Open Research Online

The Open University's repository of research publications
and other research outputs

An Exploration of Individual Emergent Leaders' Identity Development Through the Use of Learning Biographies

Thesis

oro.open.ac.uk

UNRESTRICTED

Alison Ross Craven Fox BSc, MSc, MEd

An Exploration of Individual Emergent Leaders' Identity Development Through the Use of Learning Biographies

Thesis offered for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Education

September 2011

Date of Submission: 29 September 2011

Date of Award: 20 February 2012

Abstract

The English National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services' (NCLSCS) framework for leadership development refers to 'emergent leaders', without being clear what 'emergent' means. This study explores the experiences of those considered as 'emergent leaders' to find out how 'emergence' might be understood. Their development is conceptualised as identity development, by adopting a socio-cultural understanding of the emergent leaders' learning.

The focus is on how individuals make meaning of their experiences once in formal leadership roles, so developing their identities. This is important to understand in a context in which schools are experiencing problems with both teacher retention and senior leader recruitment.

Five 'emergent' leaders from three English Local Authorities and from Primary, Middle and Secondary schools participated in a series of interviews and 'learning log' activities over periods of 14-36 months. Phase 1 focused on their experiences prior to the start of the study: Phase 2 on their current learning. From the accumulated data set learning biographies were generated.

Diverse and personal accounts of identity development were revealed. The study concluded that it was not appropriate to think of 'emergence' in terms of role progression into senior leadership positions, as the NCLSCS framework for leadership might imply. Individuals decided who they wanted to become by making sense of themselves in relation to judgments of their experiences. Whilst three participant leaders did develop identities as aspiring senior leaders, two talked instead of aspiring to be peers, rather than 'leaders'.

The study highlighted the central role of talk to identity development and the lack of opportunity for this in schools. This involved reflective 'self talk' as well as talk with others, with the study itself contributing to such 'identity talk'. It is important to develop opportunities (times, spaces, skills and relationships) for talk to support contemporary 'emergent' school leaders'.

Acknowledgements

Table of contents

List of figures and tables

Guide to frequently used abbreviations

BERA – British Educational Research Association

CA/LSA/TA – Classroom assistant/Learning Support assistant/Teaching assistant (roles for adults in classrooms in supporting pupil learning, usually allocated to designated children identified with special educational needs - seen as equivalent in this thesis other than as discussed)

ICT – Information and Communication Technology (an English National Curriculum subject)

LA – Local (Education) Authority

LftM – Leading from the Middle (the NCLSCS leadership programme aimed at 'emergent' leaders)

NCSL – National College for School Leadership, becoming the NCLSCS – National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services in September 2009

NPQH – National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (a now mandatory course to become a headteacher in England, run by the NCLSCS)

NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher (those in their first year and still within a probationary period)

PE – Physical Education (an English National Curriculum subject)

PGCE – PostGraduate Certificate in Education (a one year, when taken full-time, teacher training course)

PSHE – Personal, Social and Health Education (an English National Curriculum subject)

RE – Religious Education (an English National Curriculum subject)

TLR – Teaching and Leadership Responsibility status, allocated by schools to newly created posts since 2006.

Chapter 1 Introducing 'emergent leaders'

1.1 Why study 'emergent leaders'?

This thesis explores school leaders' experiences of formal leadership roles at an early stage in their careers. Scoping the literature revealed a dearth of empirical research about the development of early leaders; particularly from their perspective. Theoretical models of leadership development, and organizational views of leadership capacity building, dominate the field. This is particularly so since the 1990s when problems in the recruitment and retention of school headteachers were identified; still a current issue in England at the time of this study. The 'crisis' is both attributed to falling numbers of applicants and a demographic retirement 'bulge' (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2005). I argue that studies from the perspective of early leaders would contribute to understanding how best to support them in their further development.

The National College for School Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (formerly the National College for School Leadership, NCSL) sets out a view of leadership progression underpinned by a seemingly linear framework of five levels of leadership (NCSL, 2001). Leaders are seen as developing from:

1. 'emergent leader', to

2. 'aspiring headteacher', to

3. 'new headteacher', to

4. 'long-serving headteacher' and to

5. 'consultant headteacher'.

As indicated below, schools have been encouraged to consider such leadership succession and to identify and nurture leadership 'talent' in school:

If leadership succession is not to be blighted by a leadership crisis, the question emerges as to where the next school leaders will come from. One response schools may consider is to adopt a more proactive stance towards leadership talent identification, development, succession and retention amongst existing school staff. In short, the notion of 'growing one's own leaders' is beginning to emerge (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2005, p15).

The English NCLSCS, with the support of the UK government, has taken a lead in promoting leadership succession planning. It has both published and commissioned reports (e.g. Barnes, 2009; Hartle and Thomas, 2003; NCSL, 2006; NCLSCS 2010a; 2010b; Rhodes, Brundrett and Nevill, 2006) and these have led to specific guidance being developed with and by Local Authorities (LAs) (e.g. Likeman, 2009; Rhodes, 2005a; 2005b; Rhodes and Brundrett, 2006). In addition the NCLSCS offers development programmes aimed at each level of leadership. Schools are encouraged to identify potential programme participants and support their applications.

As I became familiar with the work of the NCLSCS I began to wonder how this framework applied to early leaders in English schools. The NCLSCS's framework suggests that teachers taking on formal leadership roles are assumed to be doing so as part of an expectation that they will 'emerge' into future senior leaders. Do those identified as 'emergent' hold this view? If not, how do they make sense of taking on leadership roles in school? I also wondered about the role of the leadership development programmes in the development of leaders, from their perspective. In fact, which experiences would early leaders report as influential?

In raising these questions I realized that my interest in, and also concerns about, the development of early leaders derived from my own experience in taking on early leadership roles in secondary schools, further fuelled by my work as a contract researcher into teacher and leader development.

I begin this thesis by reflecting on my experiences as an early or 'emergent' leader (section 1.2). This illustrates how I have found a biographical approach for thinking about leadership development useful in this study and acknowledges the perspective I bring to it from my own experiences. My personal 'bias' I examine in chapter 4. I then outline the conceptual territory of the thesis (section 1.3).

The study examines the perspectives of contemporary 'emergent' leaders. I argue through chapters 3 (conceptually) and 4 (methodologically) how I went about this inquiry. I was keen to elicit autobiographical accounts from leaders to counter the critique that "the life' is of substantial concern when teachers talk of their work but is too often excised from research reports' (Goodson, 1992, p115). Goodson suggests studies focus on the 'the singer, not the song' (ibid, p112). I introduce the 'singers' contributing to this study in section 1.4.

A review of the literature base for the thesis is divided into two. The first relates to the English school context of the leaders studied (chapter 2). The second is a review of literature used to conceptualise the study and leads to an identification of the study's research questions (chapter 3). Chapter 4 justifies and explains the case study research approach adopted in terms of its methodological basis, the research design and details of the research process and methods used. Chapter 5 presents the products of this approach - a set of five case studies of individual leaders presented biographically. These are discussed comparatively in chapter 6 and the study reflected upon in the final chapter, 7.

1.2 Reflecting on my experiences as an 'emergent leader'

The following autobiographical account offers a narrative which goes beyond description to examine how my experiences might be firstly, explained and secondly,

insightful to a wider understanding of early school leader development. A biographical approach became methodologically central to this thesis. It is necessarily personal and begins before I became a teacher (or leader).

I remember always being interested in environmental issues, fuelled by my parents' knowledge of the natural world. I developed these interests by completing a Botany and geography degree, a Master of science in Environmental science and acting as a scientific leader on youth expeditions. At university I aspired for a career in ameliorating environmental pollution, not as a school teacher. My first career was as a soil scientist, but, when I was expected to change role to one I considered not directly 'environmental', I reflected on what I liked most about my work. I enjoyed training other staff, sharing my enthusiasm for and promoting the environmental aspects of my work. I decided that these job satisfactions were better met by retraining as a teacher. I decided between training as a geography or a science teacher, both of which offered scope for environmental work in school, and chose the latter.

In my second year of teaching I was invited to take on Key Stage 3 (11-14 year olds) coordination in science as a maternity leave cover and also volunteered, as part of a cross-curricular team, to develop the school's Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. Having enjoyed these chances to manage, the first role being largely administrative, and lead change, in the second, I gained the confidence to apply to a second school as Head of Subject (Biology). Here, in addition to my core responsibilities, I organised Duke of Edinburgh programme expeditions, set up an active Ecology and Conservation club, taught geography and embarked on a Master of Education (MEd) course which I focused on understanding Environmental Education. For me this range of interests was inter-related: I sought to teach science

with a cross-curricular perspective linked to out-of-classroom activity such as exploration and conservation.

However I became aware that the way I worked professionally was not supported by my Head of Department, who repeatedly explained that I should restrict my activities to improving Biology examination grades. My MEd was also something I undertook without the full support of the school. I was not supported financially nor was the school interested in my studies. Instead the headteacher urged me to join the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme being set up for aspiring senior school leaders. She explained this would better prepare me to become a headteacher. This did not match my interests in understanding how to make a difference in schools in terms of environmental awareness. I explained that I did not hold aspirations to become a school headteacher.

My personal circumstances then changed and I took maternity leave. I completed my MEd but did not return to this school as they were unwilling to allow me to return part-time with any responsibilities. My MEd thesis generated a 'blue-print' for developing a school environmental coordination role: I never had chance to negotiate this with a school. Instead I became involved in educational research, initially related to environmental education, alongside teaching, first, at a Further Education College and, more recently, in Higher Education. As a result of my teaching and research into teacher and leader development I am aware I still hold an aspiration to return to work in schools. Whether I do or not, I was inspired to gain an appreciation and understanding of how other early school leaders reported their experiences of development as a school leader.

My autobiography has no doubt been affected by my gender and decisions to work alongside starting a family. Significant to this account is the way my career decisions

and actions can be connected to my aspirations; aspirations rooted in my childhood and prior experiences. Although anecdotal this account shows any notion of 'emergence' as a leader to be a complex inter-relationship between an individual and their work context(s). In terms of raising issues of wider interest to early leadership development it highlights:

- a mixed experience as to whether teachers are invited to apply for leadership roles or there is opportunity to volunteer for (or even create) roles

- reflection taking place by leaders as to whether aspirations are being met

- the origins of aspirations and beliefs about teaching and leading may predate current practice and may be strongly held

- personal aspirations may not be being discussed in school in ways that explore how they might be achieved

- feelings of frustration when aspirations appear to be constrained

- options being considered as to whether to stay in the current workplace or move to another setting for promotion or other forms of job satisfaction

It is only since leaving teaching that I have identified this conflict, between who I wanted to become against who I was apparently expected to become, as the major reason I left teaching. I wonder whether, in retrospect, anything could have been done by me or my school for my retention in school. My account raises three challenges for those in schools concerning the:

1. articulation of expectations to leaders (and by leaders),

2. articulation of possibilities for leaders,

3. negotiation of expectations and aspirations between leaders and school.

My view of the possibilities for school leadership (and teaching) was only based on five years of work in two schools and was therefore limited. Perhaps, in time, I might have become more aware of the school's needs and more flexible in my approach?

What I wanted to know from studying the experiences of other 'emergent leaders', now in contemporary school settings, was how they reported their experiences of developing as a school leader. Which issues and insights would their accounts raise for other teachers/school leaders and those who support them?

1.3 Organising concepts for this study

By deciding to focus on those leaders a school would identify as 'emergent' I began to reflect on what 'emergence' might mean. I found 'emergent leader' to be a term particular to the NCSL, applying to their first level of leadership (NCSL, 2001). A trawl of the NCLSCS's website in 2010 however found fewer than 10 documents referring either to 'emergent' or 'emergence'. A definition of 'emergent leadership' was found to be:

> [...] when a teacher is beginning to take on management and leadership responsibilities and perhaps begins to form an aspiration to become a headteacher (Collarbone and Southworth, 2009, p22).

It seems that the origins of this notion were in encouraging leaders to 'emerge' through to eventual Headship in response to the perceived crisis in Headship recruitment. The NCLSCS's report entitled 'Identify and grow your own leaders' (Barnes, 2009), offering practical guidance and case studies to develop 'emergent leaders', is found on the website under the subject heading 'recruiting headteachers and senior leaders'. Their report 'Learning to Lead: NCSL's strategy for leadership learning' (Collarbone and Southworth, 2009) offers the alternative outcomes of

emergence as 'headship' or 'established leader' (assistant and deputy headteachers who have chosen not to pursue headship).

The only consideration by the NCLSCS of 'emergence' conceptually was in reference to the work of Holland (1998) and Johnson (2001) in a 'Leading Practice' resource published for leadership training events run by the College (West-Burnham and Ireson, 2005). Holland and Johnson talk of emergence as the process of 'much coming from little' (Holland, 2001, p1) and refer to the applications of this in: the physical world, as with seeds; the social world, in games such as chess; and the constant innovation of the business and scientific fields. These ideas were not developed at the NCLSCS in terms of leadership development other than to frame aspirations to 'emerge' *into* headteachers or established leaders. As the NCLSCS did not seem to be advocating any particular understanding of 'emergence' I wondered what the experiences of those identified as 'emergent' would say about 'emergence'.

To begin to do this I considered how well the biological metaphor for emergence could apply to leadership development. Emergence in this sense conjures up something dynamic: a caterpillar emerges into a butterfly (or moth); a seed into a plant. Such images imply change, direction and determination and lead to questions such as: How do teachers change as they 'become' leaders? Are they developing *from* something particular *into* something particular? Can what they emerge *into* be determined i.e. predicted? In terms of the last question at least, the metaphor quickly becomes problematic. In dealing with individuals in schools, unlike a particular type of caterpillar always changing into a particular type of butterfly (or seed into plant), it seems unlikely that the emergence of teachers into leaders (or leaders into leaders) can be determined in this way. Through my own anecdotal autobiographical account I have indicated the complex inter-relationship between individual and workplace in

13

my development as, and resignation from, 'becoming' a leader. What does this sort of account say about 'emergence' and 'becoming' as a leader? To explore the applicability of the notion of 'emergence' I wanted to find out how 'emergent leaders' made sense of their experiences as a leader.

This interest in 'emergence' developed during the first year of the study. In chapter 4 I outline how I had started by looking at the learning of those I saw as 'experienced teachers' before refining this to focus on those identified by others as 'emergent leaders'. I have indicated how there was little empirical work about the experiences and perceptions of such leaders so, to explore 'emergence' conceptually, I looked to literature both about leadership development and learning (developed in chapter 3).

I found it productive to consider learning as identity development, a view drawn from a socio-cultural perspective on learning, because of its attention to the inter-relationship between individuals and their social world. Lave and Wenger (1991) propose a model of learning based on apprenticeship. This is based on social participation in which novices are considered to join a community of practice with practitioners engaged in practice similar to themselves. Individuals are conceptualised as identifying with these communities and developing a sense of belonging to them (Wenger, 1998; 2010). This sense of belonging is explained by the development of identities and Wenger offers the conceptualisation that learning is the 'vehicle' for such identity development:

> [Learning] is the vehicle for the evolution of practices and the inclusion of newcomers, while also (and through the same process) the vehicle for development and transformation of identities (Wenger, 1998, p13).

