from spending time within the classes, most of the student teachers also spent their free

time together between lessons at the university and outside the university. They created a learning relationship within the group which provided the members with support and encouragement:

Michael: 'Sometimes we go to the canteen and do our own discussions. At 9:50am [break time], we go to the canteen and we will discuss what we have learned in the class and relate it to our real life situations and sometimes we go for outing.'

Pam: 'I can see it [the group of students] as one big family. We have a good relationship. It's like a big family, you know sometimes when we go to the canteen, we would use the whole table for all of us. This group is interesting. It's like back to school really...and I think for me personally, I will miss this moment, this experience and this learning experience. You feel you can go along with your colleague, automatically you will love the course as well.'

Sarah clearly valued the chance of being a student again. Learning to teach off-the-job allowed her to have less responsibility as a teacher compared to when she was learning to teach on-the-job. Another student teacher, Faith also enjoyed her student experiences:

'...generally, I think what I enjoyed the most is the experience. It's been a long time since I have worked to chase a deadline. It's been a long time that I actually do a proper research, finish an assignment. So it refreshes the thought of what I am actually in education system for.'

Like all other student teachers, Sarah had to chase assignment deadlines. This is because passing assignments was one of the criteria for assessment on the teacher training course, as illustrated in Chapter 2. Anna also felt pressurized by assignments and exams. She said, '...exam pressures. Just like we are two weeks ago, we have the semester break and we had so many deadlines just before the weekend'. Some student teachers had different views about the assessments on the course:

Michael: '...assessment criteria is something I don't really like. It is 70% assignments and 30% exams. In the second semester, most of the coursework given to us have no specific deadlines. So people tend to be de-motivated in their learning. Like in the first semester, we have deadlines. This week you have this [deadline], next week, you have that [deadline]. It is continuous. However, in the second semester, the first five weeks, there is nothing to submit. You feel like you are not motivated. You feel de-motivated. Because if you have deadlines, you are aware of it. If tomorrow is the deadline, I will need to do it. We do plan. Even I have my own diary with the submission dates but it is difficult. They said you can send in two coursework by the end of this semester. In the end you have a lot to submit, that is why people feel de-motivated sometimes....'

Phillip: '...some people are more in favour of exams. Some of the lecturers are in favour of bigger weightage in exams but here the argument is, we are in-service people. We don't need to have exams. We do carry out tasks and projects, datelines, coursework are better reflection of what we are doing, not exams.'

There were several unplanned learning outcomes from activities organised by lecturers. For example, in microteaching, Sarah not only gained from learning to teach in front of her peers, but was able to gain from observing how other student teachers taught. Similarly, other student teachers also learned to teach through observing how their university lecturers taught and relating that to their own teaching experiences.

Pam: '... [When] I compared my learning in [university], I can concentrate using the PowerPoint, whereas if we just give the notes to the students, we keep the notes. The students use the notes as well. How do you know they are with you, listening to you? I remember last time when we did a lesson on PowerPoint, I really agree the statement that students would learn better if they see something, and then hear something at the same time. I agree with that. I experience that in the course. For me when I am in [university], I am a student and usually I would imagine myself as a teacher standing in front.'

Phillip: 'Since I am here as a student, I get the students' view point. Because when I am in [named institution where he was teaching], I am a teacher. I am not sitting in my students shoes. So I just know that I am doing my part. I am

not sure what they are perceiving and what they are thinking. That used to be one of the things that I didn't do from the students' view point. Like how do they read? What do they pick up? But here, having taught by someone else, that is something that I do. Sometimes it is very useful because I realise some of the lecturers here, their styles and my styles, there are some overlaps. So I can see where it works and where it doesn't.'

Anna: 'During the three years of my teaching, before I joined PGCTE, I didn't use PowerPoint to teach. I was only using the transparency and I think it is sufficient to get my students interested. It made me realise which approaches we prefer by seeing the different methods of all the different lecturers here, from semester one and semester two. Like one lecturer is using transparency, one lecturer is using PowerPoint and another one just sits there and talks something. We would discuss among ourselves the different approaches and pick up the best ones and then we would try to implement it in [teaching placement] on our students.'

Sarah's story showed that one of her concerns about being a student teacher was she would have less flexibility and control compared to when she was a teacher. Firstly, she felt the way she approached her learning was controlled by her university lecturer. Put simply, she felt that her university lecturer provided too much guidance. Some other student teachers like Mary and Sheryl felt the same. They said they felt that they were guided and directed too much, which in a way discourages their independent thoughts and actions. Secondly, Sarah and other student teachers had to finish their assignments in good time as well as attending lectures on a regular basis. This is because an attendance registry was kept. All of these elements contributed to their overall performance in their VTE teacher training course. Put simply, they had to conform to the university's requirements, which tended to lead to less flexibility and control over their studies.

Learning at the university site highlights a few points. Firstly, individuals had to attend lectures, tutorials and participate in discussion. These are the normal practices of a student teacher. Secondly, student teachers enjoyed learning with their peers as they could relate more to them than to their lecturers. Thirdly, student

teachers valued their learning relationships within the teacher training course. This is because these learning relationships provided support to their learning. Lastly, as student teachers, they had less control over their work compared to when they were teachers. Thus they were obliged to continue working towards fulfilling the university requirements e.g. regularly attending lectures and tutorials, finishing assignments, and passing exams.

Learning on the placement

Sarah and most student teachers valued their Monday teaching practice at the teaching placement. On Mondays, Sarah took the opportunity to practice new ideas or teaching strategies that she had learnt in the previous week at the university. Most student teachers tried different planning strategies which they had never used before:

Phillip: 'Well, I apply what I learn here [university]. For example, sometimes if I do something mental, I would sketch my notes and handouts. So that in a way is my lesson plan. I never really think about objectives like behavioural objectives. But now, I will look at it. I think the lesson plan is useful to guide me in what to focus on for each lesson. So it has been very good and very useful and then of course, we learn all the other different techniques like how we could do discussion, buzz groups and how we could plan a lesson. So that is useful. I may not be able to apply it in many of my topics but it is useful to know'

Even David, whom at beginning felt he did not need to attend the course to be a good teacher, tried to teach differently during his teaching placement:

'I think the teaching part is a bit different from my first two years because I know that there are certain things that I can do during the lectures. So I try to do it....so it's quite different from the first two years when I just started.'

However, most of the student teachers did not apply all the teaching methods that they learnt on the university course. Based on previous teaching experiences, most student teachers had better judgement and were able to select the appropriate teaching methods learnt at university for their own lessons:

Faith: 'What we teach, we don't implement everything. We learn to pick what is relevant. It is up to us to digest what we learn here [at university], and pick what is relevant to our unit [the subject each student teacher teaches]. We are encouraged to actually implement student based activities in our lessons but when you are in a lecture, you are teaching 105 students and that is not possible.'

At the teaching placement, Sarah saw herself as a teacher when she was in the classroom. However, she would be reminded by her own university assignments that she was a student at the university. Most of the student teachers either saw themselves as a teacher or a student teacher when they were at their teaching placements.

Anna: '...for this semester, I see myself as a lecturer. I need to switch the role but just as I get out from the lecture room, I will be like, coursework. Back to student life but then if I am entering a lesson, I need to focus on my students. They are like my clients. They are my customers. I need to entertain them.'

David: 'On Monday, I feel a bit different because when I am in [named teaching placement], it's like we are actually doing the work for the students as in preparing for the lessons and then we also have to consider ourselves as we are student in [named university] and there are a lot of assignments, and coursework to do. We are also a student teacher doing some assignments and finishing up some coursework at our offices. So it is actually difficult to balance between a student and a lecturer.'

Sarah wanted to be seen as a student rather than a full-time teacher among her colleagues back at her teaching placement. She would then not be obliged to take on non-teaching responsibilities. This depended on the practices within each

student teacher's teaching placement. For example, Andrew was not obliged to take on administrative responsibilities apart from his teaching role.

'...you know when I go to [named university], I gave up my duties and my responsibilities to the school. Now even though I go to school, I don't have the responsibilities like ECA [extra-curriculum activities] officer. I don't have non-teaching duties in school. All I have to do in school is just to teach. Basically I just practise what I have learnt at the university.'

However, other students like Faith and Phillip had to take on non-teaching responsibilities which were not related to their teaching practice:

Faith: '...On Mondays, I think I am just there to teach and I feel like I am lost to what is happening in my institution [teaching placement]. Slowly I am given administrative work because they know I am coming [back]. So it means I still have to catch up with what has been happening since I have been gone. It's quite a catch up to do...'

Phillip: '...to be honest, very very hectic, because I go to the office at 7:45am and for about two hours, I will spend on lesson planning, do the mental rehearsal and then of course other things that we need to response to like photocopy jam, you have to fix it. We have to supervise projects as well. Things like this which is not directly relevant to our teaching but we need to spend time on these duties. This is 2 hrs in the morning until 10am then my class starts for two hours...'

Student teachers who were not able to arrange all their lessons on Mondays had to return to teach on other days.

Anna: 'It is hard... we don't have much time as we have our own projects going on like all our assignments and assessments and also the thinking about the things that we need [to do] for the students. It is really really hard, switching, and it is not only Mondays that I go back to [name institution]. I go back on Wednesday as well for my labs. So it means that after we finish our lectures on Wednesday, my friends will go back to do their own things but I will go back to [named institution, teaching placement]. My HOD [Head of Department] knows that [named university] doesn't have any classes on Wednesdays due to ECA [Extra-curricular activity] period. Shortage of staff in my institution I should say but it is just too much. It is just too much'.

Andrew: '...because like every Monday, we have to teach and coming back to university, we have to do our assignments. Sometimes I have to go to school every Saturday to prepare for my lessons. That is what I usually do. For every lesson, I have to prepare. It is not like other subjects. You just come in the class to teach. For us, we have to prepare for the fabric, the materials that we need, it is a lot of work.'

The university course required the student teachers to practise their teaching skills at their teaching placement, as well as continue to work normally back at their teaching placement, as this would increase their opportunities to work with their mentors (Department of Science and Mathematics, 2006). Whilst some teachers continued to both teach and take part in school-related activities, which also involved administrative work, other student teachers took control of their learning, although their colleagues continued to treat them as 'full-time' teachers who were there on Mondays.

Mary: 'Most of them view me as a professional colleague because there is shortage of staff now. They would ask me, "When are you coming back? We need staff". They wanted to give me a lot of hours to teach... "c'mon, I also have a lot of project for my PGCTE". So I also need to be very assertive. I don't mind as long as it sticks to Monday. When I said maybe there is a limitation. They view us as the Monday colleague only. Because we also put some kind of barrier...they know... "no, don't include us in"Because or else I would end up 100 hours of teaching and top up with what I have to do here [university]'

Andrew: '...when I am in school, they don't see me as a student. They see me as a teacher as well as their colleagues. As if like I have never gone to [named university]. Like it has never changed. However, I would like to treat myself as a student during every Monday practice. Every time they [his colleagues] ask me, "maybe you can do this work for us". I would say "wait a minute, I am a student teacher. I can't do that." I am enjoying one year off, but time to time, I do help out.'

At the teaching placement, student teachers faced challenges due to differences in practices between the requirements of the university and their own personal ways of working at their workplace. This is because these student teachers had already

been teaching at their workplace for several years prior to joining this teacher training course. They had already developed personal ways of teaching and working with their students. Sarah had never used a lesson plan before at her workplace, but she had to do so when she was doing her teaching practice. On one hand, Sarah gradually changed her mind to believe that using a lesson plan was a benefit. Despite the fact that she felt writing lesson plans was a burden, she continued doing to do so. On the other hand, most student teachers did not agree with their university lecturers with regard to lesson plans. Instead, many continued to prepare two lesson plans; their 'own' way of writing a lesson plan and their university's taught lesson plan.

