

# Preservice Teachers' Identity-Agency with Progressive Writing Pedagogies

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## Abstract

This study explores the relationship between preservice teachers' perceptions of their professional identities and their progressive primary school writing practices as part of a University-school partnership project. We analyse preservice teachers' identities using discourse analysis and find a tension between self-perceptions as progressive teachers and the difficulties they experience enacting progressive pedagogies. For the majority, these difficulties are overcome through reflective theorising, but in utilising process drama, their otherwise expansive identity-agency is restricted by their wider apprehension of neoliberalism. We conclude by underlining the importance of specialised and concurrent models of teacher preparation which align preservice teachers' identities and practices.

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*Index terms*— preservice teachers; identity-agency; discourse analysis; progressivism; neoliberalism

## 1 I. Introduction

Within teacher education in England, neoliberalism's "state controlled de-control" (Ball 2013, 215), where performance is measured and resources allocated accordingly, took hold under New Labour's administration through the introduction of standards for teachers (DfES/TTA 2002). As Furlong argues (2005, 127-8), the standards "flattened the complexity involved in professional education" by creating "the impression of disinterestedness and objectivity". Seen in this light, achieving the professionalism required to become a teacher involves preservice teachers evidencing unproblematised standards in a process of "managed professionalism" (ibid, 130) where the potential for critical autonomy is silenced.

As Whitty (2014) illustrates, the decline in teacher autonomy in terms of critical thinking also takes the shape of the U.K. government's continued commitment to locating preservice training in schools rather than universities (DfE 2016).

From a global perspective, this model for primary teacher preparation is not supported by evidence from the highest performing countries where teaching practice is "concurrent" with University education (Driskell 2014). In Finland, for example, where full master's study and teaching practice are concurrent, Maaranen, Pitkaniemi, Stenberg, & Karlsson (2016) identify how preservice teachers' engagement with theory provides them with the criticality to maintain childcentred philosophical views of their roles as teachers against a global backdrop of neoliberalism.

Set within this context of neoliberalism, managed professionalism and school-led teacher preparation, this paper develops an in-depth and practice-based view of preservice teachers' professional identities and how they might align their philosophical views with their practice. To do so, preservice teachers' views on their own philosophies of English teaching are analysed and compared with their reflections on classroom practices. The context for this comparison is the primary school writing classroom. As part of a concurrent University undergraduate training program, 9 English specialist preservice teachers team-taught writing in an inner city primary school in the north of England over four consecutive Friday mornings. The specialist module asked them to engage with two specific pedagogies -teachers as writers and process drama -which below we define as evidence-based progressive

44 pedagogies. The ways in which the preservice teachers engaged and reflected upon these pedagogies and the ways  
45 in which this compared with their own philosophies of education, gives us a focused means of thinking about the  
46 development of their identity-agency in the writing classroom.

## 47 2 II. Theoretical Frame and Relevant Literature a) Identity- 48 Agency

49 The work of Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain (1998) has been utilised to some effect as a means of  
50 conceptualising teachers' identities in education (Luttrell and Parker 2001;Urrieta 2007). Holland, Lachicotte,  
51 Skinner, & Cain's key concept (op.cit., 52) is that identity is discursive participation in cultural contexts called  
52 "figured worlds" -"a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters  
53 and actors are recognised, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others.  
54 Each is a simplified world populated by a set of agents who engage in a limited range of meaningful acts or  
55 changes of state as moved by a specific set of forces". These simplified worlds are figured both in a deterministic  
56 sense by wider societal and global structures (neoliberalism), which afford participants "positional identities",  
57 and by the enacted discourse of the participants themselves (progressive pedagogies). Within figured worlds,  
58 intrapersonal and interpersonal factors affect an individual's agency and their ability to figure their positions,  
59 the positions of others and the nature of the worlds themselves.

60 In line with Bakhtin (1986), participation is mediated through the interplay of social languages ("heteroglos-  
61 sia") which are by nature dialogic. The words that make up the individual's utterance in figured worlds are,  
62 therefore, "interindividual" (ibid, 121), belonging to three places in time: previous speakers, the present individual  
63 speaker and future respondents. Within this framework of dialogism, figured worlds are fluid and perspectival and  
64 the localised nature of these worlds means that an individual has more potential for agency when compared with  
65 Bourdieu's conceptual view of "habitus" operating within "field" (Grenfell and Kelly 2001).