Identity development through social participation offers a way of thinking about 'emergence' in school settings. This socio-cultural perspective pays attention to the

history of participation considering how prior, as well as current, social experiences inform the development of identities. Hence individuals form views of who they want to become as a result of these experiences. These views affect their practices and their beliefs about practices in ways which relate to those they feel a sense of belonging with. From this perspective identities are not static, continuing to develop through further social participation.

I was aware of alternative conceptualisations but I did not see these as potentially fruitful as Wenger's. These can be found both by those studying learning as participation, for example the work of cultural, historical activity theorists such as Engeström and Kerosuo (2007) and Edwards (2005; 2009), as well as other approaches to theorising identities, for example sociologists such as Holland and colleagues (1998) and Markus and Wurf (1987). I concluded that the conceptual frameworks offered by such work did not connect identity, social learning and context as required for the purposes of developing this thesis. I accept that some of the reviews, particularly of social psychological theorisations (e.g. Hogg and Ridgeway, 2003; Stryker and Burke, 2000), do offer alternative lines of inquiry to that offered by Wenger, but were not adopted here. I return to reflect briefly on possibilities for exploring alternative perspectives from the data collected in chapter 7.

Wenger's conceptual framework in particular offered the potential to explore the notion of 'emergence' by so-called 'emergent leaders'. A first hypothesis could be proposed that 'emergence', using this conceptualisation, would predict that leaders would become more centrally located in a community of practice of *leaders*. The framework needed to accommodate a complication, in the UK context at least, that such leaders also remain classroom teachers. A second hypothesis could therefore be proposed that identities relating to belonging to communities of practice of *teachers*

could also be envisaged for the same individuals. I could find no evidence of inquiry of school leaders framed in this way in the literature and yet exploration of such hypotheses of 'emergence' appeared likely to offer insight into how 'emergence' of 'emergent leaders' could be thought about. For this a study was needed which allowed those identified as emergent leaders to reveal how they were making sense of their roles as leaders in particular school settings.

A fuller development of my understanding of the organizing concepts is found in chapter 3 and the decisions I made to apply them methodologically in chapter 4. I was aware that, to be of use to potential audiences, my findings (presented in chapter 5, as individual case studies, and chapter 6, looking across the cases) needed to be richly contextualized such that a reader could apply them to their own contexts. I begin this contextualisation by introducing the five participant leaders. Similarly to my own autobiographical account, these pen portraits begin to illuminate the diversity and complexity that is associated with 'emergence' as an English school leader.

1.4 Introducing the leaders in this study

Before introducing the leaders I summarise in Table 1.1 key features of state English schools to help the reader locate the settings in which the leaders in this study worked. This includes the naming of the different settings for different age range intakes and the relationship of these settings to English National Curriculum stages.

There are other school models as apply to the independent (or private) sector or for faith schools but, during data collection in this study, all participants were in state-run schools operating with the support of their Local Authority (LA).

Table 1.1 An overview of English school settings of the five participant leaders

Names of School Settings					
Infant (3/4 to 7 years)		Junior (7 to 11 years)			
		Middle (various: 8/9/10 to 12/13/14 years)			
Primary (3/4 to 11 years)			Community College (11 to 16 years)		
			High (11 to 18 years)		
					Sixth Form or Further Education College (16-18 years)
National Curriculum stages					
Foundation	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key Stage 5
3 to 5 years	5 to 7 years	7 to 11 years	11 to 14 years	14 to 16 years	16-18 years

These school structures are not static and, as a result of Local Authority rationalisation of schools in two Local Authorities during the study, middle schools and separate infant and junior schools were merged to form new primary schools. This is set within a national trend towards closing middle schools and reverting to a two tier system[1]. Other changes occurring in England during the study were that some community colleges were expanding their intake to include sixth forms, while some schools were working more closely with other settings across phases by becoming trusts, federations and academies. None of these latter changes were represented in this study. The following leaders participated in the study having been nominated for the NCLSCS's 'Leading from the Middle' (LftM) programme aimed at 'emergent leaders'.

---

[1] Further information on these schools can be found from: http://sites.google.com/site/middleschools/history/middle-schools-in-england

Amanda: came directly to teacher training from a Music degree. Prior to this she spent a year working in an independent school. On joining the study she was in her third year of teaching in her first post in a rural town junior school. During her first year Amanda became music and geography coordinator. At the end of her second year she took on modern language coordination, shared assessment coordination with a colleague and shadowed the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). As the school restructured in her third year a senior leadership team post, with Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) status, was created for Amanda and she completed the LftM programme. To support this restructuring the new senior leadership team was invited to take part in a primary Leadership Programme run by the LA. During this time, however, the school prepared to merge with its feeder school to become a primary school. Both the deputy and headteacher took long spells of sick leave, leaving Amanda as acting deputy or headteacher. Instead of forming part of the new school's leadership team she decided to take up an assistant headteacher position in another rural primary school. Amanda participated in the study for nine school terms (i.e. three academic years) including experience of both schools.

Margaret: After six years of experience in retail management and auditing, then a period of parenthood (which included nine years of part-time work as a teaching assistant (TA)), Margaret trained as a teacher, having taken first a social science and then an education degree. On joining the study, she had taught in two rural middle schools for five years. For three years before joining the study Margaret had been responsible for the coordination of the humanities subjects (geography, history and religious education (RE)) and had just completed the LftM programme. Margaret's class teaching responsibilities moved from year group to year group, as determined by the headteacher, involving her in different teaching teams each year. During the study

the school merged with its feeder school to become a primary. Margaret retained her job, including her subject coordination role with a broader remit for the age range 4-11, with additional roles for 'gifted and talented' children and educational visits. Margaret participated in the study for nine terms.

Phillip: completed LftM the year before joining the study, when he was still Head of history, a post he had held for six years at his current large rural secondary school. The school had recently restructured and Phillip had been appointed to the novel post of Key Stage 4 learning director. This school was Phillip's second, having taught history for two years in a large urban secondary directly after training. This, in turn, directly followed his completion of a history degree. During the study the school's leadership structure was reviewed and, although previously planned, no equivalent learning director for Key Stage 3 was appointed. Instead Phillip's remit and responsibilities were renegotiated to work across all year groups. His core work was to manage a team of Year Managers responsible for pastoral care and discipline, whilst introducing intervention programmes aimed at improving pupil attainment. He also retained a mentoring role for trainee teachers. Phillip participated in the study for six terms.

Aimee: joined the study when in her second teaching post. She trained as a teacher after a year of temporary jobs including at a fast food outlet, for a newspaper and on a cruise liner. On joining the study Aimee was in her third year at a large urban secondary school. Aimee was employed as one of two drama teachers in the school, joining this school as head of drama. She was promoted to head of the faculty of expressive arts during the study. The other drama teacher was intermittently absent over a two-year period. Coping with this teacher's absence was significant to Aimee's experiences as a leader. Aimee joined the profession as a Fast-Track teacher which

was associated with four years of support by the NCLSCS. She also completed two further NCLSCS programmes: LftM in her second and Leadership Pathways[2] in her third year at her current school. Aimee was also well supported in school by her line manager, a deputy headteacher. Aimee participated in the study for six terms.

Jacky: came into teaching having worked as a team leader in a bank for four years. She taught at the same rural junior school as Amanda's first school, having been appointed as a newly qualified teacher (NQT) at the same time. She came into post as physical education (PE) coordinator. In her second year she was invited to take on numeracy coordination and began to share responsibility for assessment with Amanda. Numeracy was a key focus for the school as a result of an Ofsted[3] inspection highlighting poor pupil performance in numeracy. Similarly to Amanda, during the school restructuring in her third year, a senior leadership team post with TLR status was created for Jacky. She too was therefore part of the primary Leadership Programme but became pregnant and, unlike Amanda, did not start the LftM programme. After maternity leave Jacky rejoined part-time to find the school about to merge. For one term she had no class responsibility but supported others, maintaining her responsibilities for numeracy. She then joined the staff of the newly merged school under a new headteacher, sharing both class and leadership responsibilities and continuing to work part-time. After a year she became pregnant again and decided to leave the school (and teaching), profoundly dissatisfied with her new workplace experiences. As with Amanda, Jacky participated in the study for nine terms (bar two terms' maternity leave).

---

[2] This is another NCSL leadership development programme aimed at 'senior leaders or those aspiring to a senior leadership role within the next one to two years' which involves five day face-to-face sessions and self-directed study of online modules over a year. See http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/professional-development/leadershippathways.htm

[3] The body charged with inspecting all English schools on behalf of the government.

Chapter 2 Setting the scene for studying leadership development

This study takes place in an English context, with participant emergent leaders working in schools in the East and South of England. There are certain particularities about the English context at the time of the study, which I raise in this chapter as they seemed pertinent to understanding leadership development.

I have outlined how it is important in a study of the development of individuals to appreciate the cultural setting for their experiences. These are discussed according to personal, organisational and policy-related features (as outlined in Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 The organisation of cultural features relevant to English school leaders

Cultural features	Category of feature	Sub-section
Diversity in the backgrounds of those becoming teachers	Personal	2.1
Diversity in the ways leaders take up formal leadership positions	Personal and organisational	2.2
Diversity in the roles and responsibilities of school leaders	Organisational	2.3
Perceived 'crisis' in the throughput of headteachers	Personal and organisational	2.4
Accelerated career progression by teachers through school leadership positions	Organisational and policy	2.5

In this way I outline the national picture of how school leaders take on roles and develop careers. In doing so I raise issues which make the NCLSCS's linear model for leadership progression and notion of their 'emergence' seem problematic. The chapter concludes by showing how this appreciation of context affected the way the study was formulated and indicate how these features relate to the leaders summarised in section 1.4. I leave conceptualisation of 'emergent leaders' as leaders and

discussion of how learning can be used to conceptualise leadership development to chapter 3.

2.1 Diverse backgrounds for entry into teaching

The first feature affecting the 'emergence' of leaders is a personal one. School leaders come to their first positions of responsibility with different biographical experiences. This requires considering their experiences as teachers and even before they came into the teaching profession. Personal experiences will already have influenced how individuals think about themselves as teachers and as leaders before taking on these roles. These experiences might help explain how they came to take up school leadership roles (discussed in section 2.2).

Becoming an English teacher, according to the 'Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives, and their Effects on Pupils' (VITAE) TLRP and ESRC funded project which surveyed teachers in 100 UK schools between 2001-2005, can be explained both by choice and by chance (Day *and* Qing, 2007; Day *et al*, 2007). In Day *et al*'s study many teachers cited their decision to teach as being influenced by family members or by significant teachers from their own education; findings supported by earlier studies (Lortie, 1975; Woods, 1978; Hutchinson and Johnson, 1993). Some join the profession mid-career and career changers have been noted as a recent feature of teachers' career entry, both in the UK and the USA (Cannata, 2009; Day and Qing, 2007; Hammerness, 2009; Johnson and Birkeland, 2003; Wilson and Deaney, 2010). Reasons for individuals retraining and changing career often relate to changes in either personal or organisational circumstance.

Further detail of UK-wide patterns of entry into the profession is offered by a large-scale survey commissioned in 1999 by the Department for Education and Skills,

which looked at the career entry of 1999 graduates (Purcell and Wilton, 2005). This distinguished between young 'straight through' graduates, young 'mature' graduates and older 'mature' graduates over the age of 30 and compared those who graduated with qualifications to teach, with other graduates. Although there were significant proportions of males and females qualifying to teach as young graduates, the proportion of older 'mature' graduates was higher for the education profession compared to those not going on to teach.

The proportions of these older mature graduates entering teaching were higher for men than women and both male and female teachers chose to study a degree and gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) more often than taking a PostGraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route into teaching. The reasons for significant numbers of males turning to teaching after at least a decade of other experience were not offered by Purcell and Wilton's study. Reasons might relate to economic issues affecting other forms of employment, a growing dissatisfaction in their work or career breaks associated with family circumstances. These issues are also pertinent for women, in particular the latter.

Teachers can therefore start work as a teacher having had different prior experiences to one another, some with significant other periods of employment to draw upon. These biographical experiences will have already begun to shape how individuals think of themselves.

2.2 Taking up leadership positions: Selection or self-nomination?

How a leader comes to take on formal leadership roles is important to consider when trying to understand the way individuals go on to make sense of their development. In

the English context this second feature appears to relate both to personal and organisational factors. As outlined earlier (sections 1.2 and 1.4) individuals are sometimes selected for leadership positions in their schools but may also self-nominate themselves for further responsibility. 'Emergence' is therefore likely to have both spontaneous and planned dimensions.

Staff interviewed in focus groups as part of a national survey prepared for the NCLSCS to evaluate the 'Identification, Development, Succession and Retention of Leadership Talent' reported perceptions of leadership recruitment as staff self-disclosing their desire to lead, 'positioning themselves with respect to the head or other senior staff' (Rhodes *et al*, 2006, p6), combined with the 'gut feelings' of senior staff in identifying likely candidates. They observed that, in smaller schools, it was easier for senior leaders to get to know staff, and presumably therefore staff demonstrate their interest in leadership. This implies a mixed responsibility for leadership succession between individuals and their schools.

School leader recruitment is decentralized to schools in England and the NCLSCS have taken a national role in supplying guidance. This included a report to the Secretary of State for Education with guidance for schools on succession planning (NCSL, 2006) as well as commissioning advice from organisations such as the Hay Group who draw together experience from corporate and educational settings (Hay Group, 2007). Some LAs, in their role in supporting schools, have also developed guidance e.g. in one North of England Authority (Likeman, 2009).

The advice being given to schools as to how to think about leadership development, however, appears conflicting. On the one hand schools are being encouraged to set up systems of succession planning and leadership selection, think strategically and consider how to build capacity for leadership (Hay Group, 2007; NCLSCS 2006;

2010a; 2010b). The Hay Group[4] assert that education falls behind the private sector in the 'management of potential' (Hay Group, 2007):

> In our surveys, 61% of private companies had a formal process for identifying high potential staff, compared to 37% of schools (Hay Group, 2007, p4)

On the other hand research commissioned by the NCLSCS suggests that schools should be empowering and encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their career development.

To select potential leaders, the Hay Group (2007) advised that schools need clarity as to what leaders need to be able to do in particular leadership roles, as well as an understanding of how individuals might show 'readiness' prior to taking on these roles. The NCLSCS (2010a, p2), building on earlier reports by the Hay Group, propose that there are four important characteristics to look for:

1. Thinking beyond the boundaries

2. Curiosity and eagerness to learn

3. Social understanding and empathy

4. Emotional balance.

Other studies (e.g. Rhodes *et al*, 2006; Gronn, 1999) offer alternatives as to what constitute the necessary characteristics or 'character' (in Gronn's terms) of potential future leaders. Whether such clues are universally understood in schools, and the extent to which these 'desirable' characteristics are communicated to aspirant leaders, is not clear. In a study of the 'emergence' of school leaders it will be important to

---

[4] The Hay Group are a consultancy rather than an academic group and their advice is not necessarily backed by published research. It operates in 47 countries, and states that its focus is 'on making change happen and helping people and organisations realise their potential' (http://www.haygroup.com/uk/about/index.aspx?id=2371)

look out for accounts of whether and how planned and structured elements of a leader's experience affect their sense-making of their development.