Faith: '...I haven't been keeping up with my lesson plan because I have the habit of doing after the lecture now. Before, lesson plan was very alien to me. Now [named lecturer] encourages us to draw our lesson plan before but now, I have the habit of doing it after... Currently, I am actually adopting two ways [of writing the lesson plans]. Before lecturing, I still do the notes page outline and after that [lesson] I do the lesson plan. With the PowerPoint speech note, I am prepared and I am not limited to time but with the lesson plan, I am.'

David: '...for me it [lesson plan] was not useful because to be honest with you, I didn't do the lesson plan before the lesson. Usually, I try to make some points or some notes of how I am going to deliver the lesson but not as a lesson plan. I usually write down all the important things that the students need to know but that is not a lesson plan. So after the lesson then I will write down the lesson according to what I have done in the class. That is the way I write down the lesson plan.'

They were obliged to write the university lesson plans as it was one of the course requirements. These lesson plans would later be checked by their university supervisors, who were also their university lecturers.

Michael: '...before seriously in [named institution], we don't have lesson plan. But now you know how to do a lesson plan. Even though in here [teacher training course], you are actually forced to do lesson plan but actually it helps. Of course, for a start, it is difficult to do a lesson plan. But then maybe after that, you can improve on the lesson plan. I just refer to my lesson plan

and also identify the topics which need to be improved like I would need to include group discussion here.'

At the teaching placement, student teachers were encouraged to ask for support from their cooperating teachers. These cooperating teachers also played a role in assessing the teaching performance of the student teachers. On Mondays, some of the student teachers consulted their cooperating teachers if they had any doubts about their teaching. Some student teachers received support from their cooperating teachers; however, some student teachers like Sarah did not receive much support. Some student teachers did not always share the same opinion as their cooperating teachers. However, most student teachers learned to compromise with their cooperating teachers.

Faith: 'He is supportive but also defensive as well to new ideas. When you are new, you will try to inject new ideas. Sometimes he is defensive of his old techniques but that is acceptable because people are very reluctant to change. You learn to be accommodating as well. You learn to compromise. He still uses his old techniques where it is open book. He just explains to the students from the text book where as I work differently.'

Michael: 'If I have something in doubt, sometimes I ask him [cooperating teacher] but there is nothing much. In a sense of helping me to improve my teaching, no.'

Phillip: '...he [cooperating teacher] is helpful when he has the time. If I ask anything, he will help and he will give a lot of advice. Maybe some of it, he will. He has more experience than me. I still disagree with certain things. He is a few years older than me. He has got his own points and views about certain things. For example, assessments. He would do certain things in certain ways. I would say there is another way of doing it. He has been through PGCTE and I am doing it now. It is a matter of point of view, but we accept it together. So I find I don't do everything he does but I find his advice and guidance very helpful.'

Learning at the placement highlighted four important issues. Firstly, student teachers were practising what they learnt at the university site during their Monday

teaching practice. Secondly, they were expected to practise their teaching skills as a student teacher, as well as be involved in the educational activities of their department. Thirdly, student teachers experienced tension between their own personal pedagogic beliefs and the need to fulfil the course requirements. Finally, student teachers had to learn to compromise with their cooperating teachers, although they did not fully agree with their teaching approaches.

Roles and identities

The university and teaching placement staff agreed that the student teachers would spend four days a week at the university and one day a week at their teaching placement. At the university, the student teachers enjoyed being able to be students again, as they stopped being teachers. They had to attend lectures and tutorial sessions. In addition, they had to complete their assignments and projects and also pass assessments. Being students, they felt they had less responsibilities compared to when they were teaching. Their roles as student teachers were much more straightforward compared to when they were at their teaching placements.

On Mondays, the student teachers had to return to their teaching placements to practice their teaching skills and continue to participate in the educational activities within the department or the college. However, their student teacher roles at the teaching placements were not as simple as they seemed.

Firstly, these student teachers had previously been teachers at their teaching placements. Thus, their colleagues viewed them as 'teachers' rather than 'student teachers' doing their teaching practice. This was illustrated earlier in the section on

learning at the placement where Faith and Phillip were asked to take on administrative work even though they were expected by the university to be 'student teachers' practicing their teaching. Conversely, student teachers were caught between the need to continue their previous responsibilities as a 'teacher' at their teaching placement and the need to hold on to their beliefs of what a 'good student teacher' should do. Most student teachers had to fulfil two roles at one time in order to comply with the demands of both contexts. This is because their teaching practice is assessed on how well they performed as a student teacher at their teaching placement. In the student programme handbook, it states:

'The assessment of TP (Teaching Practice) seeks to recognise that a student teacher needs to think, to teach, and to contribute in other ways to the well-being of students, colleagues, the College/School, and the profession in general. The three aspects are identified as thinking, teaching and involvement. The UBD Supervisor (university lecturer) is ultimately responsible for determining the grade for TP, and will take into account the student teacher's TP File and the comments of the Cooperating Teachers, the college/school, and the student teacher, in doing so' (Department of Science and Mathematics Education, 2006, p. 11).

Put simply, they had to be good teachers and at the same time they had to be good student teachers who were learning to teach, as both contribute to the university course requirements.

Another example relating to this issue is how Faith and some other student teachers approached the idea of lesson plans, as they didn't agree with the idea. For example, Faith had her 'own' way of doing her lesson plans. However, she decided to continue writing the lesson plans as required by the university until she graduated from the course. She was caught in between the need to please the university tutor whose assessment would be counted at the end of the practice and the need to practice what she believed worked for her. Learning at the university and learning at

the teaching placement had certainly influenced the way the student teachers perceived their roles and identities.

Outcomes and changes

Most student teachers valued the teacher training course and had positive outcomes from doing it. Pam felt that she understood more about the process of teaching after attending the course:

Pam: '[before coming to the course], I only prepare the lesson plan after I have taught the lesson. Now I know that the plan should be done before the teaching. Before, I was not explained and not told about this. They [colleagues] just told me verbally, not so formal. That is why I don't know about lesson plan, evaluation, many things, eye contact which is important, teaching aids, teaching resources. I think I will miss this a lot. Now I feel that one year is too short.'

Phillip: 'I mean to be honest, back then I did not really have a clear idea of what teaching is really all about. You go to school. We see what the teachers do, oh that is it, everybody can do that, and everyone assumes they can do that. But when you are actually doing it, you realise there is a lot more to it. A lot more behind the scenes. And the problem was, I never really knew what it was. Whereas now in PGCTE, I see how everything fits. In a way, formalise. You see it as a structure. There are learning objectives, assessment and methods of teaching. You see it as more systematic whereas back then, there is something wrong, but I can't figure out what it was.'

Sarah saw a change in how she perceived herself and how she managed her lessons. Most of the student teachers felt more confident after completing the course. One significant example is Faith, who joined the course thinking that she would not be in the teaching profession in ten years time. However, by the end of the course, her perception had changed.

Faith: 'Like I said, my perception of teaching has changed. In ten years, I still see myself teaching. I hope within that time, I find my passion in teaching. I realised now that I don't hate it. Actually for me personally, I see a change in how I see my contribution to my student....'

She felt that she became an equipped teacher, which partially explains why she saw her lecturer as her colleague.

Faith: '...there has come to a point now in my second semester that we are starting to see eye to eye in terms of we are colleagues in the education system. Where as in the first semester, it was apparent that they are the lecturers and we are students and with the progression, how we see each other now is quite different.'

All the student teachers had changed in different ways,

Phillip: '...at the beginning I was teaching like an engineer but now, I have tried to change my style. Tried to find out more how they [the students] are getting along. For example, in the tutorials, at the beginning, quite honest, in some subjects, I really didn't do tutorials. Just present lectures. Actually I would give them a list of questions, "okay you go and do it". A big mistake. But now I have changed my approaches. Here is a list of questions but now they have to think and discuss in groups.'

Mary: '...this course has really changed me in some ways like it gives me a new look because my students also commented that I am more confident and looked more confident when I taught them. Some style which I used to be rigid of, I become more at ease. In a way that is a great change for me.'

Even Greg and David, who were the most reluctant to attend the teacher training course, saw a change in themselves:

Greg: '...It is good, to me, I appreciate teaching there [institution where he used to teach] more now...although I learn something but I can't wait to go back to [named institution] and teach.'

David: 'Now I am a bit conscious about planning, and preparing. It used to be like one semester, I will do the whole lot. But now for one lesson, I will prepare this one bit. We are conscious to be prepared at the lesson. The conscious feeling is now there.'

Most of the student teachers saw a change in themselves attending the course. The course not only helped to develop their teaching skills, but also changed their view of teaching.

The interrelationship between learning at a teaching placement and learning at the university site

Based on my research data, I can make two observations about the interrelationship between learning at teaching placements and learning at the university. To avoid confusion, I will use the term 'workplace learning' to relate to learning at the teaching placement and 'college-based learning' to relate to learning at university site. Rather than overlooking the relevance of college learning to work, which is usually ignored by writers from the situated cognition background (for example, Lave and Wenger, 1991), the issues I have drawn from the data highlighted that formal education institutions could still be sites for social participatory practices like informal discussions, collaboration learning, group work and informal discussion. With regard to learning at the university site, my research data has shown that the student teachers continued to learn through formal courses, as well as through informal discussions among themselves. Most student teachers learned better through informal discussions and tutorials among their peers. At their workplace, they continued to learn through their cooperating teacher and their colleagues. Thus, this issue suggests that rather than focussing on the context in which learning takes place, we should look at the practices which contribute to learning (Billett, 2002).

Secondly, the student teachers were moving between the workplace and the university site, and thus influencing each other in both directions. Therefore, rather than seeing learning as a one direction process, it is helpful to view it as a bi-directional process. That is, the student teachers took the ideas that they learnt at the university and tried them out at their teaching placements. However, they did not literally apply all the methods that they learnt. Instead they made judgments and were selective of the teaching methods based on their teaching experiences prior to joining the course. They also shared what they had learnt with their colleagues at their workplace. This simultaneous movement between the workplace and the university site also involved a change of roles which is much more complex than the common sequential movement i.e. where a student moves into a workplace or a worker moves from one workplace to a new workplace. The complexity of this simultaneous movement will be discussed in Chapter 8.

Conclusion

I have described and discussed the learning experiences of the student teachers at their teaching placement, as well as at their university site. This chapter highlights several issues which are associated with the roles and identities of a student teacher. Given that they had to change roles to be a teacher and a student teacher, they had to work in 'double structures' (Grenfell, 1996, 1998). That is, they had to comply with the demands of both their workplace and university course. Operating in such structures caused tensions between what they had to do in order to satisfy the university requirements and their own pedagogic beliefs. Thus, the student teachers' dispositions to teaching could have changed as a result of these tensions; in other words, these tensions contributed to the learning of these teachers.

Chapter 8 Understanding the learning of individuals in becoming VTE teachers

Introduction

In order to understand the process of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei, there is a need to comprehend the interrelationship between individuals and the learning situations which emerged as one of the central themes across Chapters 5, 6 and 7. In addition, and in relation to this, there is a second important central theme which is the notion of the 'individual learning journey'. This notion provides a way to understand the three stages of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. Thus the purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive discussion to illustrate these two central themes in relation to my data.

In an attempt to illustrate these two central themes, I first discuss how individuals choose to become VTE teachers, drawing on Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership theory. This is to provide an illustration that career decision-making is part of the process of becoming a VTE teacher. Following on from this, I discuss a different way of understanding individual learning within a learning situation in relation to my data by critiquing the limitations of Lave and Wenger's communities of practice. Building on this, I discuss and explain a way of understanding career decision-making and learning in relation to my data. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of how an integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning can be extended and modified in order to understand my research data.