66 In order to think about the ways in which a preservice teacher figure the world of their own classroom, we  
67 draw upon the specific social language of reflective practice. Taking Schon's (1983) broad conceptualisation of  
68 practitioners reflecting both "in" and "on" practice, we see both types of reflection as being part of the discursive  
69 dialogism in what we call the figured worlds of the Primary School Writing Classroom and the University. It is  
70 our contention that the ways in which the two social languages of the Primary School Writing Classroom and  
71 University interact is crucial in terms of preservice teachers' identities.

72 From an international perspective, whether or not University reflections provide a place for preservice teachers  
73 to figure better worlds is unclear. McGarr and McCormack's (2014) analysis of six preservice teachers' reflections  
74 on their teaching practice in Ireland identifies how preservice teachers are unable to reflect in such a way as  
75 to transform their practice. Seen through the lens of Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, this is due to  
76 the preservice teachers' low "positional identities": feeling the need to conform to their perceptions of the  
77 dominant school practices, they renounce the social language of the University and adopt the social language  
78 of neoliberalism. The implication here is that the eminance of the social language of neoliberalism silences  
79 theoretical reflection. In a project with a greater sample size (n=115), Gardner (2014) identifies how English  
80 primary preservice teachers' reflections on their own writing builds their understanding of the complexity of the  
81 writing process. Although this study is limited to the preservice teachers' perceptions captured via a survey, their  
82 reflections demonstrate increased writing confidence and increased understanding of different ways of approaching  
83 the teaching of writing. With a greater focus on classroom practice, but with a sample size of six, Cheng, Tang,  
84 & Cheng (2012) develop a typology of preservice teacher reflections in Hong-Kong and identify how preservice  
85 teachers are able to reflect upon and actively figure their classroom worlds. Whilst the project's findings are not  
86 triangulated with observation or assessment data, the researchers find clear evidence of trainees reflecting upon  
87 the pupils' learning and in doing so adapting their own theoretical understandings in order to accommodate new  
88 information in what they term acts of "reflectivetheorising".

89 Drawing the two strands of reflection and identity together, Ruohotie-Lyhty & Moate (2016, 318) analyse  
90 twelve preservice teachers' reflections on action in Finland to help them think about identity-agency -"the agency  
91 individuals invest in the development of their professional identity". According to Ruohotie-Lyhty & Moate,  
92 identity-agency is a key function of all professional development. It is not a case, therefore, of some preservice  
93 teachers having agency and others having none. Instead, the way identity-agency is exerted by an individual  
94 varies and, to use the language of Holland et al, this will depend upon the ways in which an individual is  
95 positioned and engages in dialogue with the wider political and global discourses as well as localised school  
96 discourses. Analysing preservice teachers' reflections on practice, and considering the ways in which they draw  
97 upon their past experiences, Ruohotie-Lyhty & Moate develop a broad typology of identity-agency: expansive  
98 (new pedagogies embraced); reductive (new pedagogies rejected); and attentive (new pedagogies considered).  
99 Building on this work, we are interested in the ways in which our preservice teachers exert their identity-agency  
100 through their use of social languages to reflect upon their use of progressive pedagogies in the writing.

## 101 3 b) Progressive Pedagogies

102 Before we go on to look at this, it is necessary to define what we mean by progressive pedagogies. Progressivism  
103 has its routes in European philosophy and can be traced back to Rousseau's 1762 publication *Emile*, a treatise on

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104 education and childhood which moved from a view of the child as "tabula rasa" to a view of the child as a being  
105 in its own right (Coveney 1967). Philosophically, the shift from absence to presence paved the way for Dewey  
106 (2011), who renounced the transmission model of teaching in order to foreground the importance of experience  
107 as a precursor to learning. In Dewey, therefore, the link is made between a progressive, child-centred ideology  
108 and learning theories which, like Vygotsky (1986) and Wenger (2000), view learning as dialogic, process-driven  
109 and socially constructed in cultural communities. This view of learning has clear and important parallels with a  
110 view of identity as dialogic interactions within context specific figured worlds. In this sense, through the lens of  
111 progressivism, learning and identity are inextricable.