The very notion of whether leadership 'character' or 'talent' exists and can be 'spotted' is contested (Bennis, 1997; Surowieki, 2004: MacBeath, 2006). MacBeath (2006) refers to 'the talent enigma' suggesting it should be debated as to whether 'talent' is something that an individual holds innately, can be developed or even whether any such potential talent is related to the individual alone. In summary he suggests that talent is in fact the result of an interaction between individuals and organisations. This raises questions as to whether talented leaders can operate as successfully in some workplaces as they can in others or, as MacBeath frames this issue, 'Do exceptional leaders grow successful schools?' or 'Do successful schools grow exceptional leaders?' (MacBeath, 2006, p184). These ideas confirm that it is not clear where responsibility for leadership development lies. This lack of clarity will have implications for individual leaders in schools in terms of both expectations of them and their agency in their 'emergence'.

There are those who advocate that schools do have responsibility for developing leaders but that this should be through generating a culture in which everyone is taking responsibility. Hartle and Thomas from the Hay Group (2003), in their report entitled 'Growing Tomorrow's School Leaders: The challenge', suggest that:

> [...] by creating the expectation that everyone has a leadership role, schools are giving a signal that the individual should exercise some responsibility for their professional/career development (Hartle and Thomas, 2003, p39).

Support for the assertion that teachers should involve themselves in their career development comes from teachers and leaders who formed part of the national survey mentioned earlier (Rhodes *et al*, 2006). It was concluded that teachers believed the

'locus of control for longer-term career planning lays with middle leaders and classroom teachers themselves' (Rhodes *et al*, 2006, p6). Gronn offers two modes of agency an aspirant leader might show. Firstly, they might 'rehearse or test their potential capacity to lead by direct comparison with existing leaders' (later referred to as 'grooming' (Gronn and Lacey, 2004, p410)). For this it is advocated that 'positioning space' is created:

> [...] a temporary haven during possible role transition for the self-rehearsal of likely future roles (Gronn and Lacey, 2004, p416)

Having 'rehearsed' in this way, secondly, aspirants should try to demonstrate the qualities they perceive are desirable 'to alert potential role sponsors, gate-keepers and talent spotters...and to satisfy their potential critics' (Gronn, 1999, p35-6).

These ideas are pertinent to a study of the 'emergence' of leaders, if such personal modes of agency can be found in individual's accounts of their development as leaders. Gronn and Lacey's (2004) ideas are drawn from one of the few empirical studies looking at leaders' experiences of leadership progression, having surveyed 21 Australian aspirant headteacherheadteachers. These teachers reported their key frustration as not having a clear picture of the expectations of them, for example:

> I've vertially [sic] been told that I haven't got a chance with this application as it will be hotly contested. Made lots of changes but not sure what is expected as everyone who has a look at it tells me to change something else. Feeling a little confused (e-journal entry, leader A25, Gronn and Lacey, 2004, p416).

This study suggests aspiring leaders should find opportunities to explore the expectations of future roles and their capabilities for such responsibilities. In English schools I needed to find out how 'emergent leaders' perceived expectations of them and how these were communicated to them. They might refer to national expectations,

such as from the NCLSCS, or more locally and specifically in relation to particular roles in school. Gronn and Lacey would predict that appreciating expectations allows aspirant leaders to decide whether and how to show their 'readiness' for taking up further positions.

Taking on leadership positions therefore seems to relate to personal and organisational factors, both of which need to be acknowledged in the accounts of leaders to understand the way they make sense of their development.

2.3 The diversity of roles and responsibilities for school leaders

The range of roles and responsibilities any 'emergent leader' might hold varies in English schools, relating to organisational features of the English context.

One particular feature likely to unite all 'emergent leaders' is that, after taking on leadership responsibilities, they will retain classroom teaching responsibilities. This is true even for many headteachers, particularly of smaller schools. This is not the case in all countries internationally. English school leaders are therefore likely to be thinking of themselves as both teachers and leaders and will have to make sense of both roles simultaneously. Teacher and leader development need therefore to be considered in parallel.

Conversely primary schools in particular, and smaller schools more generally, expect most classroom teachers to take some leadership responsibility – usually in the form of subject coordination roles.

> Once regarded almost exclusively as a generalist teacher of his or her own class, the British primary teacher is now usually expected to take responsibility for leading and supporting colleagues in at least one designated area of the

curriculum, not least since the introduction of the subject-based National Curriculum (Hargreaves, 1992, p227).

These roles may be taken on as early as a teacher's newly qualified year and, whilst some time may be allocated within a teaching timetable to undertake additional leadership responsibility, this is not usually the case for early roles such as subject coordination.

Leadership structures in English schools vary. School Governing Bodies employ a headteacher; the headteacher, supported by the Governing Body, then determines internal school structure and appoints. This results in schools having different structures to one another, made up of different roles. Consequently, the possibilities of leadership role for individual teachers to move into depend on their school setting. There are some commonalities, which can be highlighted.

As outlined above, subject coordination roles are commonly shared amongst teachers in primary (and middle) school settings. There may also be key stage teams led by a head of key stage. Secondary schools often have structures split into academic and pastoral teams. Academic organisation is usually by subject departments (led by a head of subject), often grouped into broader faculties (led by a head of faculty). Pastoral organisation is often as year group teams (led by a head of year). In all schools leadership structures are led by a team of senior leaders (often referred to as the SLT - senior leadership team – or SMT – senior management team). These teams range in size from a headteacher and deputy/assistant, in the smallest schools, to a headteacher, supported by a series of deputy and assistant headteachers in larger schools.

However a proliferation of specialist roles has been observed in English schools across sectors (Reid *et al*, 2004). This is partly explainable by schools responding to

the increased number of areas of accountability expected of them by the government; such as for children with special needs, those identified as 'gifted and talented' and for assessment data. It also relates to the introduction of a standards framework for teacher development by the Labour government in 2007 (TDA, 2007). After qualifying and completing induction, teachers on the main scale are termed 'core' teachers. To achieve higher levels of status, teachers must meet standards which incorporate some leadership responsibility (see Table 2.2 extracted from TDA, 2007). Teachers achieving 'post-threshold', 'excellent' or 'advanced skills' teacher status can therefore be considered to have taken on additional leadership roles in a school.

Table 2.2 Leadership responsibilities: Aspects of English teacher standards

Teacher standard	Statements referring to leadership responsibilities
Post Threshold	Contribute to the professional development of colleagues through coaching and mentoring, demonstrating effective practice, and providing advice and feedback
Excellent	Be willing to take a leading role in developing workplace policies and practice and in promoting collective responsibility for their implementation
Advanced Skills	Be part of or work closely with leadership teams, taking a leadership role in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and practice in their own and other workplaces that contribute to school improvement

This framework is a manifestation of the aspirations noted in section 2.2 that schools should encourage all teachers to take on some responsibility and contribute to one another's professional development by aspiring to become at least post-threshold teachers.

To respond to the changing demands on them, schools have been encouraged to remodel and be creative in the way they do this. Between 2006 and 2009, the UK government introduced TLR points for schools in England (TES, 2005). Headteachers

were encouraged, on a school-by-school basis, to allocate these points by creating new job descriptions to meet a particular school's leadership needs.

A further suggestion from the government was that schools consider introducing year managers, learning coaches or mentors drawing on people other than trained teachers (DfES, 2000; LSIS, 2010; DCSF, 2010). These ideas offered further ways to restructure the leadership of a school pastorally and academically. In some schools non-teachers as year managers replaced heads of year, overseen by new roles focusing on pupil learning.

The situation in English schools for emergent school leaders will therefore vary from school to school and be likely to change over time. The implications of this for accounts of the 'emergence' of individuals are that unique experiences of development are to be expected.

2.4 Retention and recruitment issues

As teachers and leaders spend time in their roles, they would be expected to be reviewing their aspirations. The fourth feature of the English school context is that there are staff retention and leadership recruitment issues. These can be explained by both personal (aspirational) and organisational (work context) factors.

There is perceived to be a 'crisis' of Headteacher/Principal recruitment in the UK (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2005) (as well as in the USA and Australasia) (MacBeath, 2006). This is particularly true for primary schools (NCSL, 2008). A peak in retirements of headteachers in England was predicted in 2009 (NCSL, 2006) falling to a still high estimate of 2500 retiring in 2016 (NCLSCS, 2010d). This crisis is not only explained by high levels of retirement, including early retirement, but also a lack of leaders applying for these top leadership posts (Earley et al, 2009). I have outlined

how this has resulted in an interest in succession planning in schools and the NCLSCS's leadership development framework which identifies 'emergent leaders'.

In terms of retention the NCLSCS report that early retirement is the key problem '60 per cent retire early - mostly by choice to take an actuarially reduced pension' (NCLSCS, 2010b, p2). They are keen to point out that retirements attributable to ill-health have been falling. Early retirement issues are coupled with a demographic bulge of older incumbents in these positions, soon ready to retire. Problems in retention are reported to be regionalized in England (NCLSCS, 2010a) and a nationwide 'crisis' has been refuted (Thomson *et al*, 2003). In this study Amanda and Jacky's first headteacher retired early during the study citing the stress of school restructuring.

Miller (1999) asserts that the demands on headteachers, and indeed all school leaders, should not be undervalued. He explains that, in reinventing their schools, school leaders are, at the same time, redefining themselves and that this 'self re-definition' is demanding work. There is no empirical research relating to this 'work' as it pertains to the development of 'emergent', rather than 'senior', leaders, but is an interesting idea to consider in terms of leader 'emergence'.

In terms of the recruitment dimension to this 'crisis' the NCLSCS refer to two factors, relating to potentially aspirant headteachers. The first factor is a personal one and relates to their negative perceptions of the job:

> In one study 43 per cent of deputies said they had no desire to move up to the next rung on the career ladder. The impression of an overwhelming workload and level of responsibility are clearly acting as a deterrent to deputies, assistant heads and others with the potential for headship. Teachers and middle leaders say stress and the loss of pupil contact are also major deterrents (NCLSCS, 2010a, p4).

It is not clear what is being done, if anything, to address this particular situation. It seems important to find out the perceptions of leadership from 'emergent' leaders as a way of considering how this affects aspirations.

The second factor is organizational and relates to the extended time it generally takes to become a headteacher in England:

> It takes a long time to become a headteacher, longer than it takes to achieve an equivalent level of seniority in most other professions. The standard 'apprenticeship' lasts 20 years, comprising 15 as a classroom teacher and 5 as a Deputy (NCLSCS, 2010a, p5).

In response to the latter issue, to be picked up in section 2.5, the NCLSCS have supported programmes that accelerate this progression for selected individuals to:

> [...] make it [the profession] more appealing to younger teachers who feel that the system as it stands stifles their ambition (NCLSCS, 2010a, p5).

The problem of retention is not restricted in the profession to headteachers. Teacher retention is also reported to be an issue earlier in teachers' careers. This is therefore relevant to consider when studying 'emergent' leaders often also in their early careers. Patterns of wastage in a report commissioned by the DfES of English teachers during 2003 were linked to age, location and subject specialism:

> Wastage rates were higher among younger and older teachers than those aged 30-49. There was regional variation with loss generally greater in London, the East and South East than other parts of the country. There was some suggestion of higher rates of loss among teachers of the core subjects of english, mathematics and science (Smithers and Robinson, 2004, piii).

Although not necessarily linked to age, the loss of teachers during their early career has been noted in a number of surveys:

- The General Teaching Council for England survey reported a third of teachers not expecting to remain in teaching in five years' time (GTCE, 2002, cited in Rhodes *et al*, 2004).

- The House of Commons Education and Skills Committee survey reported over a quarter of the NQTs they surveyed expecting not to remain in teaching for more than five years (HCESC, 2004).

- The 'Becoming a Teacher' survey noted that younger trainee teachers were less likely to still see themselves in teaching in five years than those over 40 (Hobson *et al*, 2004).

Explanations for this wastage included reported low levels of support and high workloads beyond their first year of teaching, particularly when teachers had taken on additional responsibilities (Tracey *et al*, 2008) and might be considered 'emergent'. This suggests that, whilst some teachers were keen and happy to take on leadership roles, others refer 'to the burden of the additional workload associated with their new roles' (Tracey *et al*, 2008, piii). These findings raise awareness of the likely variation in individual perceptions in relation to their roles as teachers on becoming 'emergent leaders'. It also suggests a link between such perceptions and their commitment to the profession. Day *et al*, (2006) recognise that motivations to teach (and lead) can change over time for a number of reasons and these might also explain changes in commitment:

> [Teachers'] motivation to remain in the job can be affected by a number of professional, situated and personal factors which impact upon and thus, mediate their capacity to sustain commitment (Day *et al*, 2006, p218).

It became important to think about these issues of retention to help explain the loss of Jacky from the profession during this study.

Such retention problems reduce the throughput of available teachers and 'emergent leaders' to take up more senior school leadership positions. Whilst advocating schools to talent spot and 'grow' leadership talent (as discussed in section 2.2) a further solution, discussed next, is to attract potential future leaders into teaching and accelerate their career progression through the support of particular programmes.

2.5 Accelerated teacher career progression

The fifth feature of the English school system is partly related to organisational factors and partly to policy responses to the situation discussed in section 2.4. It has resulted in the phenomenon of possibilities for accelerated career progression within the teaching profession.

A review of changing patterns of school leadership in England (Chapman *et al*, 2009) reported that 'you no longer have to serve your time to achieve leadership positions' (p11). The phenomenon of early career movement into the diverse range of leadership roles now present in English schools (section 2.3) was summarised in a paper entitled 'Where have all the teachers gone? Gone to be leaders every one' (Reid *et al*, 2004). As noted in section 2.3, teachers may even start their careers with some leadership responsibility. Of the nearly 2000 teachers surveyed in the English 'Becoming a Teacher' study, 9% of secondary and 5% of primary teachers became heads of department and 68% of primary teachers subject coordinators by the end of their second year of teaching (Tracey *et al*, 2008). In addition to the increased diversity of roles now available in schools another explanation for this trend might relate to the planned attempts to encourage the throughput of leaders to headship.

Dealing with the dual-sided nature of the problem (section 2.4) has become a national priority in countries identifying this crisis (MacBeath, 2006; NCLSCS, 1010a; b).

Accelerated career progression has been encouraged, all be it for selected individuals. This phenomenon will affect how long some leaders will have to make meaning for themselves of roles and of themselves in relation to these roles. The pace of progression through roles will also distinguish between individuals' biographical experiences.

In England a number of programmes have been introduced specifically aimed at accelerating routes into senior leadership. One of these was the *Fast-Track* programme. It was set up in 2002 by the non-profit making Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) Education Trust[5] and, from 2006 run by the NCSL, ending in September 2009. This programme was designed to encourage teachers to be explicit about their aspirations to become senior school leaders either on applying for teacher training or once in post. If successful in applying, *Fast-Track* teachers received government-funded support and a programme of activities through four years of teaching. To graduate the aim was to achieve either an assistant headteacher or more senior position. The breakdown of posts of 'graduates' in the final cohort is summarized in Table 2.3, from which it can be seen that 74% were successful using this criterion.

Table 2.3 Posts after graduation from the Fast-Track Training scheme (September 2009)

Type of senior leadership post	Number
Headteacher	8
Deputy headteacher	115
Assistant headteacher	245
Advanced skills teacher	95
LA advisory post	13
Other	21
Total	**497**

[5] Information about the trust is available from: http://www.cfbt.com/aboutus.aspx

Other programmes with similar aims include *Future Leaders*[6], led since 2006 by the NCLSCS and supported by the UK government (Earley *et al*, 2009), and *Teach First,* a rolling two year programme combining teacher training and leadership development, run since 2002 by the charity *Teach First*[7]. These programmes focus on meeting the needs of schools in disadvantaged areas, where Headship recruitment is most problematic. In 2010, the NCLSCS launched a programme to replace *Fast-Track* which would feed directly into the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) programme. This is called *Accelerate to Headship* (NCSL, 2009) and aims that it 'will ensure the next generation of great school leaders can accelerate to headship positions quicker than ever before' (NCLSCS, 2010a).