Career decision-making in becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei

In Chapter 5, we saw that the positions, dispositions and capital of an individual play a part in the career decision-making of that individual. The stories also illustrate that an individual's position in the field where the career decision was made and 'others' play a part in influencing those choices. This concurs with the central idea of the careership theory, which suggests that the career decision-making process and career progression take place in the interactions between the person and the fields which they inhabit (Hodkinson et al., 1996; Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997; Hodkinson, 2009). Expressed simply, career decisions are derived from an individual's dispositions that arise as a result of their ongoing life experiences and their interactions with others in their social environment.

In Chapter 5, I illustrated how Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) notion of 'pragmatic rationality' provides a way of understanding how individuals make career decisions. Here, I would like to discuss how one way of understanding pragmatic rationality is to understand that learning is a part of it.

As discussed in Chapter 3, Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership model draws on Bourdieu's concept. Bourdieu's concept of habitus has been accused of being structurally deterministic and criticized for providing no mechanism for changing the habitus (Jenkins, 1992). In response to such criticism, Hodkinson and Sparkes (2007) suggest that learning is one of the mechanisms that can change the habitus. In illustrating the notion of pragmatic rationality, they suggest that Bourdieu's notion of habitus is very much like Giddens's (1991) 'practical consciousness'. That is, someone might know what they are doing but they cannot express it discursively. However, there are also actions which individuals can express discursively, which

Giddens (1991) refers to as 'discursive consciousness'. Hodkinson and Sparkes (1997) argue that habitus is a combination of practical consciousness and discursive consciousness. For example, Michael wanted to study in the United Kingdom (UK) but could not articulate why he wanted to do so. It is plausible that it is very common among individuals in Brunei to be sent to the UK to study due to the post-colonial traces in the country. He knew that if he chose to accept the scholarship, he would be required to return to Brunei to work as a VTE teacher. However, he still went ahead with his decision.

According to Hodkinson and Sparkes (1997), both practical consciousness and discursive consciousness can be seen developing through schemata. Given that habitus is a structure of the mind characterized by a set of acquired schemata, dispositions and experiences, then changes in the schemata through accumulation of information can contribute to the development of the habitus. Put another way, individuals are also learning during the decision-making process. This is because any new information which contributes to the decision-making of individuals is constantly building on their existing schemata framework. This subsequently changes the individuals' habitus and their 'horizons for action' (Hodkinson et al., 1996). Thus, the habitus is not static and is reproduced and developed through the process of career decision-making. For example, Phillip started to work as an engineer in a private company abroad. During this time, he realized that he was interested in doing research. Since his engineering job could not fulfil his interests, he decided to return to Brunei to search for a job which could provide him with the opportunity to do so. His career decision-making process involved looking at job opportunities apart from teaching. However, he decided to teach, as he thought other jobs might end up like his previous job abroad. Phillip's story showed that his decision to teach was considered logical. It was also informed by his previous job

experiences and through his dispositions towards the labour market. Phillip's actions and dispositions during his decision-making process can be understood as learning about himself and learning about his position in the employment field in terms of re-evaluating what he wanted from his job. As his decision is made during this process, his habitus is subsequently changed. That is, learning subsequently changed his habitus. Put another way, one way of understanding pragmatic rationality as learning is when individuals are making the pragmatically rational decisions, it is actually a part of a process whereby individuals modify or reinforce how they see the world and where they are located.

In exploring learning as part of career decision-making, I turn to look at the third dimension of the careership theory i.e. the longitudinal dimension of career decisions. In Chapter 3, I discussed how Hodkinson and Sparkes (1997) used the notion of 'turning points' and 'routines' to describe the longitudinal dimension of career decision making. Here, I use the idea of 'turning points' and 'routines' to understand my research data.

Within my research data, some students moved from another job into teaching, which can be described as a 'self-initiated' transition. Some students came to the end of their formal university course and applied for a teaching position, which was similar to a 'structural' transition. However, some participants like Michael, Mary and Andrew chose their teaching career before they had even finished their formal university course i.e. they were bonded to teach. There is value in using these concepts to explain the transitions of some of the individuals in my research from one job to another or from education to work. However, it is through one of the stories of those participants who were bonded to teach that I found that we should refrain from using 'turning points' and 'routines' to explain transitions.

As shown in Chapter 5, Michael, who was bonded to teach, was pragmatic and rational about his career decision to become a VTE teacher. However, when he returned to Brunei after his undergraduate course, he didn't want to become a VTE teacher. Once in his teaching job, Michael was dissatisfied with his career decision. He was so reluctant to stay in his job that he tried to apply for an engineering job:

Michael: '...the first and second year, I applied to [private company] and I was recruited but it was difficult to be released from my bond. I reapplied for two times and after that I quit knowing that it was really difficult to be released from my bond.'

However, he stopped trying to leave his job after several failed attempts. Through participating in his workplace, his views about teaching began to change. In a way, his 'routine experiences' changed without any intervening turning points. This contradicts the idea that 'turning points' usually come before and after 'routine experiences'. Thus, I concur with Bowman et al. (2005) and Hodkinson (2009) that the concepts of 'routines' and 'turning points' used within a longitudinal dimension of careership are unhelpful. As a result, Bowman et al. (2005) argue that, instead of seeing career development as a series of routines and turning points, it is better to understand it as individuals undergoing progressive change through constructing their career by participating in their workplaces. That is, transitioning should be viewed as an on-going learning process.

Based on my research data, individuals participated in several learning cultures which contributed to their career and their identity construction with regard to becoming a VTE teacher. For example, Mary's participation in her diploma nursing course leading up to her career decision can be seen as a part of her career construction. Subsequently, her participation in her undergraduate course, teaching workplaces and teacher training courses all contributed to her becoming a VTE

teacher. In all these circumstances, she was learning to become a nursing tutor. This illustrates that the process of career construction and learning had begun before she decided to become a VTE tutor. This finding supports the idea that a central part of career construction is learning (Hodkinson, 2009). It follows that individuals' career decision-making should not be seen as an event, but rather as an integral part of a longitudinal career development process (Hodkinson, 2009).

We have looked at the career decision-making of individuals with regard to becoming a VTE teacher. Next, I discuss ways of understanding the learning of individuals within their workplaces in order to provide a pathway leading to a discussion of the relationship between the three stages in the process of becoming a VTE teacher: career decision-making, learning in the workplace and learning on the teacher training course.

Learning cultures or communities of practice?

In Chapter 3, I illustrated the different approaches to understanding learning and the limitations of the current literature on understanding learning. Although there are limitations within the current literature on understanding learning, learning approaches like learning cultures and communities of practice prove useful in understanding my research data. However, I find learning theories which employ Bourdieu's conceptual tools like Hodkinson et al.'s (2007a, b) theory of learning culture provide a better way of understanding the learning of participants within a learning situation. In order to illustrate this point, I first provide a discussion on the value of Lave and Wenger's communities of practice, followed by the limitations of this concept with regard to understanding my research data.

Communities of practice: Legitimate Peripheral Participation

In their situated learning theory, Lave and Wenger (1991) describe their overall view of learning:

'As an aspect of social practice, learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but also a relation to social communities. ...learning only partly – and often incidentally – implies becoming able to be involved in new activities, to perform new tasks and functions, to master new understandings. Activities, tasks, functions, and understandings do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relations in which they have meaning. These systems of relations arise out of and are reproduced and developed within social communities, which are part systems of relations among persons. ...viewing learning as legitimate peripheral participation means that learning is not merely a condition for membership, but it is an evolving form of membership...'(p.53).

For newcomers, becoming a member in their community of practice is about gaining access and being able to participate in social practices within the community. Thus, membership and social relations are central to their understanding of learning.

There is value in using Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP) in understanding how individuals learn within their workplaces. For example, the data in Chapter 6 produced a number of fairly straightforward examples of LPP as the way 'novices' establish themselves in their community of practice. In Chapter 6, Mary, Pam and Andrew were all newcomers to their community of practice. Their situations are similar to members of Alcoholics Anonymous, as described by Lave and Wenger (1991), whereby once you are accepted into a community of practice, you are in. That is, they had to begin teaching once they joined the teaching profession, although they had not taught before.

In LPP, Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest that apprenticeship essentially involves exposure to on-going practice, but does not necessarily involve intentional guidance

and instruction. Andrew's story compares with Lave and Wenger's account of Vai and Gola tailors, where the apprentices observe their masters and learn to do simple tasks which gradually lead to more complex tasks. His mentor taught him how to sew and also offered him guidance on how to teach sewing. This form of formal support helped Andrew to become a full member in his community of practice. Other forms of formal support can be illustrated in Mary's story. She was given the chance to move from the periphery to the center in her community of practice through team teaching with her colleagues. Unlike Andrew and Mary, Pam had no support at all.

While using Lave and Wenger's (1991) concepts to analyse my research data, I identified several issues in their approach that can be addressed and developed. The following are the issues that I would like to bring to your attention. Lave and Wenger (1991) acknowledge the significance of learner identity, but they implicitly treat newcomers as *tabula rasa* (see Fuller et al., 2005). In Chapter 6, all the teachers have different prior experiences before coming to their new workplace. They bring with them their values, beliefs and expectations which have been influenced by their experiences prior to entering the workplace.

Latching onto the previous point, Lave and Wenger's (1991) LPP did not address the issue of individual agency (Billett, 2001a; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004b). The findings in Chapter 6 show that individual agency was important in locating different learning strategies to learn to become full members. For example, Mary was proactive in building informal relationships in order to learn to teach.

Lave and Wenger also did not talk about what and how individuals learn in their workplace. It was not clear how the examples in their book learn and what is learned through their participation (Elkjaer, 2003). As discussed earlier in Chapter

6, all the teachers learned to teach or became full members in different ways. These different ways were influenced by their individual dispositions and positions within their workplaces, as well as workplace practices such as the amount of support they received from their colleagues and their relationship with their colleagues.

In order to move beyond the limitations of the concept of communities of practice in relation to my data, we need to find a different way of understanding the learning of my individuals. This learning theory should be able to integrate individual learners into a participatory understanding of learning, as well as taking into account the wider social, cultural and structural influences on individual learning. As argued in Chapter 3, in order to integrate individual learners into a participatory understanding of learning, Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning can provide a different way of understanding the learning of individuals compared to Lave and Wenger's (1991) communities of practice. However, this integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning only helped me to partially understand the learning of my individuals with regard to them becoming VTE teachers, which will be made apparent later. Therefore, this integrated theory needs some extending in order for it to help understand my research data. Since I have already introduced the concept of learning cultures in Chapter 3, I intend to illustrate the ways the theory of learning cultures can be used as a thinking tool in understanding my research data.

Learning cultures

Learning cultures is a concept proposed by Hodkinson et al. (2007a) that can be used to describe the social practices which influence learning within a situation. They claim that a learning culture is not the same as a learning site; rather, it is a particular way to understand a learning site through its social practices which are 'constituted by the actions, dispositions and interpretations of the participants' (p.419). Following on from this, it is suggested that individuals can (re)construct a learning culture within a site through their practices.

In this section, I will demonstrate how the concept of learning cultures can help us better understand situated learning through my research data. In doing this, I will first illustrate these learning cultures in relation to my data, followed by a discussion centring on why the concept of learning cultures provides a better way to understand learning within a situation. Hodkinson et al. (2007a) argue that all situations have learning cultures. I have research data about learning cultures in at least three situations: the family home, workplaces and university learning sites. All individuals who are part of a learning situation play a part in influencing or (re) constructing the learning cultures within it.

Within a family home, Phillip's story showed that the learning culture is influenced by his parents. For example, his parents had high expectations of Phillip's academic performance. They encouraged him and his sisters to read at home by buying them plenty of story books. Phillip also had high expectations of his own achievements. He competed with his sisters in their studies. Similarly, cultural practices in Anna's family home influenced the way she learned about her eventual career. Her parents' expectations and actions influenced Anna's learning at home. For

example, they had high expectations for her to do well in her exams. Anna's parents, who are both teachers, used their teacher roles at home when disciplining her. Her parents' actions led her to work hard in order to fulfil their expectations. Thus, these stories illustrate that the practices which are made up of actions and dispositions of the individuals and their parents influence the learning culture within a family home.