112 In terms of 'teachers as writers' as a progressive pedagogy, the basic idea has its roots in process writing  
113 (Graves 1983) but more explicitly involves the teacher adopting the identity of a writer (Cremin and Baker 2010)  
114 who writes with their class. From a practical perspective, this writing can be either guided or shared: with guided  
115 writing, the practitioner writes a text in front of the children, "drawing attention to the process of writing"; with  
116 shared writing, the practitioner responds to the children and as a community together they construct a text in  
117 order to lay bare the "processes of composition, transcription and revision" (Dombey 2013, 22). In terms of  
118 identity, in laying bare the processes of writing, the teacher should adopt the identity of "writer-teacher" (Cremin  
119 and Baker 2010) who is "authentic, agentic and emotionally engaged writing in the literacy classroom" (Cremin  
120 and Baker 2014, 32).

121 For process drama, the teacher involves their pupils in co-constructing a "temporary world" which has meaning  
122 and significance to the learner (O'Neill 1995). Similar to the teacher adopting the writer-teacher identity, a teacher  
123 involved in process drama is required to switch identity from a teacher in role in their temporary world to the  
124 teacher in the everyday classroom -a distinction referred to as the 'if' and the 'is' respectively (Edmiston 2003).  
125 As our focus was writing, we looked at how the creation of temporary worlds could generate ideas and language  
126 for writing in role as pupils would be encouraged to "seize the moment" to write within their fiction (Cremin,  
127 Gooch, Blakemore, Goff, & Macdonald 2006). We also focused on how 'teachers as writers' could be used within  
128 the temporary worlds of 'process drama' in order to directly shape pupils' writing.

## 129 4 III. Method a) Research Design

130 Our research project focused on two questions: 1. How do University-based preservice teachers' educational  
131 philosophies for the teaching of writing compare with their practices? 2. How do preservice University-based  
132 teachers reflect upon their use of progressive pedagogies and what does this say about their identity-agency? Our  
133 participants were 9 preservice primary teachers who were part of a group of 20 preservice primary teacher taking  
134 a level 6 undergraduate module, which focused on teaching and leading English in a primary school. Sampling  
135 was opportunistic and these 9 volunteered to take part giving their informed consent, which included reassurance  
136 that participation in the project would not affect their participation on the module. The participants have been  
137 anonymised and we write about the progressive pedagogies they predominantly adopted and reflected upon. It  
138 should be noted that for 1 participant, we were able to write about their reflections upon both pedagogies and  
139 draw comparisons (see TABLE ??

## 140 5 below).

141 During the first part of the taught module, the preservice teachers engaged in six three-hour taught sessions at  
142 University, half of which focused on the research, theory and practice of the two progressive pedagogies. The  
143 second part of the taught module saw the preservice teachers working in groups of three to teach writing (fiction)  
144 to pupils aged between five and eleven years in a coeducational inner city school over three consecutive Friday  
145 mornings. Although the time period was short and whilst we acknowledge that progressive pedagogies take time  
146 to develop, the school and the classes within the school were chosen as result of their interest in progressive  
147 pedagogies and, therefore, all of the classes were used to being taught through process drama and teacher as  
148 writers approaches. From a school perspective, informed consent was gained from the head teacher and the class  
149 teachers. The information given to the teaching staff made it clear that the pedagogies used by the preservice  
150 teachers were evidence-based and would be of benefit to the pupils in terms of their engagement and progress in  
151 writing. The head teacher acted in loco parentis and the children were informed verbally about the nature of the  
152 project and their verbal assent was solicited accordingly.

## 153 6 b) Data Collection

154 We collected two sets of data directly from the preservice teachers: 400 word philosophies of English education,  
155 written at the start of the project (preservice teachers defining 'philosophy' for themselves); reflections upon  
156 practice, written at the end of the project. In line with our view of identity as socially constructed, Gee's (2015)  
157 distinction between big "D" and little "d" D/discourse became relevant.

158 The preservice teachers' written statements about their philosophical perspectives on English education  
159 enabled us to analyse their "Discourse", that is their values which identify them "as a member of a socially  
160 meaningful group"; the preservice teachers' written reflections enabled us to analyse their "discourse", that  
161 is their "language-in-use", and the extent to which this language was figured by the Primary School Writing  
162 Classroom or University or both (ibid, 178).