These programmes are selective and do not apply to all school leaders, although the notion of accelerated career progression as a general trend is accepted in England. Where accelerated leadership progression is to be found in accounts of individuals it will be important to reveal the relative contribution of personal aspiration, organisational opportunities and policy to the individual's experiences of development.

2.6 *The implication of context for this study*

To summarise the particularities of the English context, as examined in this chapter, I reflect on how this appreciation of context affected the way my study was formulated. I also refer to how the features discussed applied to the circumstances of the participant leaders introduced in section 1.4.

---

[6] For information see: http://www.future-leaders.org.uk/be-a-future-leader/the-programme

[7] For information see: http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/OurWork/leadershipdevelopment.aspx

Firstly, there are different entry routes into teaching as a career and hence a diversity of backgrounds expected of those in English schools identified as 'emergent leaders'. Some teachers train or retrain after previous experiences, and others enter teaching as straight-through graduates. 'Emergent leaders' will come with unique biographies, their prior experiences likely to be affecting their current aspirations. Jacky and Margaret for example, unlike Amanda, Aimee and Phillip, had significant workplace experience prior to training as a teacher. Both also needed to retrain to become a teacher. The decision to study more than one leader was taken to explore the leaders' identity development of individuals from a range of personal backgrounds.

Secondly, taking on school leadership is reported to result from a mixture of selection and self-nomination. Teachers may be invited to apply for particular leadership positions. Additionally, teachers may find ways to express their aspirations, perhaps to show 'readiness' for leadership, for example by volunteering for responsibility or applying formally for positions. However, there is lack of empirical research into the way leadership roles are taken on from a leaders' perspective. As well as being able to ask leaders about how they had come to take up their current leadership positions, a longitudinal study allowed opportunities to study any leadership progression during the study. Both Aimee and Amanda were promoted; Aimee internally and Amanda through application to a further school.

Thirdly, I acknowledge that all leaders, especially those classed as early or 'emergent', retain significant teaching workloads in addition to their leadership responsibilities. I was interested in how the leaders in this study would report their development in relation to these dual roles; whether separately or together. This affected how I formulated questions of them.

Fourthly, the leadership roles teachers might take on are increasingly varied across English schools. Leadership structures are locally determined by the senior leadership of each school and may change as schools remodel themselves to respond to changing visions and needs. By studying a number of leaders in this study different workplace experiences of leadership could be represented. Participant leaders came from primary, middle and secondary schools and covered a range of responsibilities; subject specific, in the case of Jacky, Margaret, Aimee and Amanda, and with cross-school responsibilities, for Jacky, Amanda and Phillip. Prior to the study TLR posts had been created for Jacky and Amanda by their headteacher as she formed a new senior leadership team and Phillip's school had recently remodelled their pastoral organisation creating Phillip's new role of learning director. Through being longitudinal, the effects of organisational change on leaders could be considered. During the study two of the participants' schools merged with local feeder schools, affecting Jacky's and Margaret's responsibilities in the re-modelled schools.

Fifthly, a study of the perceptions of 'emergent leaders' early in their career could offer insights into reported problems of teacher retention and headteacher recruitment. English schools are being offered a range of advice as to how to respond to these problems. What is not clear is how 'emergent leaders'' perceive their experiences of leadership and support for their development.

Finally, in response to the perceived crisis in throughput of headteachers, opportunities for accelerated leadership progression in English schools have been created. National programmes, to which aspirant leaders can apply, have been created. In this study Aimee was a Fast-Track teacher in the final cohort of the programme, having applied for it when she trained to teach.

The five participant 'emergent leaders' in this study represent unique configurations

of these contextual features that enabled me to explore 'emergent' leaders'

experiences of development in relation to their contemporary context. This thesis goes

on to show how I went about finding out from these five 'emergent leaders' how they

experienced their development as leaders.

Chapter 3 Emergent leaders and their identity development

In this study of the development of leaders, 'development' is conceptualised as 'learning' and, the particular view of learning adopted, one of social participation. From this perspective 'learning' is seen as concerning 'identity development'. This views individuals as developing identities based on their sense of belonging. Who individuals identify with is related to their social experiences mediated by personal factors, such as an individual's aspirations, values and beliefs. In this way identity development offers a way of thinking about how individuals make sense of their experiences in a dynamic way, coming to see themselves, not just in terms of their current 'being', but in terms of who they want to become in the future, that is their 'becoming'.

This offered a way to think about how leaders change as they become leaders - from their perspective – so enabling me to address the kinds of questions about school leader 'emergence' I began to ask in section 1.1. Conceptually the study draws on literatures from the fields of leadership and leadership development. I connect these with perspectives on learning to review how the conceptualisation of learning through social participation could be applied to understanding the development of 'emergent leaders'.

Section 3.1 examines the way leaders who might be considered 'emergent' are referred to in the leadership literature, reflecting on the implications alternative terminologies might have for those categorized as such. This offers insights into how 'emergent leaders' might perceive their experiences.

Section 3.2 reflects leadership and career development literature highlights issues relevant to understanding emergent leaders' experiences. This review highlights the limitations of these approaches and the dearth of published work framed in terms of leadership development as learning.

Hence **section 3.3** explores why learning as social participation is a useful perspective for understanding leadership development. The use of Wenger's conceptual framework of 'Learning, Meaning and Identity' (Wenger, 1998) to explore leaders' experiences and the notion of 'emergence' is discussed.

The chapter concludes (**section 3.4**) with a presentation of the research questions that provided the focus for this thesis.

3.1 'Emergent leaders': Who are they?

Although the category 'emergent leader' is peculiar to the NCLSCS, leaders who might be identified as 'emergent' are recognisable in the broader leadership literature. This section reviews what has been said about who 'emergent leaders' are.

My search of the NCLSCS website in 2010, which found less than 10 documents relating to 'emergent' leaders (or 'emergent' leadership), revealed 970 referring to 'middle' leaders. Even the programme targetted at 'emergent leaders', as the programme's name 'Leading from the *Middle*' implies, was generally referred to as being for 'middle' leaders[8]. The term 'middle leader' is common in the leadership literature. In management literature middle 'managers', rather than middle 'leaders', is found. Bennett *et al*'s (2003) review of the role and purpose of 'middle leaders'

---

[8] The LftM programme finished in 2011 to be replaced by a newly created 'Middle Leadership Development Programme'.

considered related work published between 1990 and 2003 and included reference to: subject leaders, middle managers, heads of department, curriculum coordinators.

What is not clear is whether these alternative terms can be considered equivalents. These categorisations of leader are underpinned by different conceptualisations of leadership. Alternative models are a dominant feature of the leadership literature, usually offered as theoretical constructs and less often explored empirically in schools. I thought it worth exploring these models to think about who 'emergent leaders' might be expected to see themselves as.

Section 3.1.1 explores the implications for leaders as to whether they are characterised as 'managers' or 'leaders' and by being in the 'middle'.

Section 3.1.2 examines the roles these middle leaders (or managers) inhabit, again in terms of how they might be experienced.

Section 3.1.3 considers the limited empirical literature about how leadership is experienced in schools.

I summarise, in section 3.1.4, how 'emergent leaders' might both be viewed and view themselves.

3.1.1 Middle 'managers' or middle 'leaders'?

While many studies focus on the role of middle leaders (e.g. Bennett *et al*, 2003; Carey, 2009; Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2006; Martin and Williams, 2003; NCLSCS, 2010c), a number of studies target middle managers (e.g. Adey, 2000; Glover *et al*, 1998; Wise and Bush, 1999; Wise, 2001). What then does it mean to be 'in the middle' and does it matter to those identified whether they are referred to as 'managers' or 'leaders'?

Bennett *et al's* (2003) review, found such leaders an identifiable but diverse cohort. I, however, question any unproblematic equivalence of roles when in other leadership literature the roles of leaders and managers are considered distinct (e.g. Burton and Brundrett, 2005; Bush, 2003; Storey, 2004) - see Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 The roles of leaders and managers (adapted from Storey, 2004, p7)

Managers	Leaders
Are transactional	Are transformative
Seek to operate and maintain current systems	Seek to challenge and change systems
Accept given objectives and meanings	Create new visions and new meanings
Control and monitor	Empower
Trade on exchange relationships	Seek to inspire and transcend
Have a short-term focus	Have a long-term focus
Focus on detail and procedure	Focus on the strategic big picture

The characterizations of managers and leaders in Table 3.1 offer two very different sets of expectations for those who take on these roles. 'Management' is predicated on 'managing' systems of control, with responsibilities for enacting procedures (transactions); 'leadership' implies a role in visioning and making change (transformation) through inspiration and influence that empowers others. This led me to wonder what these differences meant for the experience of so called 'emergent leaders' in school? Would they see themselves as managers or leaders? Which would they refer to in their accounts – both for themselves and for others in school?

Uniting the two conceptualisations when applied to leaders who are considered 'emergent' is their 'middleness'. 'Middleness' implies these leaders/managers form a tier between senior leaders and followers. According to some, this hierarchical way of thinking about school organization, assumes a managerial viewpoint and is prevalent in the UK (Gronn, 1993; Bennett *et al*, 2003). This would be the case if senior leaders

are seen as setting organisational goals with followers needing to be 'managed' to work towards these goals. A management perspective on their work will see accountability and monitoring as key foci for 'emergent leaders' (Bush, 2003). Indications that management underpins the work of English schools can be found in Bennett *et al's* (2003) literature review, which although international in scope found most literature relevant to middle leadership in UK and in particular English contexts, and concluded that:

> [...] since the late 1990s there has been a move in both primary and secondary schools towards middle leaders becoming accountable to line managers for the quality of the work in their responsibility area (Bennett *et al*, 2003, p6).

Middle leaders are also responsible for a number of others, at least in terms of controlling the 'quality' of what they do: This defines their 'middleness'. Heads of subject in secondary schools are usually responsible for staff within their department for example. This is less likely when considering subject coordination roles more usual in primary and middle schools. Here the coordinator is responsible for the work related to their subject area, but not usually line managing individuals (Burton and Brundrett, 2005).

What will be expected of middle leaders (or managers) will depend on how they are conceptualised by others; whether they are expected to act more like managers or leaders. Do those in school expect them to influence and empower others as well as change systems (see Table 3.1) or manage tasks and imperatives from above, as Bennett *et al's* 2004 quote above implies? It may be that, without clarification of their role, 'emergent leaders' might find themselves expected to enact both. It is important to consider these issues because the formal roles leaders take on are constructed by others. What others think about 'emergent leaders' is relevant to this study only in as

much as it affects how the leaders think of themselves. This is not a study of identities constructed by others.

Looking to the wider management and leadership literature a bewildering array of possible underpinning models of management and leadership are offered; one summary forms Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Leadership and management models (adapted from Bush, 2008, p10)

Management models	Leadership models
Formal	Managerial
Collegial	Participative
	Transformational
	Interpersonal
Political	Transactional
Subjective	Post-modern
Ambiguous	Contingency
Cultural	Moral
	Instructional

Even this list is not complete, with other models referred to in the literature. Some are considered top-down, such as 'heroic' or 'saviour' and some bottom-up models, such as 'distributed' or 'teacher-leadership'. There have been trends in the relative interest in these models in the English situation, as well as in the discourse of management and leadership.

Management was dominant in the English national discourse about schools until the mid-1990s when national accredited *leadership* programmes were introduced by the Teacher Training Agency (Bolam, 2004). These were the precursor of the government setting up the National College for School *Leadership* in 2002 and its national *leadership* development framework (outlined in chapter 1, NCSL, 2001). It is argued that a managerial form of leadership still predominates in England, resulting from a

history of top-down management of schools by the UK government (Packwood, 1989). 'Managerial leadership' (see Table 3.2), although with characteristics of both management and leadership, emphasises the former. It acknowledges the need for transformation and empowerment but schools are viewed as goal orientated with activities managed towards achieving these goals (Bush 2008; Caldwell, 1992; Leithwood *et al*, 1999; Myers and Murphy, 1995). Any models and whether schools exhibit management and/or leadership is only of interest as it is reported in the accounts of leaders. These different conceptualisations of school organisation, however, offer different interpretations of how 'emergent leaders' might view themselves and their 'emergence'.

The NCSL was originally framed by a 'transformational' perspective of leadership (Bush, 2003; Leithwood, 1994), in which the focus was on senior school leaders developing commitments and capacity within an organisation directed at transformative school goals (Bolam, 2004). Transformational leadership would see 'emergent leaders' being encouraged to contribute to the 'transformation' of the work of the school by broadening visions of classrooms, into subject departments or teams and to the whole school.

The NCLSCS sees its role as turning theory into practical guidance for those in schools and does not see itself as restricted to advocating any particular model of leadership (or management). It sees itself in its former title as the National College *for,* rather than *of,* school leadership. Critics of its work (Bolam, 2004; Gronn, 2003; Thrupp, 2005) charge that, even when the NCLSCS deals with particular models of leadership, it does not use them as descriptive or explanatory tools and does tend to advocate models prescriptively, building them into leadership development programmes. Its leadership development framework, for example, has led to the

definition of standards for leadership - now adopted by the government as mandatory for all headteachers – in the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH). Gronn has termed the work of the NCLSCS as 'designer leadership'; promoting forms of leadership that are 'designed' to fit in with meeting national agendas (Gronn, 2003).

Aware of a growing interest in countering top-down models of leadership during the early 2000s the NCSL began to advocate a model termed 'distributed leadership' (Barker *et al*, 2002; Spillane, 2005). This required changes in structures and cultures of schools in ways which encouraged leadership across the school. In trying to break away from hierarchies of school leadership this offers an alternative conceptualisation for 'emergent leaders'. The NCSL commissioned the Hay Group to conduct an exploratory report about the potential advantages and disadvantages of distributed leadership for schools (NCSL, 2004). Since then, further projects have been launched (e.g. Bowen and Bateson, 2009) culminating in a distributed leadership resource pack and web resource[9]. Enacting distributed leadership is now embodied in 'Ten strong claims about successful school leadership' published for the NCLSCS (Day *et al*, 2010). There are two manifestations of this form of leadership which might affect expectations of 'emergent leaders' differently. On the one hand individuals might be expected to play a planned part in a school's distributed leadership structure. On the other individuals might be expected to foster and develop leadership more spontaneously. These raise different implications for viewing the 'emergence' of leaders, particularly in the second case which implies that leadership need not be recognised by the holding of formal leadership roles.

---

[9] Available at: http://forms.ncsl.org.uk/mediastore/image2/distributedleadership_web/introduction.htm

A form of distributed leadership has been developed by authors internationally into a model termed 'teacher-leadership' (Crowther *et al*, 2002; Frost, 2008; Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). This view accommodates both leading and teaching roles as being involved in leadership; significantly (compared to the distributed leadership model) retaining the centrality of teaching roles (Fay, 1990). In terms of retention of teachers, discussed in section 2.4 as an issue in England, the loss of focus on teaching when taking on other responsibilities has been cited as a concern by beginning teachers (Hobson *et al*, 2005). If enacted, teacher leadership offers a way of overcoming this. There are school-university partnerships founded on this premise; for example the 'Leadership for Learning' (MacBeath *et al*, 2006; MacBeath and Dempster, 2008) and 'HertsCam' networks in the South of England (Frost and Durrant, 2003; Frost *et al*, 2008). These initiatives assert that encouraging leadership to be everyone's responsibility addresses the tensions of monitoring and evaluation as being of external scrutiny. The implications of these movements are that 'emergent leaders', in schools underpinned by distributed or teacher-leadership rather than top-down models, would be expected to report different experiences and views of their development.

