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## Preservice Teachers' Identity-Agency with Progressive Writing Pedagogies

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# Preservice Teachers' Identity-Agency with Progressive Writing Pedagogies

Tom Dobson <sup>α</sup> & Lisa Stephenson <sup>σ</sup>

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## 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, Pitkäniemi, Stenberg, & Karlsson (2016) identify how preservice teachers' engagement with

theory provides them with the criticality to maintain child-centred 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 pedagogies. The ways in which the preservice teachers engaged and reflected upon these pedagogies and the ways in which this compared with their own philosophies of education, gives us a focused means of thinking about the development of their identity-agency in the writing classroom.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAME AND RELEVANT LITERATURE

### a) *Identity-Agency*

The work of Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain (1998) has been utilised to some effect as a means of conceptualising teachers' identities in education (Luttrell and Parker 2001; Urrieta 2007). Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain's key concept (op.cit., 52) is that identity is discursive participation in cultural contexts called "figured worlds" - "a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognised, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others. Each is a simplified world populated by a set of agents who engage in a limited range of meaningful acts or changes of state as moved by a specific set of forces". These simplified worlds are figured both in a deterministic sense by wider societal and global structures (neoliberalism), which afford participants "positional identities", and by the

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enacted discourse of the participants themselves (progressive pedagogies). Within figured worlds, intrapersonal and interpersonal factors affect an individual's agency and their ability to figure their positions, the positions of others and the nature of the worlds themselves. In line with Bakhtin (1986), participation is mediated through the interplay of social languages ("heteroglossia") which are by nature dialogic. The words that make up the individual's utterance in figured worlds are, therefore, "interindividual" (ibid, 121), belonging to three places in time: previous speakers, the present individual speaker and future respondents. Within this framework of dialogism, figured worlds are fluid and perspectival and the localised nature of these worlds means that an individual has more potential for agency when compared with Bourdieu's conceptual view of "habitus" operating within "field" (Grenfell and Kelly 2001).

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

From an international perspective, whether or not University reflections provide a place for preservice teachers to figure better worlds is unclear. McGarr and McCormack's (2014) analysis of six preservice teachers' reflections on their teaching practice in Ireland identifies how preservice teachers are unable to reflect in such a way as to transform their practice. Seen through the lens of Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, this is due to the preservice teachers' low "positional identities": feeling the need to conform to their perceptions of the dominant school practices, they renounce the social language of the University and adopt the social language of neoliberalism. The implication here is that the eminence of the social language of neoliberalism silences theoretical reflection. In a project with a greater sample size (n=115), Gardner (2014) identifies how English primary preservice teachers' reflections on their own writing builds their understanding of the complexity of the writing process. Although this study is limited to the preservice teachers' perceptions captured via a survey, their reflections demonstrate increased writing confidence and increased understanding of different ways of approaching the teaching of writing. With a greater focus on classroom practice, but with a sample size of six, Cheng, Tang, & Cheng (2012) develop a typology of preservice teacher reflections in Hong-Kong

and identify how preservice teachers are able to reflect upon and actively figure their classroom worlds. Whilst the project's findings are not triangulated with observation or assessment data, the researchers find clear evidence of trainees reflecting upon the pupils' learning and in doing so adapting their own theoretical understandings in order to accommodate new information in what they term acts of "reflective-theorising".

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

#### b) *Progressive Pedagogies*

Before we go on to look at this, it is necessary to define what we mean by progressive pedagogies. Progressivism has its routes in European philosophy and can be traced back to Rousseau's 1762 publication *Emile*, a treatise on education and childhood which moved from a view of the child as "tabula rasa" to a view of the child as a being in its own right (Coveney 1967). Philosophically, the shift from absence to presence paved the way for Dewey (2011), who renounced the transmission model of teaching in order to foreground the importance of experience as a precursor to learning. In Dewey, therefore, the link is made between a progressive, child-centred ideology and learning theories which, like Vygotsky (1986) and Wenger (2000), view learning as dialogic, process-driven and socially constructed in cultural communities. This view of learning has clear and important parallels with a view of identity as dialogic interactions within context specific figured worlds. In this sense, through the lens of progressivism, learning and identity are inextricable.

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

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

### III. METHOD

#### a) Research Design

Our research project focused on two questions:

1. How do University-based preservice teachers' educational philosophies for the teaching of writing compare with their practices?
2. How do preservice University-based teachers reflect upon their use of progressive pedagogies and what does this say about their identity-agency?

Our participants were 9 preservice primary teachers who were part of a group of 20 preservice primary teacher taking a level 6 undergraduate module, which focused on teaching and leading English in a primary school. Sampling was opportunistic and these 9 volunteered to take part giving their informed consent, which included reassurance that participation in the project would not affect their participation on the module. The participants have been anonymised and we write about the progressive pedagogies they predominantly adopted and reflected upon. It should be noted that for 1 participant, we were able to write about

their reflections upon both pedagogies and draw comparisons (see TABLE 1 below).