In Chapter 6, although the three new teachers (Pam, Andrew and Mary) set out to achieve similar objectives in terms of learning to become a full participant in their workplaces, each underwent different processes of learning to teach due to the different practices in their workplaces. These different practices which influence their learning constitute the learning cultures of their workplaces. The practices within their workplaces were influenced by their colleagues and mentors. For example, Andrew had a smooth transition in his learning due to the support given by his mentor. His mentor guided him and taught him the skills he needed to teach. However, Pam's mentor was reluctant to support her in her quest to learn to teach. Whilst Pam and Andrew had a mentor, Mary did not have one. Mary also did not receive enough support from her senior colleagues, as they were reluctant to help her. They had high expectations of her and expected her to know it all since she had higher qualifications than them. Despite all this, Mary was able to obtain support from her junior colleagues through discussions and sharing teaching ideas during their free time. They shared teaching resources with each other as they did cross-teaching. She also learned to teach through team-teaching with her colleagues. Thus, the mentors and colleagues within a workplace influence the learning cultures of the workplaces of these new teachers.

Similarly in Chapter 7, there are two identifiable learning cultures involved in the university course i.e. one at the university site and the other at the teaching placements. The learning cultures within both the university site and the teaching placement are influenced by the practices of the student teachers. For example, the student teachers participated in discussions with their peers which allowed them to exchange ideas. They also participated in microteaching, which allowed the participants to observe and self-reflect. The university lecturers also played a part in (re)constructing the learning culture within the university site through their practices. For example, Sarah's story also showed that her university lecturers guided them through every step without them needing to do much. As a result, she and her peers did not have to use their own initiatives to find resources for their studies. At the teaching placements, student teachers had to write and keep their lesson plans in their teaching practice file up to date in order to satisfy the course requirements, as they are assessed by their university lecturer and their cooperating teacher. Both the university lecturer and cooperating teacher would observe and assess the student teachers' teaching. The student teachers, their university lecturer and cooperating teacher all influence the learning within the teaching placements through their actions.

From the above illustrations, we can see that the practices which are constituted by the actions and dispositions of individuals influence the learning within a situation. If we look at Mary's story, the practices in her workplace were also influenced by her subject discipline. For example, she said that she had to be equipped with nursing skills and be kept up to date with the latest nursing trends. She tried to keep abreast with the latest nursing trends through discussion with her in-service nursing students. Mary's learning within her workplace was also influenced by the strong subject identity formed prior to her teaching. Mary's actions and dispositions in her

workplace are also derived partly from the view of nursing that she held, relating back to her own experiences abroad. She brought her ideas from her experiences abroad and put them into practice in her workplace. In a way, she can be considered to be a vehicle for communicating globalised international ideas and new innovations in nursing teaching approaches back to her workplace. Similarly, many of the teachers in my research data were also educated abroad. They brought their experiences and expectations back with them, which influenced their actions and dispositions to learn in their workplaces.

Learning cultures also allows us to think of factors that impact upon a particular learning site originate and operate beyond the learning site itself (Hodkinson et al., 2007a). This is because if we think of the operation of learning cultures is likened to Bourdieu's fields of force, then the learning cultures in my study are made up of the interaction of several forces, as they are a part of several overlapping fields. For example, Mary's workplace can be influenced by other factors such as requirements set by the nursing community in Brunei and the VTE sector. This is because the learning culture of Mary's workplace is also a part of the nursing field and the VTE learning field. This suggests that we can't understand the learning culture within Mary's workplace if we don't take into account the relationship of the workplace to the wider fields of which it is part of or interacts with. Subsequently, this also implies that if we are to understand the learning culture of the workplaces of the teachers, we need to understand the learning field as a whole that it is part of, for example, the learning field of Brunei's VTE and also other fields such as the nursing field in Mary's case.

Similarly, the concept of learning cultures also allows us to think of learning within the university site, as influenced by factors such as the structure of the Brunei VTE

teacher training course, i.e. the course specifications, the assessment and qualification specifications set by the university which were specifically designed for VTE teachers. For example, as shown in Chapter 7, the student teachers had to attend lectures four days a week at the university site and a day of teaching practice at their previous workplace, which influenced their learning. The students had to regularly attend their university in order to pass the course. They also had to pass both their coursework and exams. In Chapter 7, Michael showed that his learning was influenced by how the assessments were structured. He said there were no definite deadlines for the assignments; as a result, he was rather de-motivated. Another example is the writing of lesson plans. Some students did not agree with writing lesson plans. However, they had to do so in order to pass their exams. Alternatively we can think that the way the VTE teacher training programme is structured is partly the result of the cultural traces of Brunei's colonial past, when it was temporarily ruled by Britain as part of the British Empire, as shown in Chapter 2. For example, the use of the general method approach taught in the VTE teacher training programme is consistent with the trends in the UK.

Although there is value in using the concept of learning cultures in understanding the learning within a situation, it still shares with many other participatory studies of learning, the tendency to marginalise individual learners and overlook learner agency (Hodkinson et al, 2008). As shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the positions of individuals in relation to the field should not be overlooked. This is because their dispositions have been developed through these positions. In Chapter 6, the learning of individuals was influenced by their position as newcomers, their habitus and the affordances or expansiveness of the learning culture. Thus, in order to fully understand the learning of individuals, we need to incorporate individual learners into this participatory view of learning. However, the theory of learning cultures is still a better way of understanding learning within a situation, as it provides an easier

way to bring in or incorporate individuals into a learning situation. That is, Hodkinson et al. (2007b) argue 'the relationship between individuals and learning cultures is reciprocal: individuals influence and are part of learning cultures just as learning cultures influence and are part of individuals' (p.37). Expressed simply, individuals are an integral part of their learning culture, just as the learning culture is an integral part of the individuals.

In order to bring individual learners back in, the theory of learning cultures needs to be integrated with a cultural theory of learning (Hodkinson et al, 2008). This cultural theory of learning provides a way of understanding how individuals learn through participation in learning cultures. Using Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning together helps us to keep in view individual learners, as well as the cultural practices in social situations in which they are learning.

I have already illustrated how the theory of learning cultures can be used to understand my research data. In the next section, I will illustrate how the cultural theory of learning can help to understand how the individuals in my research data learn through participation in the different learning cultures.

The interrelationship between individuals and learning cultures

Earlier in this chapter, I illustrated the fact that one way of understanding individual pragmatic rational decision-making is to understand learning as part of it. That is, there is learning during career decision-making. Thus, this suggests that the process

of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei involves three stages of learning: learning during career decision-making, learning in the workplace and learning on the university course. Drawing on Hodkinson and Sparkes' (2007) careership theory and Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) theory of learning, I develop the idea of individual learning journeys to describe these three stages of becoming a VTE teacher. In this section, I first discuss and illustrate the idea of the 'individual learning journey'. I then illustrate this idea using one longitudinal story.

The individual learning journey

As discussed in Chapter 3, the nature of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei suggests that the process of becoming a teacher involves individuals going through a series of staged transitions which involve both career 'choice' and learning. Instead of seeing the process of becoming a teacher as three stages; career decision-making in becoming a VTE teacher, learning in the workplace and learning on the course, as distinct and separate, in my view the process should be seen as an ongoing learning process which I called an individual personal learning journey. Developing from Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) idea of career decision-making, I first engage in a discussion to show how career decision-making is a part of an individuals' learning journey, based on my research data. That is, how learning in the workplace is influenced by career decision-making. Following this, I will discuss how learning on a course is influenced by learning in the workplace. At the beginning of this chapter, I showed how learning is inherent during individual career decision-making using Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership theory; I now show how individuals' career decisions can influence their learning in the workplace.

Based on my data, several individuals experienced frustration when they entered their new workplaces, whilst some demonstrated proactivity. Others experienced a smooth transition. In analysing the career decisions of the individuals, the period or time when the career decisions are made could be one of the contributing reasons for participants' different experiences of transition into their workplaces. That is, although all individuals' career decisions were pragmatically rational, when and how they were made has implications on their learning afterwards. For example, compared to all the other individuals in my data, Michael appeared to have the hardest time transitioning from education to work. Although his decision to take up a scholarship to study engineering which bonded him to become a VTE teacher upon graduation was pragmatically rational, he didn't think that his dispositions towards teaching would have changed after completing his undergraduate engineering course.

Michael's journey in becoming a teacher begins after he chose to take up his scholarship. Thus, this also suggests that his learning on his undergraduate course is part of a long-term process of constructing a teaching career. However, this course changed him. Participating in the course might have helped him to learn about who he really wanted to become. As shown earlier, he tried applying to other jobs for the first two years. His actions of wanting to change his career in his first two years of teaching could have influenced his dispositions to learning in his workplace. In other words, his actions and reactions to change his career direction resulted in a lengthy period of learning in his teaching workplace before he was settled in his teaching career. This is because his actions and reactions worked against his teaching career. That is, they did not contribute towards the construction of his teaching career because he was trying to change his career pathway. This illustrates and concurs with Hodkinson (2009) who claim that the way individuals

construct their own career can 'reinforce existing dispositions and career pathways, they can contribute towards changing those dispositions and career pathways, and they can sometimes do elements of both these things at the same time' (p.12). However, Michael gradually but unintentionally learned to think of himself as a VTE teacher as time went by through the process of participation and belonging in his workplace. Thus, this also showed that he (re)constructed his own career identity i.e. he learned to become a VTE teacher through the process of becoming (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009).

Unlike Michael, Mary, who was also bonded, had a different learning experience in her workplace. Mary chose to take up the scholarship as she wanted to become a nursing tutor. Although she experienced difficult challenges when she first entered her workplace, as shown in Chapter 6, she was proactive in finding ways to learn to teach in her workplace. She constructed different methods of learning in order to become a full member. Her learning experiences in her workplace reinforced her career decision, which subsequently developed her teaching identity and habitus. This demonstrates that the learning of individuals in the workplace is influenced by individual prior position and disposition. Subsequently, this also suggests that, in order to understand the subsequent learning of individuals in their workplaces with regard to becoming a VTE teacher, we need to take into account when, how and why career decisions were made. Hence, career decision-making can be seen as part of the individual learning journey.

According to the cultural theory of learning, individuals can be seen as part of learning cultures when they move from one learning culture to another. In my data, the individuals can be seen moving from one learning culture to another learning culture; for example, moving from the learning culture of the workplace to the

learning culture of the university. This type of movement can be described as a sequential movement (Hodkinson et al., 2007a). In all these circumstances, the individuals are newcomers. That is, they are new teachers in their workplace, they are new student teachers in the university and they are new student teachers in their teaching placements, which are at the same place as they were teaching before. Put simply, individuals are moving into a wholly or partly new situation that has a learning culture.

In my research data, when individuals move into a new situation, they continue to learn. For example, as discussed in Chapter 6, Pam, Andrew and Mary continued to learn to become full members in their workplaces, despite the fact that some of them had to face difficult challenges. Similarly, in Chapter 7, individuals continued to learn through participation in the VTE teacher training course. One way of understanding this is when people cross the boundary from one situation to a new situation which challenges their existing practices, it provides a significant stimulus for learning (Engeström, 2001). For example, in Chapter 6, when the new teachers entered their workplaces, they had to teach even though they did not have any teaching experience at all. They had to find ways in order to learn to survive in their job. Their situation could be partly understood as involving an intensive learning period. Most transitions which involve a significant change in conditions within the new context compared to the previous context result in an intensive learning period (Zukas et al., 2008). An intensive learning period is a period which involves an individual learning to survive and adapt to the new learning culture.