3.1.2 Emergent leaders and their roles

The leadership literature tends to refer to leaders by the roles they take on. Such formal roles are those constructed for leaders by others and relate to organisational factors (chapter 2). I turn to those studies which referred to the roles 'emergent leaders' might hold, drawing on the categories used in Bennett's review of 'middle leaders' (Bennett *et al*, 2003):

- Heads of department e.g. Brown *et al*, (2000)

- Academic middle managers, e.g. Wise and Bush, (1999); Wise, (2001)

- Subject leaders e.g. Busher and Harris, (1999); Fletcher and Bell, (1999); Glover and Miller, (1999); Harris *et al*, (2001); Turner, (2006); Burton and Brundrett (2005).

Almost all were limited to studies in secondary schools and, although curriculum and pastoral leaders are also categories of role 'emergent leaders' might hold, no empirical studies of these roles were found.

A number of potential roles for primary school leaders have been considered by Burton and Brundrett (2005) in a framework which shows possible pathways for leadership development (Figure 3.1). 'Emergent leaders' might hold roles in the middle of this diagram.

Figure 3.1 Framework for the potential routes of development for primary teachers (taken from Burton and Brundrett, 2005, p3)
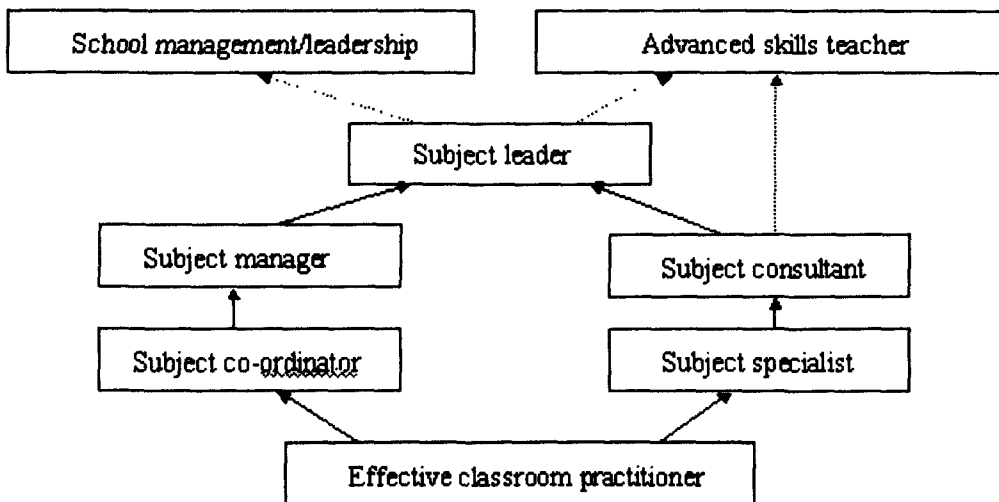
The framework is based on two strands; the development of organisational skills linked to ideas of management (on the left) and subject knowledge (on the right). In the role of 'subject leader' these strands 'combine and significantly enhance one another' (Burton and Brundrett, 2005, p11). Although there is no empirical evidence

50

offered for different aspects of this framework, it raises two issues when thinking how it might apply to leadership development.

Firstly, some of the roles in this model are likely to be implicit rather than explicit. Teachers developing subject expertise might not be recognized through being given a formal status. Instead others in school might describe someone as a 'subject specialist'. The emergence of such 'leaders' might be very personal and unrelated to school planning. Teacher leadership models of leadership would advocate paying attention to and encouraging these less explicit forms of school leadership. What would be interesting to know was, in the situation that a teacher without a formal role was considered by others either as a subject specialist or a 'subject consultant' (a specialist used for advice), would the 'leader' also see themselves as such? Would they recognise their expertise or their transition in status from a subject specialist to being increasingly consulted? Implicit or 'informal' leadership roles could be expected in any phase of education, in situations when others would nominate someone as showing leadership even when they do not hold a formal role.

Secondly, and in contrast, subject coordination roles (on the left of Figure 3.1) are common as formal roles in English primary and middle schools. In this way a school shares out responsibility for managing the curriculum amongst its teachers. It is not clear, however, whether these roles are conceived by schools at the level of 'subject coordinator' or as 'subject leader' as defined by Burton and Brundrett. It might be hypothesised, given a headteacher's role in organising school-specific structures, that the role of subject coordinator be open to different school interpretations.

Whilst there was a dearth of work conceptualising early school leadership roles, their breath has been outlined.

- Wise's survey and case studies of secondary middle 'managers' concluded that their roles covered: academic, administrative, educational and managerial objectives (Wise, 2001)

- Bell and colleagues' studies of primary subject coordinators and subject leaders, concluded that 'the co-ordinator is a subject specialist, a consultant, a leader and a manager plus a technician and a cleaner' (Bell, 1996, p12), with eight categories of task identified from interviews with 20 subject leaders relating to: resources, paperwork, influencing practice, monitoring, staff INSET, subject knowledge, supporting staff and 'other' (Fletcher and Bell, 1999).

Bennett *et al*'s review noted that the range of tasks expected was increasing and, despite Fletcher and Bell's study, with little reference to professional development activities (Bennett *et al*, 2003). One outcome of this trend relates to issues of both being 'in the middle' and of being manager *and* leader. Middle leaders have reported experiencing feeling the 'piggy in the middle' (Earley, 1990) when trying to satisfy perceived expectations of those both above and below. In particular they found difficult the management roles of monitoring and evaluating those they were responsible for (Bennett *et al*, 2003). One explanation for this was in terms of issues with whom the leaders identified. In Wise's survey of 94 secondary schools it was found that, in trying to create a culture of collegiality within their departments, heads of department identified strongly with those in their department. This placed them in conflict with the expectations from above of line management duties (Wise, 2001). As a result of this tension leaders reported trying to avoid such tasks, despite being aware of the expectations of accountability to the senior leadership (Glover *et al*, 1998;

Glover and Miller, 1999). Middle leaders were either not always willing or did not feel able to fully take on such expected responsibilities of 'control' or 'monitoring'.

These findings raise questions for me as to how leaders were making sense of their roles. What would these middle leaders say about what they thought they were trying to achieve? If they were uncomfortable in fully inhabiting their given remit, might they refer to wanting to enact roles of 'transformation', 'empowerment' and 'inspiration' (i.e. of leadership - Table 3.1) rather than focusing on 'systems', 'procedures' and 'monitoring' (i.e. of management)? How much agency do these leaders have to work as leaders, if most of the explicit expectations are managerial? Those writing from a managerial perspective might explain the difficulties described above by explaining that followers 'make an assortment of adjustive responses to their subordinate predicaments' (Storey, 1983, p160). If middle leaders are viewed as 'followers' themselves, this explains their reported unwillingness to comply with what they are asked to do.

This kind of evidence seems to imply emergent leaders have developed core values and beliefs about what they want to achieve. The situation outlined above sees leaders evaluating what they aspire to against the expectations of them by others and, in the cases above, experiencing conflict. This sense-making of roles by individuals leads to judgments and then decisions and appears to relate to how the leaders see themselves in relation to others. Who they most identify with is being mediated by how they want to see themselves. Both seem important to understand when exploring their 'emergence'.

In summary, the roles 'emergent leaders' formally hold in English schools are diverse. Expectations of them in these roles, in terms of tasks, seem broad and likely to differ from school to school and from time to time. Being perceived to enact leadership

informally in schools might also see individuals identified as 'emergent'. This raised

for me questions as to how 'emergent leaders' viewed their participation in leadership

practices, how they viewed their participation in relation to formal leadership roles

and how they viewed their leadership in relation to others?

3.1.3 English contexts for school leadership

It appears that the debate between management and leadership of schools has not been

exorcised in England, such that leaders in English schools are likely to experience

advice which has its basis in both views. Within the summative document 'Ten strong

claims about successful school leadership' commissioned by the NCLSCS (Day *et al*,

2010), extracts from school leaders refer to both 'middle managers'/'management' in

the same sentence as referring to 'middle leaders'/'leadership'. These differences

remain unchallenged, suggesting that this lack of clarity also appears to apply to the

NCLSCS. It is also not clear which, if any, models of leadership are being articulated

in schools.

This lack of explicitness about what underpins leadership practice has been reflected

upon by Lumby and English (2009). They complain that becoming a school leader

requires learning a 'ritualized performance' in which 'leaders and followers are linked

by a special kind of social-cultural drama' (Lumby and English, 2009, p103). This

implies that any 'scripts' for how leadership might be enacted in a particular school

are not articulated and are only observable in practice (as a 'performance'). If this is

the reality in English schools then leaders will be socialized into their part in this

ritualized performance only by participation in practice in which they can 'pick up'

the expectations of them.

Gronn, in his international review of empirical studies in schools (Gronn, 2009a), noted schools in which both 'heroic' leadership, highlighting the role of senior leaders, and 'shared' models of leadership were observable. He termed these schools as exhibiting 'hybrid' leadership (Gronn, 2009a). If mixed models are observable in practice in the same school, and especially where these appear to be conflicting models, leaders will find it difficult to interpret expectations. Gronn explains that most empirical studies limit themselves to observing behaviour, just as it appears leaders in schools are doing, and studies are needed which examine the meanings attributed to leadership behaviours. This sort of inquiry has the potential to explore how the rhetoric of leadership within organisations match, or do not match, observable practice (Gronn, 2009a; 2009b). I believe exploring the perceptions of individual leaders in schools is one way to explore how such rhetoric and any such ambiguity is experienced.

Ambiguities in expectations of leaders and the rationale for these expectations is likely in a climate in which multiple models of leadership and management are being advocated. It appears that in the culture of accountability in English schools, there have become tendencies for prescription and a predominantly managerial flavour to leadership. However, schools are also being encouraged to develop more bottom-up or shared views of leadership. This offers emergent leaders in English schools a complicated work environment for their practice and development; one it seems they must 'read', make sense of and decide how best to proceed. If there is a lack of discourse in schools and hence explicitness surrounding their roles, this sense-making seems likely to be left to them as individuals.

3.1.4 Emergent leaders in English schools - in summary

A review of the leadership literature has exposed different conceptualisations of who 'emergent leaders' are. They may be seen as 'managers' or 'leaders' and as working within different models of leadership. They are likely to hold any of a large number of formal roles and may also be exhibiting leadership in more informal ways. From this perspective who 'emergent leaders' are might be said to depend on the views held of leadership in a school and how these leaders are embedded in the structures of the organisation. Differences between schools will lead to different expectations of 'emergent leaders'.

The limited empirical work in English schools implies that expectations of leadership roles, and the views on which leadership is based, are usually not made explicit. Even where rhetoric is tangible, it may conflict with observable leadership practice. This suggests emergent leaders will be experiencing confused messages about how to practice. This has been evidenced by reported tensions attributed to working 'in the middle'. Being unclear whether they should see themselves as a manager or a leader, coupled with working in schools dominated by agendas of accountability, 'emergent leaders' have reported that it is difficult to make sense of themselves as both.

This situation leaves individual leaders in any one school needing to make judgments and decisions about how to practice. This will involve them in 'reading' the practice they observe, making meaning from these observations and deciding how they aspire to practice in relation to the practice of others. This implies that the way 'emergent leaders' view themselves will be personally derived, relate to their context, and sees them developing views about leadership as part of deciding who they want to become.

3.2 Conceptualising leadership development

I now turn to the leadership literature as it deals with leadership development for help in conceptualising the development and 'emergence' of 'emergent leaders'. Surprisingly, development is not explicitly framed in terms of learning in this literature and rarely reveals the authors' perspectives on learning. How learning might be applied to thinking about leadership development is taken up in section 3.3.

Section 3.2.1 reflects on the plethora of models of leadership introduced in section 3.1 to see how they might shed light on emergent leaders' experiences in terms of their development. I show how, although such models offer clues as to expectations of leaders, this literature offers little clarity about how they might learn or develop.

Section 3.2.2 reviews how a branch of this literature, which considers professional development through notions of career, might apply to 'emergent leaders'.

Section 3.2.3 draws together ideas from the leadership development literature about the role of individuals in their development.

Section 3.2.4 concludes this section by reflecting on what has been learnt so far about conceptualising leadership development in relation to ideas of 'emergence'.

3.2.1 Expectations of leadership development

A number of possible models for leadership and management were presented in Table 3.2 with the suggestion that leadership in schools might be explained by any one (or even a number of) these models (Gronn, 2009a; 2009b). These models allow inference as to what leaders might be expected to develop in their practice in each case, should any of these models underpin leadership practice in a school. Table 3.3 summarises such implications for the nine models outlined earlier, acknowledging that there are further models articulated in the literature.

Table 3.3 Implications for leadership development of the nine leadership models presented by Bush (2008)

Leadership model	Leaders would be expected to develop ….
Managerial	Goal and task focussed managerial skills
Participative	Collective bargaining and negotiation skills
Transformational	Commitment to a vision; abilities to influence, engage and empower others
Interpersonal	Relationship building with stakeholders
Transactional	Exchange strategies
Post-modern	Respect for diversity; creativity
Contingency	Situational analytical/problem solving skills
Moral	Goals which incorporate shared values
Instructional	Pedagogical understanding and the development of this with staff

Table 3.3 shows how these models suggest different possibilities for the competencies leaders would be expected to develop; such as meeting goals and managing tasks (managerial), effectively developing pedagogy with staff (instructional) or influencing others towards a clear vision (transformational). Section 3.1 suggested that managerial leadership is the predominant context for emergent leaders to be working within in English schools. However it has also been concluded that schools are not usually explicit about which model or models they are promoting (Lumby and English, 2009). Instead leaders find themselves as part of unique school contexts, developed over time, in which ways of working are tacitly understood and practiced.

The above models have been developed for use at an organisational level and I could not find evidence that they had been applied to inquiries concerning individual leader development. I argued in section 3.1 that particular models of leadership will only be pertinent if emergent leaders refer to models in accounts of their experiences. This might be the case if they have talked about the basis for leadership with other leaders, through individual reading or through participation in courses. It has been indicated

how leadership development courses, such as those run by the NCLSCS, would be expected to cover some of these models as part of their programmes. Little evidence of how leaders respond to the models advocated is evident in published work.

While some work suggests expectations of *what* emergent leaders might need to be learn to do, as discussed in relation to the range of tasks expected of them (section 3.1.2), this literature also says little about *how* any of the competencies implicit in these models of leadership might be learnt. This is despite authors such as Antonacopoulou and Bento (2004) concluding that 'the crucial question in leadership development is not just *what* to learn but *how* to learn how to learn' (ibid, 2004, p82). This raises questions as to how emergent leaders go about learning as a leader as well as what type of leader they are learning to be and is an area that this study hopes to contribute.