## 10 B) EXPANSIVE IDENTITY-AGENCY WITH 'TEACHERS AS WRITERS'

163 We also collected observational data as we were able to observe each preservice teacher using a progressive  
164 pedagogy for a 1 hour lesson. The focus of our observation was on how the preservice teachers responded to the  
165 pupils as we felt this was a key aspect in progressive teaching. This idea of responsiveness was applied to the  
166 way in which the teachers composed fictional texts (teacher as writers), constructed "temporary worlds" (process  
167 drama), or both.

### 168 7 c) Data Analysis

169 Broadly speaking, Gee defines Discourse as enactments of "who we are" and "what we are doing" (2015,102). In  
170 terms of linking the who and the what, Gee sees the use of language within Discourse as having two motivations  
171 -asserting our "status" and "solidarity" to others -and heuses Holland Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain's "figured  
172 worlds" as the location of this identity work (ibid,114). Within these simplified, figured worlds, motivations of  
173 language are broken into building tasks which enact identities and (dis)privilege "ways of knowing" ??2010,17).  
174 Gee provides tools of inquiry (ibid,60) to deconstruct these building tasks, which are listed below and are  
175 contextualised in parenthesis: In relation to the preservice teachers' academic reflections, questions 1, 2, 4  
176 and 5 were useful in helping us interrogate their discourse and think about their identity-agency in relation to the  
177 wider Conversation with neoliberalism. We were also able to think about the preservice teachers' identity-agency  
178 in terms of how the social languages of the Primary School Writing Classroom and University were synthesised,  
179 (dis)privileged or otherwise.

## 180 8 IV. Results and Discussion

### 181 9 a) Tensions between Philosophies and Discourses

182 Taken as a whole, the preservice teachers' personal philosophies of English education were progressive. The social  
183 language used belonged to four semantic groups: the need to make English teaching and learning "contextual";  
184 the importance of "collaboration"; the need for "creativity"; and the underlying necessity for "inclusivity".  
185 Interestingly, the first two of these semantic groups were intertextual and figured by the social language of  
186 University with theorists and their ideas explicitly or implicitly cited. In terms of "contextual", this notion  
187 was developed through words such as "meaningful", "real life scenarios" and "community" and underpinned  
188 by a theoretical view of learning as experience with Dewey and Kolb the most frequently referenced. For  
189 "collaborative", a view of learning as social participation between teachers and pupils was again figured by the  
190 social language of University with words such as "oracy", "social constructivism", "community" and "scaffolding"  
191 underpinned by references to Vygotsky, Bruner and Wenger. "Creativity", on the other hand, was less figured by  
192 University with progressivist words such as "self-expression", "imagination" and "potential" most widely used.  
193 Similarly for "inclusivity", concepts such as "self-esteem", "individual needs", "children's voice", "emotion" and  
194 "holistic learning" were used without specific reference to theory. In terms of the extent to which the social  
195 language of University figured these Discourses, it would be interesting in future research to explore how enduring  
196 each of these four philosophies become for preservice teachers as they embark on their careers and whether or  
197 not theoretical underpinning and understanding plays a role in the enactment of Discourse.

198 Whilst we were able to observe each preservice teacher for 1 hour in relation to their responsiveness to the  
199 pupils in their class, we do acknowledge that our observational notes were often brief. What the data did  
200 demonstrate, however, was that in line with their own reflections, the preservice teachers did "struggle" to put  
201 the progressive pedagogies into practice as Discourse. In terms of adopting the role of the writer in the classroom,  
202 the preservice teachers found it difficult to incorporate pupils' ideas into their thought processes to "lay bare" the  
203 composition of a fiction text; in terms of process drama, whilst adeptly involving pupils in the construction of  
204 "temporary worlds", the preservice teachers found it difficult to directly harness the pupils ideas in subsequent  
205 writing activities. Broadly speaking, this indicates that the preservice teachers found it difficult to put their  
206 progressive values into practice as Discourse. The discussion below focuses upon how the preservice teachers  
207 reflected upon this as well as what these reflections demonstrate about the nature of their identity-agency in  
208 their future development as teachers.

### 209 10 b) Expansive Identity-Agency with 'Teachers as Writers'

210 In reflecting upon their experiences of using the teacher as writer pedagogy with their respective classes, all 5  
211 of the preservice teachers adopted the University social language of learning theory and research into English  
212 writing in order to figure their experiences. The ways in which this social language was used by the preservice  
213 teachers varied, especially in terms how their identity-agency manifested itself in "expansive" and "reductive"  
214 ways (Ruohitie-Lyhty, & Moate 2016).