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

#### b) Data Collection

We collected two sets of data directly from the preservice teachers: 400 word philosophies of English education, written at the start of the project (preservice teachers defining 'philosophy' for themselves); reflections upon practice, written at the end of the project. In line with our view of identity as socially constructed, Gee's (2015) distinction between big "D" and little "d" D/discourse became relevant. The preservice teachers' written statements about their philosophical perspectives on English education enabled us to analyse their "Discourse", that is their values which identify them "as a member of a socially meaningful group"; the preservice teachers' written reflections enabled us to analyse their "discourse", that is their "language-in-use", and the extent to which this language was figured by the Primary School Writing Classroom or University or both (ibid, 178).

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

c) *Data Analysis*

Broadly speaking, Gee defines Discourse as enactments of “who we are” and “what we are doing” (2015,102). In terms of linking the who and the what, Gee sees the use of language within Discourse as having two motivations - asserting our “status” and “solidarity” to others – and he uses Holland Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain’s “figured worlds” as the location of this identity work (ibid,114). Within these simplified, figured worlds, motivations of language are broken into building tasks which enact identities and (dis)privilege “ways of knowing” (2010,17). Gee provides tools of inquiry (ibid,60) to deconstruct these building tasks, which are listed below and are contextualised in parenthesis:

1. What social languages are involved? (*How does the Primary School Writing Classroom and University figure the preservice teachers' reflections?*)
2. What socially situated identities and activities do these social language enact? (*What do preservice teachers' identities look like in this context and how much identity-agency do they have?*)
3. What Discourse or Discourses are involved? (*How do preservice teachers enact progressive pedagogies?*)
4. What Conversations are relevant? (*How do preservice teachers engage with the neoliberalism Conversation?*)
5. How does intertextuality work? (*How do preservice teachers use academic texts and how is this linked to their identity-agency?*)

In relation to the preservice teachers' academic reflections, questions 1, 2, 4 and 5 were useful in helping us interrogate their discourse and think about their identity-agency in relation to the wider Conversation with neoliberalism. We were also able to think about the preservice teachers' identity-agency in terms of how the social languages of the Primary School Writing Classroom and University were synthesised, (dis)privileged or otherwise.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### a) *Tensions between Philosophies and Discourses*

Taken as a whole, the preservice teachers' personal philosophies of English education were progressive. The social language used belonged to four semantic groups: the need to make English teaching and learning “contextual”; the importance of “collaboration”; the need for “creativity”; and the underlying necessity for “inclusivity”. Interestingly, the first two of these semantic groups were intertextual and figured by the social language of University with theorists and their ideas explicitly or implicitly cited. In terms of “contextual”, this notion was developed through words such as “meaningful”, “real life scenarios” and “community” and underpinned by a theoretical view of learning as experience with Dewey

and Kolb the most frequently referenced. For “collaborative”, a view of learning as social participation between teachers and pupils was again figured by the social language of University with words such as “oracy”, “social constructivism”, “community” and “scaffolding” underpinned by references to Vygotsky, Bruner and Wenger. “Creativity”, on the other hand, was less figured by University with progressivist words such as “self-expression”, “imagination” and “potential” most widely used. Similarly for “inclusivity”, concepts such as “self-esteem”, “individual needs”, “children’s voice”, “emotion” and “holistic learning” were used without specific reference to theory. In terms of the extent to which the social language of University figured these Discourses, it would be interesting in future research to explore how enduring each of these four philosophies become for preservice teachers as they embark on their careers and whether or not theoretical underpinning and understanding plays a role in the enactment of Discourse.

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

##### b) *Expansive Identity-Agency with ‘Teachers as Writers’*

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

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

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

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

In contrast to Kathleen’s reflection, the way in which Gemma and Cara identify their difficulties in the Primary School Writing Classroom and subsequently use the figured world of the University to help them name their difficulties provides a clear sense of the identity-agency gained through “reflective theorising” (Cheng, Tang, & Cheng 2012). Having spoken about a lack of confidence in adopting the identity of a writer, Cara references academic research which widens her confession to implicate other “qualified teachers” who are complicit in preparing writing at home (Grainger