3.2.2 Leadership development as career?

Section 3.1 outlined how emergent leaders are likely to be making meaning of their experiences in ways in which develop who they want to be as a leader, in personal ways affected by, but not dictated or determined by the school they work in. This makes problematic understanding who emergent leaders are and want to become according to organisational factors such as the role they hold. Any individual leader will 'inhabit' a particular role differently and will be continuing to develop once in post in ways particular to them. If we also consider (as in chapter 2) how workplace structures and situations are likely to be in flux, leadership development is complex.

The notion of a career offers one way to think about the dynamic nature of the development of individuals and there is a literature which considers the careers of teachers. This was reviewed for its pertinence to thinking about how 'emergence'

might be experienced by 'emergent leaders'. If the notion of career appears to assume progress, perhaps this might be equated with 'emergence'?

In her review of the field of career theories, Woodd concludes that how progress is considered by authors varies (Woodd, 1999), depending on three main strands of work:

- relating to the development of personality,

- as career 'stages' or 'phases'

- through psychological views of careers as set within developmental life phases.

The first and third strands of work did not seem likely to relate readily to exploring professional learning in workplaces. I therefore refer to literature relating to *career stage theories*, which have been applied to the professional learning of teachers and leaders.

Some key authors considering the careers of teachers include Ball and Goodson (1985), Sikes and colleagues (1985), Huberman (1989; 2001), Goodson (1992) and Fessler (2001). Their work offered ways to think about teachers career progression as professionals and how this might be categorised in 'stages' or 'phases'. Recent empirical work in the UK has developed such theorisations through large-scale studies (e.g. the VITAE - Day *et al*, 2007; Day *et al*, 2008 - and Learning Lives[10] - Biesta *et al*, 2008 projects). These studies developed career stage models based on the

---

[10] This TLRP/ESRC-funded project was a longitudinal project running from 2004 to 2008, which studied life history interviews from 120 adults to explore their experiences of formal and informal learning. For further information see: http://www.learninglives.org

data generated. Leadership was acknowledged as part of teachers' careers, in terms of the impact of teachers taking on further responsibilities, but was not theorised in terms of their learning in any way. It was therefore not helpful to thinking about leaders' identity development, the focus of this study. More relevant potentially was Gronn's career model of leadership, which relates specifically to school leader development (Gronn, 1999). It was of particular interest because of its focus on transitions from role to role (Pegg and Fox, 2007).

This model (Table 3.4) envisages two stages to explain how a leader comes to take on any particular leadership role (stages 1 and 2), followed by two stages whilst working in a particular role (stages 3 and 4). In later work Gronn and Lacey (2004) talk about the way leaders, once in a new role, go about making sense of their new situation – a stage termed 'encounter' - which I added to Table 3.2 as stage 2b in Gronn's model. Emergent leaders who have a formal leadership role can be located as having recently transitioned from positions as classroom teachers in stages 1 and 2 into stage 3, when taking on leadership responsibilities and formal roles.

Table 3.4 A summary of Gronn's career model of leadership

Stages	Characteristics
1	Formation – preparatory socialisation and psychological readiness
2a	Accession – grooming or public display which leads leaders to be selected and inducted
2b	Encounter (Gronn and Lacey, 2004) – the sense-making leaders make once in a role
3	Incumbency – role mastery and self-realisation
4	Divestiture – a process of leaving the role which can be either planned or unplanned; voluntary or involuntary.

In this model every time roles are changed during a career, stages 1- 3 are expected to be repeated. It has been noted (section 2.5) that in England some emergent leaders

experience accelerated career progression and would therefore find themselves spending very little time in each stage.

Gronn sees an end to the cycles as 'divestiture' when an individual leaves the field of work. He describes this as a 'letting go' of an ambition to lead and explains that this may be the result of a conscious decision at the 'height of their powers', the results of 'disillusionment and fatigue' or a decision reached as mutually beneficial by the school and the leader (Gronn, 1999, p41). This offers some conceptualisation of the reasons for early retirement cited as so prevalent by English headteachers (section 2.4), but might occur at any stage of leadership. No particular endpoint is specified and certainly no assumptions about age are attributed (Gronn, 1999). For this model to be applicable to the English situation it has been shown (section 2.4) how it would need to accommodate teachers and leaders leaving the profession at different points and for different reasons.

Understanding how leadership development takes place through career stages offers a way to reflect in more detail on what emergent leaders in my study might experience, highlighting things to look out for in their accounts of social participation. As with the other career theory perspectives however, Gronn's work is not based on any explicit view of learning. He talks about shaping a 'leadership character' comprising a 'conception of self and identity, a preferred working style and an outlook or set of values' (Gronn, 1999, p34) and in later work (Gronn and Lacey, 2004) of expressing identity as a leader. Identity is conceptualised in terms of aspirations to be a leader. How Gronn views such 'shaping of character' and 'expressing of identity' to take place is outlined below in relation to the key features of each career stage.

Formation is said to be a stage when leaders develop their 'leadership character' in ways that are influenced by their biography. This includes the influence of family and

school experiences with reference to peers, friends, mentors and, what Gronn refers to as, 'consciousness- shaping media' (Gronn, 1999, p34). Formation implicitly acknowledges the role of historical and social dimensions to learning.

The next stage, *accession,* relates to processes which take place in the time prior to taking up a formal leadership post. This was described by Gronn as follows:

> Accession refers to a stage of grooming or anticipation in which candidates for leadership roles rehearse or test their potential capacity to lead by direct comparison with existing leaders and the field of their prospective rivals for advancement (Gronn, 1999, p35-36).

Teachers in the UK report that self-nomination, in terms of being active in seeking leadership advancement, is one mechanism for taking up leadership posts (section 2.2). Gronn's view of accession offers leaders guidance as to how to go about this. This might see aspirant leaders as volunteering to take on responsibilities when they are offered generally or proactively taking the initiative to undertake particular tasks. Gronn and Lacey's (2004) later work provides more detail on what they go on to term *anticipatory socialization* (Gronn and Lacey, 2004), suggesting what aspirant leaders should do prior to being considered for a particular role:

1. Express their identity as a leader.

2. Position themselves in ways which indicate their 'readiness' to take up leadership roles.

3. Use 'positioning space' to think through the consequences of taking on leadership roles.

The second mechanism for taking up a post (section 2.2) is the selection of individuals for leadership positions by others. Gronn explains that the public display of 'readiness' may result in leaders being selected for posts if they can show a

'credible performance routine' (ibid, 2004, p37). This might relate to their showing the competencies others expect of them in that role (such as suggested in Table 3.3). This, however, assumes that leaders have been made aware of these expectations, which I have concluded is unlikely, given the evidence from other literature. Gronn explains that 'readiness' requires psychological preparation if an aspirant leader is to present themself as a potential leader. This preparation involves leaders in aspiring to identify with two groups of people: Firstly, with existing incumbent senior leaders, explaining that leaders might develop relationships with such leaders which develop into patronage or sponsorship by the more senior leaders: Secondly, individuals will be developing a sense of themselves in relation to 'prospective rivals' (Gronn, 1999, p36) in deciding to show their readiness.

The idea of aspirant leaders using 'positioning space' was explored by Gronn and Lacey in a study of prospective headteachers through the use of e-journals on a leadership development course (Gronn and Lacey, 2004). They concluded these journals offered opportunities to reflect on the expectations of headteachers and reflect whether they were happy to work towards these. Whether this 'space' is more widely available is not evidenced.

To gain formal leadership positions such preparation by individuals presumes that the aspirant leaders are noticed, considered and become successful when judgments are made of their capabilities, either informally or as part of a formal selection process. As with earlier models, without examining emergent leaders' experiences such a view of transition into formal roles cannot be evaluated as to whether it is an ideal or can be evidenced in accounts. Gronn's model of leadership development (1999) offers useful ideas about *what* should be involved, and *how* leaders might go about taking

responsibility for their development, even though it says nothing about what type of leaders, or *who,* leaders might be aspiring to become.

Although Gronn accepts that this model does not explain all leadership careers it does appear to offer a linear model and, as such, may not easily explain the complexity and uniqueness of individual experiences of the kind outlined in chapters 1 and 2. Instead this model offers a normative stage theory intended to accommodate most leaders' experiences. Gronn (1999) states that, too often, 'most leadership careers have to be reconstructed by looking backwards' (p24). This model he offers to future leaders to 'think strategically as regards themselves and their future careers (p25).

Gronn's work is based on the assumption that development is the responsibility of aspirant leaders. Certainly sense-making appears to be necessary for leaders in English schools, given the tacit nature of teacher cultures and views of leadership. By advocating that leaders take responsibility for their own development, Gronn's career model offers an alternative to schools taking responsibility for leadership development. What is not clear is whether those considered 'emergent leaders' are aware of this encouragement to take responsibility or indeed see themselves as on a 'leadership career'. To find out the answers to these kind of questions requires inquiry into the perspectives of emergent leaders of their development.

3.2.3 An individual perspective on leadership development

There is a further branch of the leadership development literature which also advocates that leaders take responsibility for their own development. Self-evaluation, self-review or self-evaluation, which leads to self-understanding or self-awareness, is prominent in a recent body of work which has been conceptualised as 'authentic' and/or 'emotional' leadership. These were being advocated by the NCLSCS (West-

Burnham and Ireson, 2005; Crainer and Dearlove, 2008; NCLSCS, 2010e) at the time

of the study and it may be that emergent leaders in schools at this time were being

exposed to such ideas.

NCLSCS leadership development courses, such as led by West-Burnham and Ireson,

draw on assertions that leaders need to 'know thyself' (Senge *et al*, 2004). Senge and

colleagues explain that:

> [...] if you want to be a leader, you have to be a real human being. You must
> recognize the true meaning of life before you can become a great leader. You
> must understand yourself first (Senge *et al*, 2004, p.186).

Other authors refer to opening the 'window to inner learning' (Antonacopoulou and

Bento, 2004, p83) or notions of a leader's 'looking glass self' (Gronn, 2003, p67).

Such self-awareness ties in with assertions that developing emotional intelligence is

required for effective leadership (Goleman, 2006; McWilliam and Hacker, 2007;

Crawford, 2009). Like bottom-up models of leadership these approaches are offered

as an alternative response to a climate of managerial leadership, this time by

individualising leadership development. This view has been termed 'leadership from

within' (McDermott, 1994) or speaking 'in one's own voice' (Kouzes and Posner,

2002) and has spawned a body of work around notions of developing authentic

leadership, a view that leaders be 'true to themselves' (Crainer and Dearlove, 2008).

Sparrowe (2005), in his critique of authentic leadership, charges that such

introspection needs to be set against the need to act socially as a leader. In other

words, to work as a leader requires abilities to marry your own ideas with an

understanding of the social context within which you works. With reference to earlier

work by Ricoeur (1992), it is suggested that leaders can then view themselves in

relation to the 'possible selves displayed by others' as part of an ongoing 'narrative'

(Sparrowe, 2005, p423). This offers a way of thinking about how leaders decide from their participation in practice who they would like to be like in their practice and hence their identity development. From the perspective of these authors this has been described as opening 'windows' both outward as well as inwards to accommodate the social dimension to an individual's development (Antonacopoulou and Bento, 2004).

This body of work again was not framed explicitly within a model of learning although, as will be shown in the next section, the ideas outlined above align well with the socio-cultural model of learning I chose to adopt.

3.2.4 The development of emergent leaders - in summary

Three issues arise from section 3.2 about how the development of 'emergent leaders' can be thought of as 'emergence': Firstly, it is complex to think about what leaders might be emerging to. Secondly, it is complex to think about what leaders are emerging from. Thirdly, there is little conceptualisation of how leaders develop or emerge. Building on questions introduced in section 1.1 and the biological metaphor of 'emergence', as outlined in section 1.3, I discuss these issues in terms of three questions:

1. Can the emergence of leaders be conceptualised as emerging *to* something?

   Emergence could be explained by leaders showing a development in capabilities towards agreed success criteria. This would require clarity as to what leaders would be expected to be capable of and how they might develop these capabilities. Currently, such expectations of emergent leaders need to be inferred from theoretical models underpinning leadership and are only applicable if such models are tangible in a school. Although there is evidence that a dominant model of managerial leadership has developed in UK schools, it cannot be assumed that this

model will be evident in all English schools, that it is the only model evident in practice in a school, nor that any models will have been articulated to a school's leaders.

In chapter 2 I noted the diversity of leadership roles and structures across English schools and the accelerated way progression can take place through such roles. This chapter has argued that leadership development should not be framed in terms of the roles that emergent leaders hold as they do not define the leaders inhabiting them. Instead, development needs to be considered from a personal perspective which considers both formal and informal aspects to an individual's leadership. This understanding of the context for English school leaders confirms that there are problems with applying a biological metaphor of emergence *into* something.

There appear to be several possibilities for an emergent leader to emerge *to*, which relate to a headteacher's decisions about school leadership and structure, are dependent on what an individual aspires to as well as an awareness that school and personal circumstances are liable to change. A deterministic or predictable view of emergence *to* does not seem likely to explain the development of emergent leaders.

2. Can the emergence of leaders be conceptualised as emerging *from* something?

I also presented in chapter 2 how individuals come to a school with unique biographies as a result of the totality of their experiences. This sees leaders bringing personal and developing values, beliefs and aspirations to their current practice. This offers a second challenge to the biological metaphor for emergence in terms of a diversity of what emergent leaders are emerging *from*.

Although there is some empirical work which looks at teachers' careers this has not focused on how teachers develop into or as 'emergent leaders'. Career theories are however helpful in focusing on the transitions which leaders might theoretically make, highlighting a leader's participation prior to taking on such roles (Gronn, 1999a). Personal and historical aspects to a leader's development are seen as important, but the impact of this on development has not yet been studied from the perspective of 'emergent leaders'.

3. How can emergence as leadership development be conceptualised?

This study is concerned with understanding how emergent leaders perceive their experiences as an emergent leader, including how they came to take up their formal roles and their views of who they want to become in the future. The work which foregrounds the perspective of individuals in leadership development points to how leaders *identify with others as they reflect both 'inwards' and 'outwards'* on their social participation (Antonacopoulou and Bento, 2004). This work pays attention to *who* a leader is emerging from and to, rather than *what* form of leadership and capabilities they are developing. If such a conceptualisation was framed in terms of learning, this approach would allow *how* leaders 'emerge' to be revealed. There was an absence in the leadership development literature of ways to think about equating leadership development with learning.

3.3 Becoming: Learning as identity development

As outlined in chapter 1, Wenger's (1998) socio-cultural views of learning as participation sees learning as the 'vehicle' for identity development. Learning as social participation pays attention to the processes of identity development (i.e. how individuals develop) by focusing on individuals' developing senses of belonging. This

therefore explores the inter-relationship between individuals and others and pays attention to this over time, including the effects of prior and current social experiences. It was this conceptualisation I believed would help understand 'becoming' as an 'emergent leader'.

Section 3.3.1 presents my understanding of learning as participation and explains how it informed this study. I clarify my understanding of this theoretical perspective, in relation to other theorisations of learning.

This leads to a focus in **section 3.3.2** on how I saw Wenger's model of learning as having the potential to help think about the development of emergent leaders. I outline how I also became aware of this model's limitations and the way I needed to adapt it for use analytically.

Section 3.3.3 introduces the argument that talk is a crucial component of identity development when considering learning from this perspective. This involves both 'self talk' and talk with others. The work of Sfard and Prusak (2005), in conceptualising identity talk, was helpful in thinking about this. I explain why the role of talk in the processes of identity development became important to this study.