215 Kathleen was at one extreme as her reflection was largely figured by intertextual borrowings from the social  
216 language (Bakhtin 1986) of University. In thinking about her own practice, Kathleen was the only preservice  
217 teacher not to reflect upon any difficulty in Year 2018

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218 actualising the writer-teacher identity. She reflects on: how she wrote a character description and "articulated  
219 the choices (she) made about style and content"; how this enabled pupils to see the "writing process"; and how  
220 as a writer-teacher she encouraged "engagement and competence". When moving on to talk about the difficulties  
221 of taking on this identity, however, Kathleen removes the first person and adopts the intertextual social language  
222 of University to present Cremin and Baker's (2010) identification of a lack of "self-assurance" as one of the  
223 key reasons why "teachers struggle" with this pedagogy. Given that teacher evaluations and our observations  
224 indicated that all preservice teachers found it difficult to engage with this pedagogy, Kathleen's drawing upon  
225 the figured world of University becomes less of a tool for reflection and more a means distancing herself from  
226 the figured world of the Primary School Writing Classroom. The result is a lack of identity-agency as although  
227 Kathleen appears "expansive" in taking on this approach, she is actually "reductive" in not wanting to dialogise  
228 the theoretical with her own practice. Or, to use Gee's terms (2010), the social language of the University is  
229 disprivileged through its separation from the social language of the Primary School Writing Classroom and as a  
230 result reductive identity-agency is exerted.

232 This was not the case with the other four preservice teachers, who all reflected upon the difficulties they  
233 experienced in implementing teachers as writers in the figured world of the Primary School Classroom. Gemma,  
234 for example, was aware that in her practice she used a pre-prepared "WAGOLL" (What a Good One Looks Like)  
235 because she lacked the "confidence" needed to adopt the writer-teacher identity and demonstrate the "writing  
236 process". Gemma felt that her WAGOLL became a "restrictive template" for the pupils' writing and she ascribed  
237 her inability to be more process-orientated as linked to her "preconceptions of herself as a writer". A similar  
238 sentiment was expressed by Cara: "One confession from this was that we had prepared some writing material  
239 prior to the shared write. The sole reason for this was our lack of confidence." Cara's recourse to religious social  
240 language indicates that her group's use of an anti-progressive, productbased pedagogy was a matter of shame  
241 and that this was something to which they would rather not admit.

242 In contrast to Kathleen's reflection, the way in which Gemma and Cara identify their difficulties in the  
243 Primary School Writing Classroom and subsequently use the figured world of the University to help them name  
244 their difficulties provides a clear sense of the identity-agency gained through "reflective theorising" (Cheng, Tang,  
245 & Cheng 2012). Having spoken about a lack of confidence in adopting the identity of a writer, Cara references  
246 academic research which widens her confession to implicate other "qualified teachers" who are complicit in  
247 preparing writing at home (Grainger 2005) and who rarely "write authentically in the classroom" (Cremin &  
248 Myhill 2011). In naming a wider issue to depersonalise the difficulty Cara has experienced in enacting the  
249 progressive pedagogy of teacher as writer, Cara exhibits expansive identity-agency as she goes on to suggest  
250 a solution in the form of "strong subject leadership" which can "resurrect" (note the biblical social language  
251 again) a teacher's "belief" through creating a collaborative and supportive network, which Cara in turn justifies  
252 through citing Ing (2009). Gemma similarly depersonalises the difficulties she experiences through reference to  
253 the social language of University and then goes on to think about the figured world of the Primary School Writing  
254 Classroom, reflecting upon the ways in which the pupils in her class "imitated" her WAGOLL. For Gemma, this  
255 reinforced the importance of the teacher being able to lay bare the "process" of writing so that pupils learn  
256 about "transferrable techniques" rather than "content" in order to "begin to have agency over their own writing".  
257 Again, this notion of pupil independence in writing is supported by literature, but what is interesting with both  
258 these examples is how the difficulty they experience is named using the social language of University and how  
259 this empowers the preservice teachers to exert their identity-agency and suggest solutions and modifications to  
260 future practices in the Primary School Writing Classroom.