2005) and who rarely “write authentically in the classroom” (Cremin & Myhill 2011). In naming a wider issue to depersonalise the difficulty Cara has experienced in enacting the progressive pedagogy of teacher as writer, Cara exhibits expansive identity-agency as she goes on to suggest a solution in the form of “strong subject leadership” which can “resurrect” (note the biblical social language again) a teacher’s “belief” through creating a collaborative and supportive network, which Cara in turn justifies through citing Ing (2009). Gemma similarly depersonalises the difficulties she experiences through reference to the social language of University and then goes on to think about the figured world of the Primary School Writing Classroom, reflecting upon the ways in which the pupils in her class “imitated” her WAGOLL. For Gemma, this reinforced the importance of the teacher being able to lay bare the “process” of writing so that pupils learn about “transferrable techniques” rather than “content” in order to “begin to have agency over their own writing”. Again, this notion of pupil independence in writing is supported by literature, but what is interesting with both these examples is how the difficulty they experience is named using the social language of University and how this empowers the preservice teachers to exert their identity-agency and suggest solutions and modifications to future practices in the Primary School Writing Classroom.

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

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

between preservice teacher philosophical and classroom Discourses.

c) *Expansive-Restricted Identity-Agency with 'Process Drama'*

Similar to teachers as writers, all 5 of the preservice teachers used their reflections to articulate difficulties they had in enacting process drama and moving between the identity of the teacher and the teacher in role. As with the expansive identity-agency demonstrated by the majority of preservice teachers enacting writer-teacher identities, these preservice teachers adopted the social language of University to name and depersonalise the difficulties they experienced in the Primary School Writing Classroom. Again, these difficulties were to do with "confidence" and incongruent self-perceptions. Reflecting upon adopting the identity of teacher in role, Taylor, for example, talks about being "unsure of the strategy" and "embarrassed and shaky". Through the social language of the University, she rationalises her "drama anxiety" (Wright 1999) and draws confidence from a community of practice that shares her anxiety. Accordingly, her discourse becomes triumphant as she adopts the active voice and exhibits expansive identity-agency in switching from the teacher in role identity ("I was able to") to facilitating the participation of her pupils in creating and switching from a temporary world ("we were able to").

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

What is striking about these reflections is that whilst engagement with the pedagogy is more immediately expansive than it is with teachers as writers, there is a sense that the preservice teachers' identity-agency in relation to process drama is likely to be restricted by a Conversation with the wider structural

forces of neoliberalism. Having reflected upon "the effects of this pedagogy" in terms of developing "language", a figuring shadow of restriction enters James' discourse as his use of process drama was "unusual" and the University module had given him "the opportunity" to be more progressive. Similarly, Isobel reflects upon how the use of such a pedagogy is not possible and how enacting process drama puts the teacher at "risk". These are allusive cautionary tales, the implications of which are not clearly defined. In a similar vein, Emelia talks about the importance of strong subject leadership to promote process drama as a pedagogy. Although confident at the outset of the project, Emelia is "reassured" by the fact that her class teacher (who is also the literacy coordinator) is aware of the "positive impact of drama on writing".

Cara's reflection is particularly interesting in terms of how her identity-agency in relation to process drama is restricted by an apprehension of wider structures as the tension becomes a dialogised Conversation within her own voice. In spite of her progressive philosophy and unlike the other preservice teachers, Cara's difficulties of engaging with process drama are less to do with confidence and more to do with some of the doubts she holds as to the value of the approach. Reflecting upon how she "embraced" becoming teacher in role with "some apprehension", Cara comments on how pupils "writing in role" was ultimately "surprisingly effective". Using the social language of the University (Hui, Chow, Chan, Chui, & Sam 2105) to further substantiate this finding, Cara adopts the second person to conclude: "I had reservations but.....I can assure you that drama is an invaluable tool for providing a context and real purpose for writing". Cara's need to "assure" herself and other teachers is interesting in the way her assurance alludes to and implies a continuing Conversation with those discourses within education which would disprivelege drama as a tool for learning.

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

## V. CONCLUSIONS

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

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

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

Reflective theorising, however, is of equal importance for process drama. As we have shown, preservice teachers' reflections on process drama indicated that whilst the partnership module had built their agency, their agency was restricted by a Conversation with wider neoliberal structures that disprivileged their values and identities. This, no doubt, is in part due to the removal of drama from the revised English national curriculum (DfE 2013) and the prescriptive emphasis upon spelling, punctuation and grammar. What we have in England, therefore, is a neoconservative curriculum which within a wider neoliberal structure of standardised testing and accountability could well further erode primary school teachers' confidence to enact progressive pedagogies and in doing so heighten their "values schizophrenia". Again, to disrupt these wider figuring forces and to avoid

"authenticity" being replaced by "plasticity" (Ball op. cit.), schools and Universities must work together in developing the next generation of teachers and lessening the restrictive grasp of neoliberalism in the development of identity-agency. In England, the government's commitment to lessening the role of Universities in teacher preparation (DfE 2016) should be seen as a threat to this being realised.

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