When an individual moves from one place to another, rather than seeing learning as the movement of knowledge from one place to another like most cognitive theorists do, it is actually the whole person that moves (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009). That is,

the movement involves the social and embodied self of the person, which includes their experiences, skills and understanding. In other words, individuals bring with them their 'accumulated lived experiences' (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009). When the individuals in my data moved into their workplaces, they brought prior knowledge and skills which contributed to their learning in the new environment. For example, each individual's experience of learning to teach was influenced by the varying gaps between their own subject knowledge and what they needed to teach. In Chapter 7, individuals also brought dispositions and values with them to the teacher training course which predated their entry to the course (see Hodkinson et al., 2004). For example, Andrew viewed the lesson plans as useful as he was used to using them and found them beneficial while he was teaching at his college. However, Greg did not view lesson plans as being useful, as he had been using a different technique to prepare for his lessons.

The above example of Andrew and Greg also reconfirms the view that no two individuals are the same. If we follow the stories of two students, Andrew and Greg, although they share characteristics like similar social positions, ethnicity and gender, their dispositions to learning in any situation are never completely the same. This is because Andrew and Greg, like everyone else, have their own unique life experiences. This concurs with Bourdieu's (1990) statement 'Just as no two individual histories are identical so no two individual habituses are identical.' (p.46). Thus, this reinforces the notion of the individual learning journey.

In their work on transitions, Bowman et al. (2005) argue that individuals are progressively changing through participating in different learning cultures. That is, they view transitioning as a continuous process of learning to become. According to the cultural theory of learning, during the process of 'learning to become',

individuals' positions change when they move from one learning culture to another new learning culture. Within the new learning culture, learning can cause dispositional changes. This learning within the new learning culture is influenced by individual prior positions, dispositions and relevant capital, which in turn contributes to the learning culture itself.

I have argued that, with regard to becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei, the two issues of career choice and learning are integrated in practice. Thus, rather than viewing the process of becoming a VTE teacher as involving three stages which are distinct and separate, these stages should be seen as a continuous learning process i.e. an individual learning journey. Since I have used different individual stories to illustrate career decision and learning in three separate chapters, the next section will explore one longitudinal story, that of Faith, to illustrate a personal learning journey. This involves her career decision-making process and her subsequent learning in different situations i.e. linear progression as a whole that spans from her earlier lives to her workplace and from her workplace to her university course in order to illustrate how Bowman et al.'s (2005) notion of transitioning as a continuous process of learning to become can be used to understand this learning journey.

Faith's story: becoming a VTE teacher

Faith is a Malay female with a middle class background and was in her late twenties at the start of the course. She comes from a small family. Both her parents are retired. Her father used to work as an officer in the public sector. In her early schooling years, she attended a private school and later moved to a public school

where she spent her secondary years until her college years. After her college years, Faith studied abroad and completed her degree.

She remembered her experiences at school. 'When we were younger, we are encouraged to speak out and some teachers actually get offended when you have a better idea of suggestion. Relating to that experience, I try not to be strict with my students 'cos I believed a students' progress should not be monitored by discipline. I don't see anything morally wrong for them to give me suggestions so I can improve myself. So it is actually better for the class to enjoy. So I don't feel restricted. Not I am better than you [students] but we are equal in class.' Her own schooling experiences had also helped her to understand her students' situation. 'I think my experience being a student was a cheeky one. I tried to actually ask difficult questions. So I learned from that experience, perhaps karma would get back to me. So I had to prepare for the worst. I have always related it back to when I was a student. I always put myself in my students' shoes.'

In relation to her career decision, she wanted to do something related to marketing. 'I wanted to do something in marketing hence I took up the major in marketing....' Upon graduation, she started working as a business officer in a private company for a period of five months before moving to teach. Prior to accepting this job, she also applied for other jobs in one of the public sector departments. She enjoyed working in this private company as she was able to utilize her marketing skills. However, she decided to apply for a teaching job when she saw the advert recruiting for teachers. Faith was reluctant to apply at first. 'I was reluctant actually 'cos it wasn't a profession that I wanna do 'cos I thought I wouldn't have the patience to become a teacher'. However due to encouragement from her parents and the pay difference in salary compared to her previous job, she decided to apply for the job. She said, '...the courage to move [from my previous job to teaching] is the pay difference.'

Faith taught for almost three years at a higher educational institution before joining the teacher training course. In her first year of teaching, she was assigned a mentor from whom she could seek help. 'I have a mentor who I shared a unit with. So if I have any trouble or what not, I would approach him'. She learnt to teach by observing her mentor's teaching. '...for the first few months, I was only observing my mentor. Problems not so much but I am actually thankful that I have the experience to re-study the subject that I needed to teach. What I needed to teach was [name of country] business law which was different from what I have learnt based on [name of country] business law. This process of re-studying allows me to know what troubles student will go through because I went through the same problem. Like what topics that they will actually have difficulties in. So it is easier for me to tackle and emphasize on topics that I have to spend more time on and which are the easier topics for them to understand.' After a few months, she co-taught with her mentor in one of the units, which she found useful because she was able to seek advice if she had any trouble concerning the unit. She also learnt to teach based on her students' feedback. Faith also drew from her own previous schooling experiences. '...when we were younger, we were encouraged to speak out. That is why I try not to be strict with my students...I have always related my teaching to when I was a student. I always put myself in my students' shoes.'

She found it difficult transitioning from her previous workplace to her teaching job. 'The earlier transition was difficult as the dynamics were completely different. Where I used to work, the dynamics were very robust cos' most of my colleagues were young and when I moved [to teaching], it was completely different. It took me a while to get used to it.' Faith was also discouraged by her students. 'How I was unable to tackle some difficult students. Difficult meaning they are repeater students and having previous years being taught by my mentor, they adopted the comparing

strategy and they said, "He did this differently and you are doing this differently". The first week, I was actually feeling very down but I told myself that the context that we are teaching are the same but just the delivery style that is different. I managed to talk to myself that this is another challenge and I have another unit to go through which I managed to overcome.' She also felt that she didn't belong to her new workplace. *'One of the biggest problems in the first year is that I felt I didn't belong. Like I said something new and the environment was completely different. I have never ever imagined that I am a teacher which I am now.'*

'To be honest in the first year that I came to [named institution], I gave myself one year. I was giving a try for one year. If I don't like it, I am going off because I am not bonded.' *'I actually envy people who get a job which they like to do. To me teaching, as of my sincerity in teaching can only be so much until I find my passion. Perhaps I can be sincere all day long but I haven't found the passion yet. So sometimes I question myself, "Until when will I become sincere?" Once if I am not sincere my [teaching] delivery will not be sincere. What the students get will not be sincere as well....'* Faith tried to motivate herself to teach. *'Everyday when I wake up, I tell myself today is not a duty day. It is a day that you are trying to actually help the younger generations, to pull them through to be somebody and I think that has got me going for three years. But I think after a few more years to come, I won't be able to motivate myself like that.'*

During these three years of teaching, she was offered a job for which she had applied when she first graduated. She declined the offer in the first year as she said her one year trial in the teaching job had not ended. She told them that she could not accept the job as she had accepted the teaching job. Although she declined the offer, the offer was made again the next year because she told them that she might

be interested in the following year. 'Second year I got called again for the same position at [public sector department]. I have rejected it because the time wasn't right. My students were in the middle of their exams and I think I have the responsibility to get them through their exams and in the third year they called me again, but I simply said no.' Faith continued to teach for three years. *'... having taught for close to 3 years, I feel that I have yet to find the passion in teaching but what I begin to like about teaching is that I begin to see how the way I teach gets the reaction from the students and time after time again, once they have finished, when the students have graduated, they would come up to me and say, "you know what you taught us, I am actually implementing them in my workplace". It gives me a good feeling when I hear this from my students. That is why I am here still teaching.'* She saw changes in her own teaching over these three years. *'Comparing with what I was lacking before and now, I would assume my delivery style is a bit different and the students' performances have also improved in response to my delivery style.'*

At the beginning of the teacher training course, Faith hoped the course might help her find her passion for teaching. She didn't intend to join the course, but since it was a requirement, she had to. When asked about how she viewed teaching, she answered, 'I am beginning to like it but have yet to find passion in it.' She began valuing the course after being on it for some time. *'I think it is worthwhile because I have gained experience that actually helped me with my teaching. I guess for each unit, it has its own specialty in regards to what we are doing, say for example, current issues [one of the course modules], if I wasn't doing current issues, I wouldn't know the updates of the new education system. Again with methods of teaching, I wouldn't know what strategies of teaching other than lecture. I guess each unit has its own specialty and benefits towards my teaching and learning*

experience.’ She also found the course difficult. ‘It is something new and obviously for something new, you need to actually take a step back and get an overview. That is, by the end of fourteenth week, this is what you should achieve. I am a person who sets objective before I actually do anything and half way through, I am not close to even one objective. My objective by the end of the course is to be more effective in teaching.’ Faith’s learning in the workplace has also helped her with her course ‘...in order to understand what I have learned here, I usually relate it back to my previous teaching experiences.’

Faith had to meet the requirements of the university such as the writing of lesson plans. ‘For me, lesson plan is not a good idea because I feel that it is restrictive and say for example, there are some minutes that you are obliged to follow and with me, in class, I would encourage the students, “What do you think of this topic, can you share your experiences?” I can’t actually just limit few students to share their experiences due to the number of minutes ‘cos most of the students have different experiences and I want them to share them in class as well.’ So, in order to fulfill the university’s requirements while preferring her own way of planning her lesson plan using simple notes, Faith prepared two sets of lesson plans. ‘Currently I am actually adopting two ways. Before lecture, I still use the notes page outline and after that I will do the lesson plan.’

At her teaching placement, Faith learned to teach by practicing the teaching methods that she had learnt. ‘This is how I see what we do here. We learn techniques and what is not, on Monday is the implementation process. Here I am absorbing things. I am actually throwing out on Mondays.’ Faith was also guided by her cooperating teacher at her teaching placement who was also her mentor when she first started teaching. She shares a teaching unit with her cooperating teacher

during her teaching placement. 'He is very helpful, supportive but also defensive as well to new ideas. When you are new you will try to inject new ideas. Sometimes he is defensive of his old techniques but that is acceptable because people are very reluctant to change. You learn to be accommodating as well and you learn to compromise...'

Faith describes a good teacher as someone 'who comes to class prepared and accommodating in such a way that when you give out tasks, you expect them [students] to do it. For example, you expect them [students] to hand it [coursework] in or discuss. Some students may not actually be able to do it because they don't know how to answer it. You don't shut them out. You actually help them out, or get their colleagues to help them.'

Towards the end of the teacher training course, Faith felt thankful that she had joined the course. She felt she was more confident in selecting teaching methods in her lessons. 'We learn to pick what is relevant. It is up to us to digest what we learn here, and pick what is relevant to our unit. We are encouraged to actually implement student-based activities in our lessons but when you are in a lecture, you are teaching 105 students and that is not possible.' Her views of teaching have also changed. 'I will be lying that if I say I have found the passion in teaching, but I don't hate teaching now. If you were to ask me where do I see myself in ten years, I still see myself teaching. I think that [old] perception has changed because before I was telling myself, in five years time, I will not be teaching. I prefer to actually look for another job but I think now after ten years I still see myself teaching.'

Transitioning as 'Learning as becoming'

Faith's learning journey with regard to becoming a VTE teacher involved her learning during her career decision-making, learning in the workplace and on the university teacher training course. Faith's story shows several transitions in her personal learning journey, namely, from her previous workplace to her new workplace where she spent her early teaching years and from this new workplace to the VTE teacher training programme. In each of these transitions, she was learning, changing and developing, which will be illustrated in the discussion below.

During her career decision-making to become a VTE teacher, Faith was being rational and pragmatic about changing her job as a business analyst to a VTE teacher. She chose to become a VTE teacher because she saw the job as an opportunity to increase her economic capital. In Brunei, graduate teachers earn as much as an engineer as far as the starting salary is concerned (Yong, 1994). In his research, Yong (1994) found that individuals are attracted to teaching because of its financial incentives, salaries and fringe benefits. Thus, apart from wanting to increase her economic capital, she was also influenced by her parents. In a way, Faith gained her job because she had the credentials or in Bourdieu's terms, cultural capital valued in the employment field. It would also be plausible that her work experience as a business analyst has added her cultural capital relevant to the VTE teaching field.