261 Katie and Molly, who were teaching together, cited Cremin & Baker (2010) as a way of identifying their lack  
262 of "confidence" in writing with and for their class. As the project evolved, their group were able to reflect "in"  
263 action (Schon op. cit.) and decided to harness their lack of confidence when writing alongside the pupils in small  
264 groups. This involved explicitly taking on the role of what they called "the struggling teacher" who shares their  
265 work with the group and asks for specific suggestions in terms of how it could be improved. For both Katie  
266 and Molly, this approach helped "boost" the pupils' "confidence". Their understanding of the literature, gave  
267 them the means to reflect upon this further and how such an approach would be problematic in a whole class  
268 situation where teachers need to appear more "competent writers". One further comment made by Katie was  
269 that by writing alongside her pupils she was able to reflect upon her own practice as she was able to "experience  
270 first-hand the effectiveness of the activities" they devised from the perspective of a pupil in the class. Katie  
271 reflects that some of the activities were "disjointed" and could have been "drawn together in a more structured  
272 format" to help pupils construct their text.

273 Again, there is a clear indication of how the University and the Primary School Writing Classroom can  
274 be synthesised to promote expansive identity-agency of the preservice teachers through reflective theorising; a  
275 reflective theorising which closes the gap

## 276 12 c) Expansive-Restricted Identity-Agency with 'Process

277 Drama' Similar to teachers as writers, all 5 of the preservice teachers used their reflections to articulate difficulties  
278 they had in enacting process drama and moving between the identity of the teacher and the teacher in role. As  
279 with the expansive identity-agency demonstrated by the majority of preservice teachers enacting writer-teacher

280 identities, these preservice teachers adopted the social language of University to name and depersonalise the  
281 difficulties they experienced in the Primary School Writing Classroom. Again, these difficulties were to do with  
282 "confidence" and incongruent self-perceptions. Reflecting upon adopting the identity of teacher in role, Taylor, for  
283 example, talks about being "unsure of the strategy" and "embarrassed and shaky". Through the social language  
284 of the University, she rationalises her "drama anxiety" (Wright 1999) and draws confidence from a community  
285 of practice that shares her anxiety. Accordingly, her discourse becomes triumphant as she adopts the active  
286 voice and exhibits expansive identity-agency in switching from the teacher in role identity ("I was able to") to  
287 facilitating the participation of her pupils in creating and switching from a temporary world ("we were able to").

288 More notable in these reflections than the teachers as writers' reflections was the way in which the preservice  
289 teachers captured their emerging ability to respond to pupils in the construction of temporary worlds through  
290 reflection "in" action. Isobel, for example, describes the process of moving away from prescriptive planning to  
291 emergent planning as "not always an easy thing to do", stating that "as teachers we could have stuck to our  
292 original plan". Instead, she reflects upon how she responded to her pupils' questions to develop "an in depth look  
293 at character" which further developed the temporary world and which provided a "richness" that "clearly shaped  
294 and informed the writing". Such examples were evident in all 5 of these reflections indicating how reflection in  
295 action increased the expansive identity-agency of preservice teachers in their use of process drama. With teachers  
296 as writers, on the other hand, the preservice teachers found it difficult to enact writer-teacher identities and were  
297 more reliant on retrospective reflections "on" action, using the social language of the University to help them  
298 name and shape their experiences.

299 What is striking about these reflections is that whilst engagement with the pedagogy is more immediately  
300 expansive than it is with teachers as writers, there is a sense that the preservice teachers' identityagency in relation  
301 to process drama is likely to be restricted by a Conversation with the wider structural forces of neoliberalism.  
302 Having reflected upon "the effects of this pedagogy" in terms of developing "language", a figuring shadow of  
303 restriction enters James' discourse as his use of process drama was "unusual" and the University module had  
304 given him "the opportunity" to be more progressive. Similarly, Isobel reflects upon how the use of such a pedagogy  
305 is not possible and how enacting process drama puts the teacher at "risk". These are allusive cautionary tales,  
306 the implications of which are not clearly defined. In a similar vein, Emelia talks about the importance of strong  
307 subject leadership to promote process drama as a pedagogy. Although confident at the outset of the project,  
308 Emelia is "reassured" by the fact that her class teacher (who is also the literacy coordinator) is aware of the  
309 "positive impact of drama on writing".