The methodological implications of the above developments of my conceptual framework are presented in chapter 4.

3.3.1 Learning as identity development

A socio-cultural view of learning, in which learning is always socially and culturally determined, has been applied to understanding teacher learning (Evans *et al*, 2006; Fuller *et al*, 2005; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2003; 2004; 2005; Sfard, 2006a). This perspective on learning can be viewed as adopting a metaphor of 'learning as participation' (Sfard, 1998). Socio-culturalists see learning not as an individual

activity that can be separated from interactions with others, but as needing to accommodate the relationships bound up with learning. This involves understanding who individuals interact with, how they interact and the meaning they make of these interactions; hence the ways individuals identify with people. Individuals are therefore involved with identification. The way I use this term is distinct from that of identity development. The process of 'identification' might be thought about as an individual feeling connected with one group or another, whilst the broader notion of 'identity development' relates to the way individuals make meaning from, make sense of and take forward their experiences of identification in ways which explain who they see themselves as currently 'being' as well as their future 'becoming'. Learning is the process of developing from present towards future identities (Sfard and Prusak, 2005).

This social view of learning accepts a number of dimensions affecting identity development. Firstly, there are cultural dimensions to the way that practice is enacted and secondly, a historical dimension to this cultural context. In this way schools are seen to operate a set of norms that have become accepted within a particular cultural setting, having developed over time. Cultural and historical dimensions, socially enacted, therefore shape the learning of individuals working in any particular setting.

Some participationists, in drawing attention to the way learning is inextricably bound to learning contexts, refer to 'situated learning' (Brown *et al*, 1989; Greeno, 1997); this view has been applied specifically to teacher learning (Borko and Putnam 1995; Putnam and Borko 2000). Others explain their understanding of it differently. Edwards (Edwards *et al*, 2002; Edwards, 2005) asserts that learning can be thought to be based on a socio-cultural version of mind; one which 'decodes' what goes on in the world of social interactions in ways that allow an individual to respond to that world.

Not all socio-culturalists would agree with any view of mind when explaining learning, seeing it as too closely aligned with those working with, what Sfard offers as an alternative metaphor for learning, acquisition. Those taking this alternative perspective argue that learning is related to the work of the mind as an essentially individual, cognitive activity (Anderson *et al*, 1997; 2000). Such academics believe that knowledge has substance, and talk in terms of there being 'domains' of knowledge and understanding. Learning is construed as cognitive processes of knowledge acquisition or knowledge construction in which knowledge is acquired, transferred and must be internalised by individual learners as they become increasingly 'expert' in a given area. Edwards *et al* (2002) calls this view of mind 'encoding' (rather than 'decoding'). This is necessarily individually, rather than socially, focused and such research draws from the field of cognitive psychology.

It has been argued that there are those studying learning whose work sits theoretically someway between the metaphors of acquisition and participation. McGuinness (2005), in her review of Teaching and Learning Research Programme[11] projects, offers a continuum, rather than a dichotomy, of underpinning theorisations.

McGuinness proposes that between a wholly individual and cognitive view of learning and a socio-cultural view is the notion of social construction. Social constructionists hold that, although knowledge fundamentally resides with

---

[11] The Teaching and Learning Research Programme operated in the UK from 2000 to 2007 (extended to 2012 for technology enhanced projects). It supported and promoted educational research with the aims that this research was used to enhance learning. It received UK Economic and Social Research Council funding to allow it to support over a hundred projects. See also: http://www.tlrp.org/proj/index.html

individuals, this knowledge is constructed as a social process through social interaction (e.g. Topping and Thurston, 2004; Baines *et al*, 2007). Such thinking builds on Piagetian ideas in which there are considered to be experts, those who know more and understand the relationships between forms of knowledge, and who can help 'novices' become more expert. My review of the literature revealed no clear view that there are leaders acting as experts to others, nor that there is any agreed knowledge of leadership which is being socially mediated for those more novice. It is difficult to conclude what it means to be an 'expert' leader in English schools and, in any case, this is likely to differ from context to context depending on the kinds of leadership valued.

I came to the conclusion that it seemed most fruitful to conceptualise the experiences of emergent leaders in terms of their socialisation with those with whom they work, adopting the metaphor of learning as participation. Thinking in this way pays attention to the complex interplay between individuals and collectives.

The implications of 'emergent' leaders when considered 'middle' leaders, as discussed in section 3.1.1, are that they are likely to have a number of collectives they might identify with. Wise's study (2001) noted a tension between acting collegially with those in a leader's Department and having to identify with senior leaders in expectations of monitoring and line managing departmental members of staff. 'Middle' leaders might also identify with other 'middle' leaders. Given that English 'emergent leaders' will also retain teaching responsibilities, they might also be expected to identify with others as teachers. This therefore offers complex possibilities for identification and, hence, identity development.

Identity development through social participation accepts a dynamic situation - it is a process - hence the notion of 'development'. Participationists like Wenger (1998) and

Sfard (2006b) argue that this contrasts with others who objectify identities, viewing them instead as 'a discourse of *being* and *having*' (Sfard, 2006b, p23), rather than of 'becoming'. With reference to Wise's example, one interpretation would be that emergent leaders feel part of a collegial Department in ways which labels and objectifies their identity as in relation to these colleagues (or followers), while also as a leader who identifies with other leaders and how they should act. Alternatively, if identities are not seen as fixed but as developing over time and in complex ways, we can now consider how a leader goes on to make sense of the tension between these dual identities (and any others that are being developed). This therefore becomes a study of the leader's learning. Socio-culturalists view learning as the identity development which both results from and drives further participation:

> *Learning transforms our identities*; it transforms our ability to participate in the world (Wenger, 1998, p227, italics in original).

Wenger (1998) talks about individuals having trajectories of participation, which can be charted. It was particularly because of Wenger's notion of trajectories of participation that I chose to explore his conceptualisation of social participation to see how it might be helpful in explaining the identity development of emergent leaders[12].

Wenger's work, developed originally with a colleague, is grounded in a model of apprenticeship (Lave and Wenger, 1991) in which novices are seen as joining

---

[12] This thesis explored trajectories closely in line with Wenger's conceptualizations of them. There are others whose work explores what have been termed 'learning trajectories' or 'life trajectories' in relation to learning in alternative ways, often in reference to Wenger, in the fields of workplace and lifelong learning. Dreier (1999; 2003) and Salling Olesen (2001; 2007) explore the role of subjectivity in thinking about learning as participation and this work includes notions of identity. Similar ideas have been explored empirically to the learning of educational psychologists (Tanggard and Elmholt, 2007) and bakers (Nielson, 2008). Still others have chosen to refer to 'learning careers' for example a longitudinal study of young people moving into further education and their changes in disposition to learning (Bloomer and Hodkinson, 2000; Hodkinson and Bloomer, 2002).

communities of practice with others engaged in similar workplace practices. Figure 3.2 offers a definition of these communities.

Figure 3.2 Defining communities of practice (developed from Lave and Wenger. 1991; Wenger, 1998)

Communities of practice are defined in terms of the concepts of *mutual engagement, joint enterprise* and *shared repertoire*. It is not just a social categorization of people who work in close proximity. They are defined if the following three criteria are fulfilled:

Mutual engagement implies that members must be engaged in some activity together, which contributes to the shared practices of the community.

Joint enterprise refers to the way that practice is shaped by a collective process of negotiation in ways that might be completely independent of any organizational definitions of it. Wenger illustrates this with respect to how claims processors as employees work together to decide how to respond as a community to employer demands.

Shared repertoire is built up over time through the engagement and enterprise described above. This involves generating cultural routines, terminology, resources and conceptual tools. These 'reifications' of practice represent the negotiated meaning that is embedded in the practice of the community and can be used to express this practice.

Learning is viewed as an enculturation process whereby novices become increasingly expert through participation in a community of practice as defined in Figure 3.2. This learning by novices is termed 'legitimate peripheral participation': Novices become encultured into what have become agreed shared ways of participating. Such participation, and the collective making tangible of this practice (reification), can lead to the novice engaging in more central participation in the communities. This view accepts that, at the same time, the practices of the community of practice are affected by the individuals' collective participation. How individuals chose to practice and negotiate such practice potentially affects those around them.

Wenger talks in terms of belonging to and becoming a member of particular communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). In educational settings this would see novice teachers learning from participation with more experienced teachers: Novice

leaders from and with more experienced leaders. Wenger accepts that multi-membership of communities is likely and possible but that individuals need to engage in the 'work of reconciliation' of their identities with respect to more than one community (Wenger, 1998, p160).

This model of communities of practice has been critiqued (e.g. Amin and Roberts, 2008; Cornelissen et al, 2006; Evans et al, 2006; Handley et al, 2006; McCormick et al, 2010). Three key limitations identified are that: Firstly, communities meeting these criteria are difficult to identify, with workplaces experienced as much more fragmented places of social interaction than as interlocking communities. Hodkinson and Hodkinson's case studies of three secondary school teachers' experiences revealed the complex nature of the communities of practice they could be considered to belong to, highlighting the subject departments as potentially the most readily definable (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2003; 2004). econdly, that this model does not explain adequately all forms of learning. In particular it is claimed that Wenger's work has not been developed to explain the learning of experienced professionals (i.e. those who are not novices) in ways which accommodate all the issues of working in contemporary workplaces (Evans et al, 2006; McCormick et al, 2010). Thirdly, that reifications are not necessarily tools which are helpful to learning merely through capturing current practice in some way. Such 'reifications' may in fact be inertial.

Whilst remaining aware of and attentive to the limitations of Wenger's work, the major contribution of his model to this study was of his conceptualisation of identity development. This he suggests can be considered through thinking about how senses of belonging are developed.

3.3.2 Three modes of belonging: A conceptual framework

Wenger's view of learning through participation sees individuals as belonging to communities of practice through three modes of belonging: *imagination, alignment and engagement* (see Figure 3.3). The leadership focused literature reviewed in this chapter had led me to expect that emergent leaders would refer to identification with others; whether teachers or leaders. Very early in the study, data emerged that such identification was complex and difficult to define. Emergent leaders were certainly not reporting belonging to clear communities of practice in Wenger's terms (as defined in Figure 3.2). Even without bounded and identifiable communities of practice, the three modes of belonging offered a useful conceptual framework with which to examine with whom and how emergent leaders' identified, how individuals made sense of these and, hence, how their identities developed.

Some adaptation of this model was, however, needed to apply it analytically to an inquiry about emergent leaders. The first task was to make an interpretation of what a 'mode' of belonging might mean, as I did not find these were clearly explained by Wenger. I understood a 'mode' to be a way to think about how individuals, in my case emergent leaders, identify with others. Each mode offers three alternative but connected ways, or lenses, (see Figure 3.3 below) to think about how individuals relate to others in a framework that attends to the social, cultural and historical dimensions of current participation. All three modes need to be considered together to explain the identity development of individuals. In this way the uniqueness of individual identity development can be explained. I describe each mode of belonging in turn.

Figure 3.3 Wenger's model of modes of belonging (1998, p174)
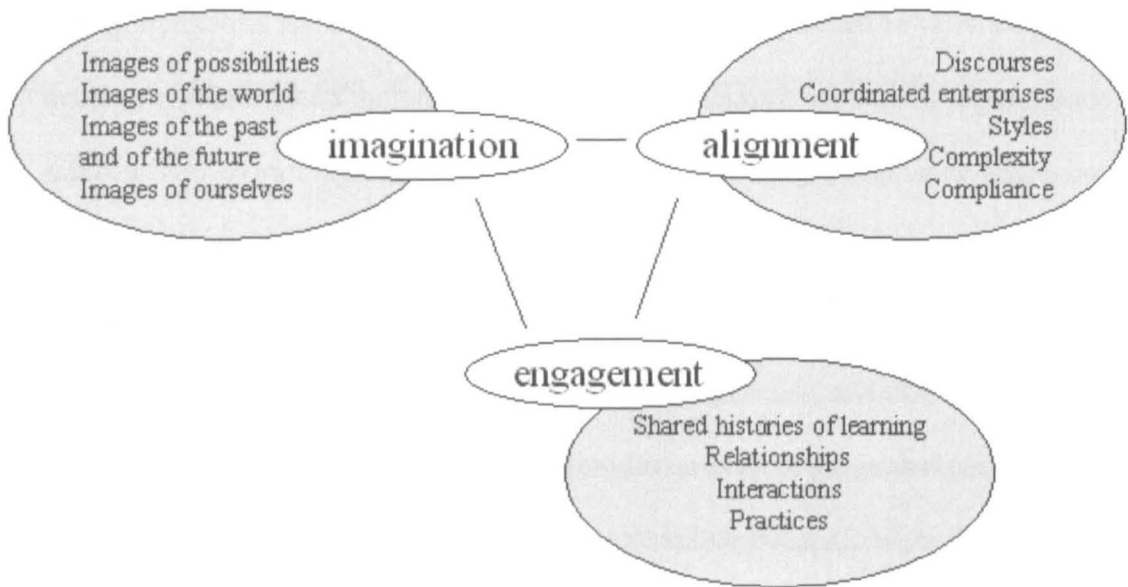
- *The mode of imagination* relates to the formation of images by individuals of what is possible or desirable. This relates to those they develop from their participation, informing 'images' of themselves in terms of aspirations, values and beliefs and therefore further participation. For example, emergent leaders in my study would be expected to have developed images of practice they have observed before (as teachers or as leaders) which they wish to enact or, conversely, those of practice they want to avoid in their own practice. This sees them reflecting on what they value. This mode therefore offers one way of thinking about how individuals come to think about who they want to become. It relates to their appreciation of the 'bigger picture' they feel they are part of and their place in this. This mode draws on all an individual's experiences and is not limited to their current place of work or even profession.

- *The mode of alignment* recognises that working with others involves social negotiation. As indicated in Figure 3.3 this might be through:

1. fitting in with the discourse of those they work with,

2. coordinated working with colleagues,

3. being aware of the styles of practice of others with whom they work,

4. the need to negotiate complex situations and/or

5. issues of compliance.

In the absence of communities of practice in my study of emergent leaders, the 'mode of alignment' is likely to relate to working with those in their place of work, the school, as well as to others they identify with beyond school. This mode explores an individual's awareness of the above aspects in relation to these collectives.

- *The mode of engagement* relates most directly to participation through practice. In this study's case, it refers to the way an emergent leader goes about their work, the activities they engage in, whether they work alone or together, who they talk with and what they are using and producing. This needs to accommodate that they practice as both teachers and leaders.

These three modes inter-relate. There may be synergy or conflict between an individual leader's images of what they aspire to compared with aspects of working with others. They may, or may not, consider that images of themselves fit with the discourse within their organisation. They may, or may not, feel they can work with others in a coordinated way in the school. They may, or may not, view that their preferred ways of working match the practices of others they work with. The judgments emergent leaders make will relate to how aware of and how they deal with complexity in their school and how and whether they decide to comply with the perceived expectations by others.

The three modes may not be in equal balance with one another in any one individual at any one time and such tensions would contribute to explaining differences between the identity development of individuals. For example individuals may be belonging in ways that see them clear about what they want to achieve and why they want to practice in a particular way (their mode of 'imagination'), together with a clear appreciation of their context (their 'mode of alignment'), but find that their sense of belonging is affected if the relationships and practices they find themselves enacting (through the mode of 'engagement') do not match these appreciations well. Similarly, individuals might find that what they value and aspire to (their 'mode of imagination') and try to enact in their practice (their 'mode of engagement') conflicts with how they seem to be expected to work in their workplace (their 'mode of alignment'). Values - practice gaps have been noted in a large-scale English study of teachers and leaders (Pedder, 2006). Conversely, leaders might not have developed clear 'images' of themselves and future possibilities.