Faith's story demonstrates that she was reflecting on whether she would be able to cope with the teaching profession. She was also evaluating her position in relation to her economic capital. Put another way, she was learning about herself and how to construct the kind of person she wanted to be during her career decision-making.

That is, she was developing an understanding of how to negotiate her position in relation to the teaching field.

When she moved into the workplace where she spent her beginning years of teaching, she had a hard time fitting in and gave herself one year to see whether she would still want to teach. Faith's story hints at her feeling regret for choosing her teaching job, as she was feeling dissatisfied with her experiences in the workplace, which undermined her decision to move into teaching. She had to motivate herself to go to teach every day. Her story also illustrates that her discomfort at not being able to fit into her workplace was probably linked to her teaching identity. She might still have been longing for her previous identity as a business analyst. Despite feeling this way, she gradually learned to teach in her workplace with the help of her mentor. As a result, her learning to teach helped her to progressively shift her position in relation to the teaching field. That is, her actions and dispositions in her workplace progressively contributed to her career construction as a VTE teacher.

Apart from being influenced by her career decisions, Faith's learning in the workplace was also influenced by her own prior experiences, skills and knowledge. For example, she had to learn the subject that she was going to teach as she lacked the knowledge to do so. She also drew on her own schooling experiences. After almost three years of teaching at her workplace, Faith demonstrated dispositional changes as she began to like teaching and her rejection of a job offer three consecutive times reinforced her position within the teaching field. This demonstrates that Faith has changed through participating in her workplace. Her participation has unintentionally helped her to learn her teaching career and has developed her teaching identity. Thus, drawing on Hodkinson's (2009) revisited

careership, one way of understanding this development is that that her actions, her reactions and interactions worked as part of the teaching field to progressively construct her teaching career. In short, Faith's learning in the workplace can only be understood if we take into account her career decision-making process and her previous experiences.

Her experience of learning to teach on the university course was also influenced by her previous experiences in her workplace. She related back to those teaching experiences in her workplace in order to understand what she was learning on the course. She continued writing her own lesson plans rather than following the university taught technique because she felt that she could be more effective with her own lesson plans which she was using prior to joining the course.

Changes in her dispositions towards teaching can be seen towards the end of the course. Faith felt that her teaching skills have developed and some of her values and beliefs about teaching have also changed or altered. Expressed simply, the university course has reinforced some of her beliefs and values about teaching which had resulted in a change in her dispositions to teaching. However, there are examples that suggest that some of her beliefs about teaching have not changed. For example, the use of lesson plans, as previously discussed. She knew she would work better by following her usual methods of lesson planning rather than utilising university taught lesson plans. Put another way, Faith learned about her own existing dispositions and abilities, and what she wanted to change or continue with in order to be the person she wanted to become. Instead of just acquiring knowledge about methods of teaching at her university course, Faith was also implicitly working towards constructing the good teacher she wanted to be. This suggests that learning on the course has changed her, which either reinforced who

she already was or resulted in a change in her habitus (see Hodgkinson et al., 2008). Put differently, learning on the course did not only change her dispositions to teaching, but also changed her position in relation to the VTE teaching field.

Faith's learning at each 'stage' of her journey was influenced by her positions, dispositions and capital developed prior to entering the learning culture. In the above discussion, I have showed that her learning within any learning culture was influenced by her prior knowledge and skills and her experiences prior to entering the learning site. Faith's story also showed that her learning in her workplace developed relevant social and cultural capital which helped her to learn on the course. For example, she already had an understanding of how to teach her students when she was on the university course. She was also familiar with her department and she had already worked with her cooperating teacher before. She was returning to her previous workplace, but with a different role i.e. as a student teacher. Her relevant social and cultural capital provided her with a smooth transition into her teaching placement. Thus, learning in the workplace contributed to Faith's on-going process of becoming a VTE teacher.

Similarly, Faith's learning in the workplace was influenced by her prior position, disposition and prior experiences. For example, as discussed previously, individuals' experiences in the workplace are influenced by their career decisions. That is, if their experiences do not fit with the identities they hope to become, it results in individuals trying to leave the teaching job. Faith's story illustrated that teaching was not a profession that she wanted to follow. As a result, this influenced her initial experiences in her workplace. These experiences did not help her to develop her teacher identity because she was still holding on to her old business identity. Here, I prefer to use the Bourdieusian concept of habitus. Hence, Faith's

learning in the workplace was influenced by her habitus which was developed prior to teaching in her workplace.

Following on from the above discussion, Faith's previously developed dispositions were important in orientating her subsequent learning, which was often the result of the accumulation of her own schooling and workplace experiences. This also suggests that Faith's dispositions were never completely 'new' when she moved onto a new 'stage' (see Bowman et al., 2005) because there is a balance between continuity and change within individual dispositions and identity when they move from one learning culture to a new learning culture (Bloemer and Hodkinson, 2000). Thus, it is more helpful to understand Faith's learning as the process of becoming a VTE teacher when she moves from one learning culture to another. For example, Hodkinson et al. (2008) explain 'Learning as becoming' as:

'...in any situation there are opportunities to learn. What those opportunities are, and the ways in which the process of learning takes place, depends on the nature of the learning culture and of the position, habitus and capitals of the individuals, in interaction with each other in their horizons for learning, as part of a field of relationships. Within any situation, an individual may learn, through the integrated processes of participation and their on-going (re)construction of their own habitus. In these processes, that which is learned can be modified as it becomes part of the person' (p.41).

Faith's experience of 'Learning as becoming' at all the learning sites was influenced by the interplay between the nature of the learning cultures within those learning sites and her position, habitus and capital. One way of understanding Faith's learning to become is that her positions, habitus and capital had changed through learning in the different learning cultures. To understand this, I relate my explanation to two types of positions: the position within the different fields that she occupied, and her position in relation to capital. These two positions are interrelated. In Faith's story, as she moves from one learning culture to the next, her position changes within several interrelated fields. Her position in relation to the

VTE teaching field changes after teaching for a number of years compared to the beginning. Teaching in her workplace has increased her cultural capital in relation to the VTE education field. That is, she gradually knew how things work at her workplace. For example, she knew how to select the appropriate teaching methods for her students. There is also a change in her position in relation to her social capital at her college. This is because she would have built her social networks with her colleagues during the beginning years of her teaching.

In summary, Faith's story can be better understood as 'learning as becoming' (Hodkinson et al., 2008) a VTE teacher. She has progressively changed since towards the end of her course her attitudes about teaching had changed. Her learning during her career decision-making and subsequent learning in the workplace and on the course have all contributed to the construction of her VTE teaching career. Thus, following Bowman et al.'s (2005) notion of transitioning as the process of becoming, Faith's learning to becoming a VTE teacher started long before she became a VTE teacher i.e. her career decision-making continues long after she has finished the teacher training course. This is because the metaphor of becoming implies that learning is never complete (Hodkinson et al., 2008) and 'people simply cannot avoid learning' (Saljo, 2003, p.315). Hence, this reinforces the view of the individual learning journey.

I have argued that, with regard to becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei, the two issues of career choice and learning are integrated in practice. Thus, rather than seeing the three stages, i.e. learning in career decision-making, learning in the workplace and learning on the university course, as discrete and separate, they should be seen as an on-going process of learning which can be called an individual learning journey.

In order to understand the process of becoming a VTE teacher, Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership theory and Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning have proved useful. One of the benefits of using these two theoretical ideas is that both draw on Bourdieu's (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) theory of practice which thus allows easier integration of career decision-making and learning. Even so, I find that Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning still need some extending in order to fully understand my research data; this notion will be discussed in the next section.

Three limitations to learning culture theorizing

There is value in using Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning in understanding how individuals in my research data learn through participating in the different cultures within their individual learning journeys. However, in my view, Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning still need some extending in order to adequately understand the learning of the individuals in my research data. Firstly, Hodkinson et al. (2007a) recognise that an individual's position will change when they move from one learning culture to another learning culture, but they do not anticipate what this might entail with regard to the learning culture of a learning site when the individual learners change their roles within it. Secondly, in integrating individuals into learning cultures, Hodkinson et al. (2008) only abstractly describe that people are part of the learning cultures in which they participate. They did not give specific details about how individuals learn to become a part of their learning cultures; to be more specific, they did not write about how

individuals fit into their learning cultures. Lastly, Hodkinson et al. (2008) acknowledge the importance of the issue of individual agency, but they do not demonstrate this issue through empirical findings in their article.

In the next section, I illustrate how Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning can be extended based on the empirical evidence found in my research data. Firstly, I discuss how changes in the position of individuals change the learning culture of the same learning site. Secondly, I then discuss the significance of individual agentic dimensions within learning cultures. Subsequently, I illustrate the importance of relationships within learning cultures in order to fully understand my research data.

Learning culture changes with the position of individuals within it

In previous sections, I illustrated that when individuals move from one place to another, they continue to develop their skills or (re) construct what they have learnt. That is, when people move from one situation into a new situation, they are 'constantly learning through becoming and becoming through learning' (Hodkinson et al., 2008, p.41). In Chapter 7, we saw how individuals continue to learn informally and formally at their university site and when they move to their teaching placement, they continue to learn informally. This simultaneous movement of individuals entails the change in the individual's position over time. Hodkinson et al. (2007a) recognise that the individual's position will change when they move from one learning culture to another, but they did not anticipate what that might entail with regard to the learning culture of a learning site when the individual learners change their roles within it.

In Chapter 7, the student teachers had to return to their workplaces where they did their initial teaching for their teaching placement once a week during their one-year teacher training course. This involves a simultaneous movement between their university site and their teaching placement. In order to avoid confusion when arguing my case later, bearing in mind that both workplaces in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 are the same place, I will call the workplace in Chapter 6 where they worked in their beginning years of teaching '*college as teacher*' and the workplace in Chapter 7 where they did their teaching placement '*college as student*'.

My research shows that, while the student teachers were moving simultaneously between '*college as student*' and the university site, when they returned to '*college as student*' they viewed their workplace differently as compared to their '*college as teacher*'. One way of understanding this is that the workplace has not changed, but what has changed is the learning culture. The learning culture has changed because the same individuals are trying to fulfill a different role. Therefore these individuals are in a different position in relation to the college. This results in a change to the way the forces interact which construct the learning culture in the college. Thus, this implies that the nature of the learning culture depends primarily on the role and the position of the student teacher within it.

Faith's story demonstrates that she viewed her workplace differently when she returned to '*college as student*'. At the workplace i.e. '*college as teacher*', individuals worked as full-time teachers who gave lectures and gave assignments to their students. In contrast, at their teaching placements, i.e. '*college as student*', they were student teachers who were required to write lesson plans and practice new teaching techniques that they had learnt on their university course. Some student teachers like Faith felt that their teaching at the teaching placement was not a real teaching situation compared to when they were teaching there as a full time

teacher. This is because Faith's teaching had to be guided and assessed by a cooperating teacher, whereas previously, when she was a full-time teacher, she was in charge of her own lessons. Similarly, other student teachers like Sarah and Mary clearly felt the difference when they returned to their '*college as student*':

Sarah: '...it [having moved from university to teaching placement] is totally different. Sometimes although I am the one standing there, and the students are there, I still feel I am still here [university] being a student....'

Mary: '... you adjust your career as a student as again as a teacher only a day in a week just teaching. So we find it very difficult. It is kind of like a cough that is gone again in Monday. You change. You don't resolve the cough. So sometimes like every Monday, am I in a new school? Am I with a different kind of people?'

As discussed in Chapter 7, these student teachers had to fulfill dual roles at their teaching placement. Faith's story demonstrates the tension she felt whilst fulfilling her student teacher role and her teacher role. She had to work in 'double structures' (Grenfell, 1998). She was writing two sets of lesson plans; one which was required by the university course and the other which she believed worked for her based on her prior teaching experiences.