310 Cara's reflection is particularly interesting in terms of how her identity-agency in relation to process drama is  
311 restricted by an apprehension of wider structures as the tension becomes a dialogised Conversation within her  
312 own voice. In spite of her progressive philosophy and unlike the other preservice teachers, Cara's difficulties of  
313 engaging with process drama are less to do with confidence and more to do with some of the doubts she holds as  
314 to the value of the approach.

315 Reflecting upon how she "embraced" becoming teacher in role with "some apprehension", Cara comments on  
316 how pupils "writing in role" was ultimately "surprisingly effective". Using the social language of the University  
317 (Hui, Chow, Chan, Chui, & Sam 2105) to further substantiate this finding, Cara adopts the second person to  
318 conclude: "I had reservations but?...I can assure you that drama is an invaluable tool for providing a context  
319 and real purpose for writing". Cara's need to "assure" herself and other teachers is interesting in the way her  
320 assurance alludes to and implies a continuing Conversation with those discourses within education which would  
321 disprivilege drama as a tool for learning.

322 What we have, therefore, with the focused use of process drama are examples of what we are calling expansive-  
323 restricted identity-agency. For all of these preservice teachers, initial anxieties or reservations are overcome  
324 through synthesising the figured worlds of University and the Primary School Writing Classroom in acts of  
325 reflective theorising. This in turn quickly builds their identity-agency in ways that are more straightforward than  
326 with the teachers as writers' pedagogy and this means they are more readily able to reflect in action. Ultimately,  
327 however, their future practice and identities as teachers is threatened by their perception and allusions to a wider  
328 neoliberal education system which will they feel will restrict and disprivelege such values and practices.

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## 331 14 V. Conclusions

332 As indicated above, ideally we would have collected more focused, multimodal data from our observations of  
333 preservice teachers' use of progressive pedagogies. Similar to Cremin & Baker (2014), this would have allowed us  
334 to capture instances of responsive reflection "in" action rather than relying upon our readings of their subsequent  
335 reflections "on" action in order to make such distinctions. Equally, a longitudinal project would allow for greater  
336 exploration of the previous experiences of preservice teachers and how these predisposed them or otherwise to  
337 the progressive pedagogies. A longitudinal project would also have allowed us to look at the impact of their  
338 identity-agency upon future practices. These, we suggest, would be fruitful lines of future research.

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339 Despite these limitations, we feel that our smallscale project highlights the important role that University-  
340 school partnerships can play in the development of preservice teachers' identity agencies. In particular, we would  
341 argue that without the focused and specialised school practice opportunities offered through this University  
342 module, preservice teachers would ultimately find it difficult to enact their Discourses and align their progressive  
343 values with their practice; an alignment which can prevent teacher alienation and what Ball terms "values  
344 schizophrenia" (op. cit., 221).

345 This alignment of values and practice, we have demonstrated, relies on a constructive dialogue between the  
346 social languages of University and School in helping preservice teachers to engage with reflective theorising.  
347 Through reflective theorising, most preservice teachers are able to adopt expansive identity-agency which will  
348 help develop their identities throughout their careers. This reflective-theorising through focused practice is even  
349 more important for those progressive practices like teachers as writers which we, and others (Cremin & Baker  
350 2014), have shown to be difficult to adopt.

351 Reflective theorising, however, is of equal importance for process drama. As we have shown, preservice teachers'  
352 reflections on process drama indicated that whilst the partnership module had built their agency, their agency  
353 was restricted by a Conversation with wider neoliberal structures that disprivileged their values and identities.  
354 This, no doubt, is in part due to the removal of drama from the revised English national curriculum (DfE 2013)  
355 and the prescriptive emphasis upon spelling, punctuation and grammar. What we have in England, therefore, is a  
356 neoconservative curriculum which within a wider neoliberal structure of standardised testing and accountability  
357 could well further erode primary school teachers' confidence to enact progressive pedagogies and in doing so  
358 heighten their "values schizophrenia". Again, to disrupt these wider figuring forces and to avoid "authenticity"  
359 being replaced by "plasticity" (Ball op. cit.), schools and Universities must work together in developing the next  
360 generation of teachers and lessening the restrictive grasp of neoliberalism in the development of identity-agency.  
361 In England, the government's commitment to lessening the role of Universities in teacher preparation (DfE 2016)  
362 should be seen as a threat to this being realised.

## 363 **15 Year 2018**

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