One explanation for Faith having to write two sets of lesson plans relates to the issue of power relations. When the student teachers were doing their teaching practice at their '*college as student*', the change in their position and roles in their '*college as student*' suggests that the extent to which they could exert influence on their learning was reduced as they move from being a full time member of staff to their role as student teachers. As a result, they had to fulfil the requirements set by their cooperating teachers and their university mentors, who both had very different expectations compared to those of the student teachers.

It is clear that the practices within the same workplace had not changed, but it is the practices of these student teachers that have changed which influenced their learning. That is, the practices and actions of the student teachers had changed compared to when they were teachers there. Expressed simply, the learning culture within the same workplace shifted in relation to the students' positions and roles. Thus, this suggests two things, which concur with claims made by Hodkinson et al. (2007b), as illustrated below.

Firstly, individuals operationalise some of the forces that make up the learning culture. The students now have different positions, different roles, different needs and different expectations. Hence, the learning culture has shifted as one of the forces, i.e. students' positions have changed, which results in changing other forces.

Secondly, although the learning culture has shifted, it does not mean practices in the college have changed. However, the fact that the learning culture only shifted in relation to the individual suggests that we should see learning in relation to people, organizations, times and places or 'thinking relationally' (Hodkinson, 2007b, p.13). Expressed simply, a learning culture is also relative in relation to the individual's position or roles. Thus, this provides us with another way of understanding how interacting forces are relative to individuals, since at the same place, the same individuals, similar forces interacting can change if individuals' roles and positions change.

Given that the learning culture changes when the roles and positions of the individuals change, it also suggests that the horizon for learning changes. The horizon for learning is similar to the horizon for action, which was discussed earlier. When Faith became a student teacher, her dispositions to learning at her *'college as*

student' were different compared to when she was a full-time teacher. The change in learning culture within her '*college as student*' in relation to Faith also offered her different opportunities to learn. Thus, Faith's horizon for learning changed.

In summary, my first argument is that Hodkinson et al.'s (2007b) theory of learning cultures needs to be extended in order to understand the student teachers' learning at their '*college as student*', which is influenced by their change of position and roles which Hodkinson et al. (2007b) acknowledged, but never fully explored.

Individual agency within learning cultures

There is a tendency to overlook learner agency within a learning culture when it shares with other participatory studies of learning (Hodkinson et al., 2008). Hodkinson et al. (2008) acknowledge this limitation, but they did not demonstrate this issue of learner agency through empirical findings in their article. However, they argued that learners' agentic action should not be separated from their structures. This is because an individual learner is not seen as separate from their structures; rather, the structures are a part of and operate through the learner. Even so, learners can still be agentic, but are subject to their structures. Here, I will illustrate individuals' agentic actions in different learning cultures through my research data.

Within the individual learning journey, individuals can be seen to be participating in several different learning cultures e.g. family home, *college as teachers*, university site, *college as students*. In all these learning cultures, my research participants were agentic. In Chapter 5, I have shown that my research participants' career decision-making process with regard to becoming a VTE teacher is influenced by interactions between the positions, dispositions and capital of the individuals and the

field where career decisions are made. Even so, most or all of the individuals in my research took an active part in their decision-making process. They were proactive in deciding to choose from the opportunities that were available to them. For example, Michael could have turned down the scholarship which would bond him to work as a teacher upon graduation. However, he was proactive in deciding to accept the scholarship offer to become a VTE teacher, as he knew that he would not have the financial capital to continue his studies abroad.

In Chapter 6, the new teachers demonstrated agentic actions in their learning. One explanation of them being proactive or agentic in their learning could be because they were 'thrown in the deep end' to either sink or swim which forced them to be proactive. This is clearly illustrated in Mary's story, where she constructed her own learning opportunities through a 'buddy system' where she discussed and exchanged ideas with her junior colleagues even though she did not have a mentor or support from her senior colleagues. She took control of her learning even in the most difficult times by creating learning relationships with her junior colleagues in order to keep her job. She was also proactive in creating relationships with her students where they agreed to learn mutually from each other. Apart from learning to teach, Mary also realized that she had to take control with regard to updating her own nursing skills in order to teach her students.

As discussed previously, in the transitioning of individuals from university to work where workplace conditions are very different compared to their previous learning situation, individuals like Mary were forced to be agentic during the intensive learning period. Whilst Mary took control of her learning, Andrew did not have to be proactive as his mentor guided him step by step. Even if he was proactive, his agentic actions would be shadowed by his mentor's support. This could also explain

why some individuals tend not to be proactive in situations where they do not need to exert it. For example, the student teachers at the university site were led gently by their lecturers through instructions and assignments and tasks. It was less essential for the student teachers to be proactive or there were fewer opportunities for them to exert it, as they were told what to do by their university lecturers. Some student teachers like Mary and Sarah felt too much guidance from their university lecturer had actually discouraged independent actions and thought.

Student teachers at the university site were proactive in creating social relationships with their peers in order to belong to learn. For example, Sarah said she learnt better through her peers. Most of the student teachers said they enjoyed learning with their peers. These examples provided us with hints that they wanted to learn with their peers and the only way to do so was to create social relationships with them. Student teachers can also be seen to be proactive when they are back at their '*college as students*'. Their colleagues still viewed them as full-time teachers. Thus, they had to be proactive in protecting their student role when they were expected by their colleagues to continue with their previous teaching role, as illustrated in Mary's story. She had to be assertive in protecting her student role by letting her colleagues know that she would be willing to help out with the administrative work during her teaching placement, but not on other days of the week.

If we look at one individual learning journey, we are able to see that individuals exert their agentic action in relation to the situation that they are in. Mary's story is best to illustrate this point. In relation to her career decision, she was given a choice to either remain in a clinical setting or move into an educational setting where she would be a nursing tutor. She was encouraged to teach by her nursing lecturers as they were lacking nursing tutors. She was also influenced by her parents and

family, who were mostly teachers. Although she was influenced by others surrounding her, she could have chosen to become a nurse in a clinical setting. However, she was proactive in deciding to choose the scholarship to become a nursing tutor. This is illustrated by the fact that her decision to become a VTE teacher was partly influenced by people around her and partly came about through her own agentic dispositions. At her workplace, Mary was seen to be proactive in constructing learning relationships with her colleagues when she was not given any support in learning to teach. She was also seen to be proactive when she had to protect her student role at her teaching placement. However, at the university site, she did not need to be proactive in her learning as the instructor guided her step by step through the different tasks. This illustrates that individuals would agentially construct their own learning in times of urgency through interaction with the experiences they encountered within the learning cultures. Thus, individuals' agentic action can be understood to be non-deterministic, non-linear, but partly predictable, depending on the nature of the support one receives.

However, Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) argues that, although individuals can be agentic, this does not suggest that individuals are 'free agents' who can choose whatever they want to do. This is because individual agentic actions are always influenced by and constrained by their position within wider social structures. Their agentic actions also contribute to the continuously changing social structures that are a part of them. In Chapter 5, the individuals' career decision-making was influenced and constrained by the social structures. For example, although Michael was proactive in his decision-making to take up the scholarship for his studies, he did so partly because of his lack of economic capital.

This discussion illustrates that individual agency is important in understanding the learning of individuals within the learning cultures in my data. Bourdieu (1984) prefers to view individual agency as partly for survival and partly an attempt to do well in order to succeed; that is, to strive for 'distinction'. Mary's agentic actions could be partially identified as a quest for survival to keep her job when she was 'thrown in the deep end'. Her agentic actions could also partly be an attempt to do well, to become a full member in her community of practice. This issue of proactivity found in my research data has raised some practical implications for the teacher training programme, which will be discussed in Chapter 9.

Relationships within learning cultures

Previously, I discussed some of the ways to illustrate how people are a part of their learning cultures. I argued that Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) abstract cultural theory of learning did not explicitly show how people can be a part of their learning cultures. Here, I highlight a major issue which is necessary for individuals to be a part of the learning cultures found in my research data. This major issue is 'personal relationships'.

Within my research data, the significance of social relationships is pivotal to understanding the interrelationship of individuals and the learning situation. My research demonstrates that, at every stage of the individual learning journey of becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei, social relationships are the most important factor in influencing the way individuals learn in relation to their practices within different learning cultures. In addition, the research data suggests that these relationships can or do occur naturally, but sometimes they are partly created deliberately in order

to belong within a learning culture. After all, Lave and Wenger (1991) claim that in order to learn we need to belong.

In Chapter 5, we saw that family relationships with parents and siblings play a role in influencing or shaping an individuals' disposition to learn. These family relationships also played a part in the teachers' career decisions. Sheryl's story showed that her parental involvement in her studies played a big part in her career decision to becoming a VTE teacher.

In Chapter 6, we saw new teachers learning to teach through formal and informal relationships in the workplace. For some teachers, formal mentor-mentee relationships were revealed as being important to their learning. For example, Andrew's mentor provided him with the guidance he needed to do his job. Unlike Andrew, Mary, who did not have a mentor, created learning opportunities through informal relationships with junior colleagues which provided her with support. In addition to the relationships that were found within these teachers' workplaces, other relationships that shaped these teachers' learning were also derived from outside the workplaces. Mary's story showed that she had to collaborate with the clinical nurses at the hospital during her students' supervision, which indirectly provided Mary with a kind of learning support. She knew she couldn't carry on being a nursing expert in front of her students as she lacked the clinical skills. Instead, she tried something different which was to construct a type of relationship with her students where they shared their clinical experiences with her and she shared her theoretical knowledge with them.

In Chapter 7, we saw that social relationships are important for many of the student teachers at the university site. Some of the student teachers, learned better through

their peers than through their lecturers because they could relate better to their peers. They also enjoyed informal discussions with their peers outside the classroom.

My research suggests that social relationships seem to be a crucial fundamental factor for my students' learning, which Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning did not deal with in detail. Ironically, this issue of social relationships takes us back in a full circle to the beginning, where Lave and Wenger claim learning as a social process where social participation, membership and inter-personal relationships are crucial (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Although there are limitations in using Lave and Wenger's (1991) legitimate peripheral participation to understand learning, the aspect of social relationships in the theory has proved useful when used to understand the learning of individuals in my research data.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the interrelationship between individuals and their participation within learning cultures in order to understand the learning of individuals. At every stage of the person's 'becoming a VTE teacher' journey, they are constantly learning. As a result of this learning, they are always becoming through learning, which contributes to their process of identity development. Thus, as illustrated by the longitudinal story of Faith, we can see that learning to become a teacher is an on-going longitudinal process which begins well before the person has started their teaching job and could possibly end long after the person has finished

the teacher training course. This is because the metaphor 'learning as becoming' provides us with a sense that individuals will always be learning.

I have identified the strengths of Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) concepts of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning in understanding the learning of the individuals in my research data. It provides an integrated approach which transcends most existing situated learning theories which focus only on the learning situation and most existing learning theories which focus on individuals. As well as identifying the strengths found in Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) approach to understanding individuals' learning, the findings from the research identify three specific additional contributions which help extend Hodkinson et al.'s theories of learning. These contributions from my research findings entail implications for research and practice, which will be discussed in Chapter 9.

Chapter 9 Conclusion and Implications

Introduction

My initial intention with regard to conducting this research was to find out empirically how individuals learn to become a VTE teacher in Brunei. I found that not much research had been carried out on VTE teachers' learning and, more specifically, there was none that links career choice and learning together. That is, taking into account how individuals choose to become a VTE teacher and how they learn to become a VTE teacher. During this research, I explored how individuals learn to become a VTE teacher using twelve individuals from one cohort of students enrolled in the VTE teacher training programme at one university in Brunei. The purpose of this final chapter is to present the main empirical findings from my research which will contribute to the existing literature. It also focuses on the implications of my research findings for VTE teacher training in Brunei. In addition, I also suggest recommendations for improving a number of issues that my findings have raised about the learning of VTE teachers.

Summary of the key findings of this research

This case study has proved successful in providing a better understanding of how individuals learn to become a VTE teacher in Brunei. The key findings of this study to understanding teachers' learning in Brunei can be summarized as follows:

Firstly, the research findings have illustrated that individuals learning in different contexts and at different stages in becoming a VTE teacher should be viewed as an

individual learning journey. Rather than seeing 'learning as acquisition', or 'learning as participation', the learning of individuals on this journey can be understood as 'learning as becoming' (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009) a VTE teacher.

Secondly, the research findings show that the career decision-making stage and the learning process to become a VTE are integrated in practice within the individual learning journey. That is, it suggests that there is learning involved in individuals' career decision-making which subsequently influences their learning afterwards within their workplaces. Put in another way, learning to become a VTE teacher should be seen as an on-going process where every 'stage' contributes to the construction of the individual's VTE teaching career. Thus, rather than seeing the three stages as discrete, separate stages, using Hodkinson et al.'s (1996) careership theory and Hodkinson et al.'s (2008) integrated theory of learning cultures and cultural theory of learning, I argue that they should be viewed as an on-going learning process.

Thirdly, the research findings show that social relationships are important with regard to the learning of VTE teachers in Brunei. In both workplaces and on the VTE teacher training programme, student teachers build learning relationships with people around them. This suggests that we can only understand the learning of Brunei VTE teachers if we take into account their social relationships within the learning situation.

Fourthly, the empirical findings show that individuals need to be proactive in order to learn within learning situations, especially when support is not provided. That is, individual agency is important in becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. This concurs with research which argues that individual agency should not be overlooked in

understanding the learning of individuals. Latching onto this finding and in relation to the individual learning journey, I argue that we need to keep in view both the individual learners as well as the social practices which influence learning within the situation in order to fully understand individual learning. This finding concurs with claims made by researchers like Hodkinson et al. (2008), Fuller et al. (2005) and Billett (2001a).

Fifthly, the research findings show that even the learning cultures within the same learning situation can change when individual positions and roles change within it. That is, the change in positions and roles of individuals in their '*college as student*' from a teacher to a student teacher also changes how they view their learning culture in the '*college as student*'. The learning culture has changed because the same individuals are trying to fulfill a different role, which results in different practices within their '*college as student*'.

Finally, the research findings show that the teacher training system in Brunei broadly works as most, if not all, the student teachers learned and changed towards the end of the course.

Implications for practice

The empirical findings of my research show that the individuals became skilled, trained and more confident by the end of their third or fourth year of training or professional training, which included learning in their workplaces and the VTE teacher training programme. Thus, in my view, the VTE teacher training system in

Brunei functions broadly successfully. In this section, I will engage in a discussion to illustrate how the system works.

As we have seen, the VTE teacher training system in Brunei involves new teachers working in their workplace for at least one year prior to enrolling in the VTE teacher training programme. Based on my research findings, this period in the workplace allows the new teachers do not only learn ways of teaching their subject knowledge, but more importantly it helps to develop their teacher role and ways of negotiating a position within their workplace through their participation in work practices. In order to negotiate a position within their workplaces, the teachers were seen to build learning relationships with their colleagues. This subsequently helped them to move from the periphery to becoming full members in their workplaces. Expressed simply, they developed relevant cultural and social capital through participating in work practices.

The one year in-service VTE teacher training programme has also proved valuable in the process of becoming a VTE teacher. Towards the end of the course, most, if not all, student teachers said they felt more confident in their teaching and that they had learned the knowledge and skills needed to teach their students, as shown in Chapter 7. The structure of the Brunei VTE teacher training programme, which requires the student teachers to return to their own previous workplaces for their teaching practice every Monday, has also contributed to their learning.

The change in individual positions and roles from a teacher to a student teacher at their teaching placement brought about significant learning of the student teachers. As shown in Chapter 7, the change of roles and positions of the individuals from a teacher to a student teacher influenced how they view their learning differently in

their teaching placements i.e. the learning culture changed in relation to the student teachers. While at their teaching placements, the student teachers were seen to be operating in 'double structures' (Grenfell, 1998). When student teachers have to operate between two structures, they are located in between in a place called 'nowhere' by Grenfell. According to Grenfell, this space avoids overt induction into one system or the other. Rather it provides a space for the student teachers to decide for themselves. Grenfell (1998) stated 'as long as the student teachers are reacting, they are moving forward by accumulating pedagogical experience' (p.172). The need to comply with the university requirements and their own personal pedagogic views which have been developed throughout their beginning years of teaching in their workplaces actually produced tensions and dichotomies. Through reading the stories, we saw that student teachers learned to create their own strategies such as writing two types of lesson plans; one to satisfy university requirements and the other to satisfy their own values and beliefs. In my view, these tensions and dichotomies aided critically reflective practice and helped student teachers to recognize, re-evaluate and (re)construct their own pedagogic values and beliefs about teaching. Many of the student teachers said they learnt to be selective with regard to the teaching methods that they learnt on the course and used in their own lessons. This illustrates the point that the course had reinforced their pedagogical values.

However, although the VTE teacher training system in Brunei works, there are still some issues which can be improved. Firstly, as we have seen in Chapter 6, the new teachers experienced different transitions into their workplaces. These transitions are partly influenced by the amount of support provided by their mentors. In Chapter 6, Mary, who had no mentor during the transition period into her workplace, complained that this left her feeling frustrated. As a result, she found

other ways to learn to teach. Pam, however, had an unsupportive mentor who nearly caused her to leave her teaching job entirely. However, in situations where there were properly structured mentor-mentee programmes, individuals like Andrew seemed to learn and progress without exerting much of their agentic actions. In my view, having too much guidance could also limit and constrain individual agentic actions. For example, in Chapter 7, we saw that the student teachers did not need to exert much of their agentic action. This was because their lecturers provided them with guidance without the need for them to find other resources. In my view, a mentor-mentee programme or the VTE teacher training programme should be structured in a way that allows mentors or university lecturers to balance the amount of guidance they provide with an amount of independence, depending on each newcomer or student teacher.

Another finding from my research is the importance of relationships in Brunei VTE teachers' learning. In the workplace, the new teachers in my research were constructing learning relationships with the people around them. In order to facilitate this, I suggest more experienced individuals should be encouraged to act as resources for these newcomers. Similarly, at the university site, the VTE teacher training programme should focus on opportunities which allow student teachers to participate and learn from each other. This is because my research findings demonstrate that student teachers tend to learn better from their peers through discussions and tutorial sessions.

Apart from the lessons learned from this research, there are of course other issues relating to the learning of individuals with regard to becoming a VTE teacher of which I don't have direct research evidence, but would warrant further exploration in other contexts or other countries. For example, in Chapter 6, individuals' learning in

their workplaces in my research involved several factors that interlocked together. There might be other factors involved in the individuals' learning which could be explored.

Implications for research

Central to understanding individuals' learning in my research is the importance of understanding the interrelationship between the individuals and the different learning situations in which they are in. To be precise, we cannot understand learning if we separate the individuals from the learning situations that they are in. This is because individuals are an integral part of learning situations and learning situations are an integral part of individuals (Hodkinson et al., 2008). This implies that we can only have a partial understanding of the learning of individuals if we only focus on the individuals, but overlook the learning situation. Similarly, if we only focus on the learning situation in which the individuals are located, this tends to overlook individual agency and individual identity.

Given that learning can be understood as an individual learning journey, this suggests that there is a danger if we only investigate the learning of teachers in one fixed snap shot. This is because doing so implies that we are disregarding the period before and after this fixed snap shot. That is, we not only ignore individual prior experiences, but also treat the learning of individuals as an isolated event which is separate from the individuals' lives. Thus, there is an implication for future research. Expressed simply, in order to fully understand individual learning, we need to consider the longitudinal view of the learning of individuals rather than just a fixed snap shot.

Also, as discussed in Chapter 4, there is value in researching teachers' learning using detailed case studies. The findings from my research show that using case studies helps to bring out the complexity of individuals learning to become VTE teachers. Using case studies also helped to reveal less obvious or implicit issues which people rarely explicitly talk about such as social class, ethnicity or gender (Hodkinson, 2009). Thus, through detailed case studies, we are able to understand the learning of individuals through locating an individual's structural position in relation to the learning field.

Finally, the research findings also show that there is value in using a theoretical approach to understand research data; theories can be used as thinking tools (Mouzelis, 1995; Hodkinson et al., 2008) to understand my research data. Using theories as thinking tools also brings out some of the limitations of the theories, which I discovered need extending in order to understand my research data.

Conclusion

My main aim was to understand how individuals learn to become a VTE teacher in Brunei. I conclude that the stages of career decision-making and learning are integrated in practice in becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. My main empirical findings from this research show that social relationships and individual agency within learning cultures are important in becoming a VTE teacher in Brunei. I have also illustrated that the VTE teacher training system in Brunei functions broadly successfully, as most, if not all, the student teachers learned and changed towards the end of the VTE teacher training programme.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Interview schedule (first round of data collection)

Learning to Become a Vocational and Technical Teacher in Brunei
Interview Schedule
Date –
Subject –

Thanks again for agreeing to take part in this study. Please take a few minutes to read through the consent form. This is a semi-structured interview which means that the questions are open ended. I will use a series of prompts if necessary to focus on particular areas of interest. This interview will be digitally recorded.

1. Please tell me how did you become a teacher

- Why did you choose to become a teacher?
- Was there any particular person that influences your decision?

2. Can you tell me a bit about your family background?

- What do your parents do for a living?
- Are there any teachers in your family?
- Has your family members influenced your decision?

3. Can you tell me your previous schooling experience?

- What was it like at school?
- What did you like about your schooling experience?
- What don't you like about your schooling experience?

4. How did you learn to teach at your workplace?

- How was it like during your first year of teaching?
- What do you like about your first year of teaching?
- What don't you like about your first year of teaching?
- Did you have a mentor? How would you describe your mentor in your college
- What have you learnt from this first year?
- How would you describe your teaching now compared to when you first started teaching?

5. What do you expect to learn from this course this year?

- How did you come to this course?
- How do you learn at the university? Tutorials,
- How do you learn at your teaching placement?
- How is your cooperating teacher?
- Are there any things that you are concern about this year?

Appendix B – Interview Schedule (Second round of data collection)**Learning to Become a Vocational and Technical Teacher in Brunei
Interview Schedule****Subject -****Date -**

Thanks again for agreeing to take part in this study. Please take a few minutes to read through the consent form.

This is a semi-structured interview which means that the questions are open ended. I will use a series of prompts if necessary to focus on particular areas of interest. This interview will be digitally recorded.

1. Please tell me about your learning since we last met.

- How do you like the course so far?
- In what ways do you think the course is helpful or not helpful?
- What do you like about your course?
- What don't you like about your course?
- How do you think of teaching after being in the course for a period of time now?
- How do you see the relationship between what you do in your course and what you do in your teaching placement?

2. Tell me about your cooperating teacher.

- In what ways is he or she helpful?
- What are your views of your cooperating teacher?
- Are there any other ways that you get to learn to teach?

Follow up questions for each individual student.

Appendix C – Consent form



Learning to become a VTE teacher

Consent form

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

I understand that:

- this project is concerned with how teachers' experiences influence the way they learn to teach
- 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
- my interview will be tape recorded and then transcribed;
- any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications
- all information I give will be treated as confidential
- the researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....

(Signature of interviewee)

.....

(Date)

.....

(Printed name of interviewee)

One copy of this form will be kept by interviewee; a second copy will be kept by interviewer

E-mail of interviewer:

Data Protection Act: The University of Leeds 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. The information is required in connection with a study which aims to find out how teachers' previous experiences influence their dispositions to learning to teach. Data will be confidential to the research team and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the interviewee. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.