Learning would involve leaders making sense of these three modes such that their current identities are shaped and developed in ways attentive both to their current situations and their developing aspirations. If leaders cannot resolve the tensions, they would not be expected to be developing a strong sense of belonging, in Wenger's terms to communities of practice, and might chose not to participate. Non-participation is accommodated in Wenger's framework (Wenger, 1998).

Methodologically Wenger's work is based on the observation of the practice of claims processors. He placed great emphasis on collecting evidence about practices, relationships, interactions and shared histories of learning. However Wenger's principal interest was in understanding participation in a collective sense, looking to explain the differences in participation of multiple members of the same community

of practice. My work takes a different approach in wanting to understand individuals, rather than of any collective they might belong to. This saw me interested in gathering data, not only about practices, but also revealing the thinking behind these practices. This was how I believed it necessary to explore the three modes of belonging (and their interconnections) and differs methodologically to Wenger's approach.

This difference was driven by my interest in finding out about the experience of emergent leaders, from their perspective. One of the consequences of my methodological decisions was that I found engagement as conceptualised by Wenger the least easy to collect data about. Having decided that I was interested in leaders' perceptions of engagement, rather than in observing it directly, I needed to decide how to think about their practice. I will show in chapter 4 how, I asked leaders to collect examples of what they considered to be learning episodes and then discussed these to understand their mode of engagement as it related to leader's perceptions of learning opportunities.

In addition to the modes of belonging another useful aspect of the way Wenger conceptualises identity development is the notion of trajectories. Wenger considers learning to be made up of trajectories of participation which build personal histories in relation to the histories of the communities individuals engage, and identify, with (Wenger, 1998). In wanting to reflect on the appropriateness of applying the term 'emergent' to 'emergent leaders' the notion of trajectories offered a way of thinking about the nature of their 'emergence'. Using Wenger's notions of trajectories allows a way of thinking about how emergent leaders' identities develop in relation to their lives prior to becoming a teacher, their work as a teacher as well as their work as leaders. Do they 'emerge' from identities 'as teachers' to ones 'as leaders', and then 'as early or emergent leaders' to 'as senior leaders' and ultimately 'as headteachers'?

Alternatively, are there other identities bound up with a leader's trajectories of participation that need to be considered when reflecting on emergence?

Wenger restricted his view of identity development as being in relation to communities of practice. He conceptualised this development as trajectories in relation to these communities of practice, using terms such as 'inbound' or 'peripheral' to categorise their direction. Wenger accepts that individuals are likely to be members of more than one community of practice and will therefore be following multiple trajectories of participation simultaneously. Because communities of practice were not evident in the data generated by emergent leaders in my study it was not possible to use his ideas of their being such types of trajectory. The useful idea was in trying to chart trajectories of participation as individual, dynamic and multi-faceted.

Wenger, in talking about multi-membership of communities of practice, explains that individuals experience a 'nexus' of trajectories (Wenger, 1998, p158) such that they do not meet and merge but need to be reconciled by the individual. In this way an emergent leader might develop identities for example both as a teacher and as a leader in ways that they have not necessarily reconciled but are held simultaneously. Making sense of multiple identities Wenger terms the 'work of reconciliation' (Wenger, 1998, p160). Later, Wenger talks about individuals needing to 'develop a trajectory that makes sense for you' (Wenger, 2009) as a way of knowing the world.

A further interesting aspect to Wenger's work, although not explored by him, was the nature of the lines between each mode in the framework of modes of belonging (Figure 3.3). To me these lines related to the mechanism of how the modes inter-relate for any one individual. In working with his conceptual framework during this study I have come to understand these as related to the role of talk.

3.3.3 Identity development requires talk

I found further insights into thinking about identity development from a participationist perspective in Sfard and Prusak's (2005) work. Unlike Wenger, Sfard and Prusak do not see identity development to be revealed in observable practices and interactions. These authors see identity development evidenced in discourse and 'equate identities with stories about persons' (Sfard and Prusak, 2005, p14). Hence, identity is 'created', rather than 'described' by words. This is an important conceptual distinction between the two authors and I believe offers a way of understanding how Wenger's modes of belonging might be connected conceptually.

For Sfard and Prusak, discourse is considered to be the stories told through conversation, whether to oneself, by others to oneself or by oneself to others. All three are considered necessary to identity development. Such accounts are 'what identities are made of, rather than merely expressing them' (Sfard, 2006b, p24). These authors assert that discourse reveals the perceptions of experience and that it is this, rather than the experiences, that are identities being developed. This view therefore equates well with my interest in exploring how emergent leaders perceive their experiences (rather than studying the experiences themselves).

Wenger does recognise talk but does not agree about its significance:

> We often think about our identities as self-images because we talk about ourselves and each other – and even think about ourselves and each other – in words. These words are important no doubt, but they are not the full, lived experiences of engagement in practice (Wenger, 1998, p151)

Juzwik (2006) also challenged Sfard and Prusak's claims about the centrality of discourse to their view of identity development, asserting that there was also a non-

discursive element. Sfard's rejoinder (2006b) argues again that, what they term 'identity talk', does encapsulate all aspects of experience.

Sfard and Prusak assert that identity talk is recogniseable in different forms, offering three possibilities:

1. stories told to oneself,

2. stories told about you to you,

3. stories told about you to someone else.

It is the first, which I will now term 'self talk', Sfard and Prusak argue has the most potential to affect future actions. 'Self talk' offers a way of conceptualising the reflection[13], self-evaluation and judgment, needed by emergent leaders in English schools to decide how to proceed in their practice, given the lack of clarity about expectations of them.

Sfard and Prusak's view of identity development is explained in terms of an individual's 'actual' and 'designated' (or expected) identities. The way they talk about these concepts relates well to Wenger's explanations of modes of belonging as being along trajectories.

Actual and designated identities are not fixed but are in flux, evidenced as 'stories':

- *actual identity* - stories about the actual state of affairs - usually told in the present tense and formulated as factual assertions;

- *designated identity*, stories presenting a state of affairs which, for one reason or another, is *expected* to be the case, if not now then in the future - recognized

---

[13] Reflection is used in this thesis in a very specific way in relation to talk and not, for example, as Schön (1983) develops in his work about teachers as 'reflective practitioners'.

by their use of the future tense or of words that express wish, commitment, obligation, or necessity (descriptions adapted from Sfard and Prusak, 2005, p18).

Designated identity therefore refers to that which individuals, as a result of their participation in practice, decide is possible to aspire to. This relates to who it is they think they can become, given their current understanding of their workplace and other social interactions. This relates well to the mode of imagination – the building of images of possibilities and of the future (see Figure 3.3). As with Wenger, learning is explained by the development of identities. It is the process of learning, which will 'close the gap' between actual and designated identities (Sfard and Prusak, 2005, p18). Understanding identity development in this way therefore offers an understanding of leadership recruitment and aspiration, currently under-conceptualised in the leadership development literature.

As with the discussion of Wenger's framework, in which modes of belonging might not be well balanced, Sfard and Prusak also acknowledge that current and future identities may also be in tension. In circumstances when aspirations are unlikely to be realised, frustration and unhappiness are likely to result. In Sfard and Prusak's terms this would be explained by 'a perceived persistent gap between actual and designated identities' (Sfard and Prusak, 2005, p18). In these situations leaders might chose to continue working unhappily, change school or leave the profession. Therefore understanding identity development would be expected to offer something to an understanding of teacher and leader retention, discussed in chapter 2 to be a contemporary issue for the English teaching profession.

3.4 The research questions

Chapter 3 has shown that, although there are multiple conceptualisations of school leadership offered in published work, there is little empirical evidence to show whether and/or how schools are trying to enact these ways of thinking about leadership. What research there is relies on observing leadership practice in schools. This reports a lack of explicitness in schools about the rationale for leadership. Hence, for early leaders taking on formal leadership roles, it is likely to be unclear what is expected of them as leaders.

This lack of clarity also relates to leadership development. This is despite current concerns about the throughput of leaders into senior leadership positions and schools being encouraged to take responsibility for leadership development and succession planning. How leadership development is being thought about and supported in schools, as experienced by leaders, is under-researched. Again, there are models of the careers of leaders available in published work, but little evidence that these are being used to underpin any such capacity building in schools. How leaders develop as leaders is therefore also unclear.

Individual leaders come to teaching and their early leadership positions with personal biographies, influencing their practice and beliefs about practice. Their ongoing experiences in different workplaces affect who they identify with and hence want to become. How leaders make sense of their experiences in these ways contribute to further development of their practice and beliefs about practice. A way of conceptualising the ongoing development of leaders is therefore in terms of their identity. Identity development can be conceptualised through views of learning as social participation. This view is not represented in the current leadership development literature, in which views of learning are rarely made explicit.

The over-arching question for this study therefore was:

How can we understand the development of emergent leaders?

To address this question and, given the lack of empirical published research in this area, I decided an exploratory study was needed to reveal the experiences of those identified as 'emergent leaders'. This would go some way to redressing the lack of 'voice' these leaders have in this literature. This would require negotiating access to and the consent of leaders in schools identified as 'emergent' and exploring with them their social participation in a longitudinal way.

To start with this seemed a straightforward endeavour and I began by asking such leaders what their goals were, how they tried to achieve these goals and explored the experiences which influenced their current practice. This led leaders to discuss their learning in the social context of their schools and others they worked with professionally.

The study developed as an iterative process of reading, data collection and reflection, involving me as a researcher, the participant leaders and those with whom I talked about my study. The result was a refinement of the sub-questions that now underpin this thesis. The final questions are the product of my learning as a researcher about this area of inquiry.

I started off holding a naïve understanding of the idea of 'becoming' as a leader, which became more nuanced and better conceptualised. I became clear that I was not interested in how to 'become' a leader, nor a leader's 'becoming' anything in particular. What was important was being open to how 'emergent leaders' talked about their aspirations and their constructions of being a leader, so understanding

what 'becoming' meant to them. This was underpinned by a view of their learning as identity development. Hence the first research question is:

RQ1. Who do emergent leaders want to become?

This question is set within a dynamic view of 'becoming' to find out what was important to the leaders as they developed 'who they wanted to become'. To answer this question it was helpful to consider the sub- questions:

1a) What type of leader do emergent leaders want to become?

1b) What differences can be seen between who emergent leaders want to become?

1c) How can differences in views of themselves as leaders be explained?

1d) Can trajectories of participation chart the identity development of emergent leaders?

To answer these questions I studied who leaders identified with and how this identification affected who they wanted to become by asking about their learning. This was a deliberately exploratory and non-deterministic approach to studying their identity development. In this way trajectories of participation need not be defined by a leader's roles or responsibilities, but attention is paid to how 'emergent leaders' report their experiences. Hence the second research question:

RQ2. How do emergent leaders talk about their learning?

This second question recognised my interest in the processes of identity development, to complement the greater focus on outcomes bound up in the first research question. I had become convinced of the central role of talk in identity development and began to fully appreciate that, when viewing learning as social participation, the identity

development being studied is inextricably bound up in discourse. One of the implications of this realisation was that emergent leaders talking as part of their involvement in this study would also be likely to influence their identity development. I constructed the following sub-questions:

2a) How do emergent leaders talk about social participation as belonging?

2b) What differences can be revealed between how emergent leaders talk about their learning as leaders?

2c) How can differences in how leaders talk about learning be explained?

2d) How did emergent leaders report the effect of involvement in the study on their learning?

The NCLSCS refer to 'emergent leaders' as those who are in early school leadership posts. Given the above lack of clarity surrounding 'leadership' and 'leadership development' what being 'emergent' means for organisations, individuals and the teaching profession is not clear. By studying individuals I hoped the study might inform both schools and the profession more widely. Therefore to conclude the study, drawing elements of it together, a third research question was posed:

RQ3. What view of 'emergence' does 'emergent leaders' talking about their learning offer?

As will be explained in the chapter 4 it was hoped that the study would also contribute positively and formatively to the emergent leaders' developing sense of themselves.

I now present my methodological choices, considerations and decisions in chapter 4.

Chapter 4 An approach to exploring the identity development of emergent leaders

Three main aspects to this study guided the approach I adopted.

Firstly, given the under-theorised and under-researched nature of this area of inquiry, it was necessarily exploratory.

Secondly, due to my aspirations for it to be meaningful for participants[14] I wanted it to be participatory.

Thirdly, in wanting to give a voice to these emergent leaders, issues of ethics and quality needed to be addressed.

How I dealt with these aspects in relation to addressing the three research questions are considered in this chapter.

4.1 Subjectivism and interpretivism: The underpinnings of this study

Adopting a socio-cultural perspective of learning raised methodological implications, requiring a study that would allow an in-depth exploration of learning as a complex and social phenomenon. I have argued 'stories' are important to learning, central to individuals' identity development. This study was organised around hearing these 'stories' of learning 'as emergent leaders'. This allowed inquiry into who the 'emergent leaders' wanted to become (RQ1) how they talked about their learning (RQ2) in order to reflect on the applicability of the term 'emergence' to their

---

[14] In this chapter 'participants' refers to the emergent leaders participating in the study, rather than participation as conceptualised regarding their learning.

development as leaders (RQ3). To collect these 'stories', and so develop robust responses to the research questions, a case study approach was chosen.

A socio-cultural conceptualisation of learning sees meaning as made by, and amongst, people. Epistemologically this sits within a subjective – rather than objective - paradigm (Crotty, 1998), which celebrates the subjectivity associated with the way all individuals make meaning. To study such meaning making I adopted a qualitative, naturalistic, or as I refer from now on, interpretative theoretical perspective (e.g. Denzin, 2001; Denscombe, 2007; 2010) which allows subjectivity to be explored. This accepts that people hold different perspectives to one another and even themselves from time to time. It is a dynamic view of meaning making. The purpose of research from this perspective is to describe, understand, interpret and capture the process of a 'social phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to them' (Boeije, 2010, p11).

The social phenomenon I was studying was the learning of school leaders. A socio-cultural perspective on learning accepts that individual school leaders will have different histories of social participation. I was interested in the individual's experience of these, rather than of any collective view as explored in Wenger's work (Wenger, 1998). Methodologically this involved decisions about how to reveal such histories. I was also interested in studying ongoing participation as the continuation of these histories. This required me to access what individuals recalled, how they perceived their histories, as well as how they were making ongoing sense by 'decoding' their world (Edwards *et al*, 2002). This decision to focus on 'reporting' and 'stories' brought with it an acceptance of the limitations as well as the strengths of working interpretively. While celebrating the subjectivity of individuals' accounts

and my own subjectivity in interpreting them, this study required careful planning to deal with acknowledged threats to quality and reveal rich and robust stories.

By taking a case study approach, choosing to study a number of individuals, I aimed to contribute to filling a gap in the de-personalised, organisational-level and often abstract theorising found in my review of the leadership development literature. In this literature 'emergent leaders' have little voice. The biographical approach to reporting the case studies of 'emergent leaders, focused on *their* aspirations (RQ1) and *their* reports of learning (RQ2), so allowing readers to hear their 'voice'.

The chapter is structured covering the following aspects of the study:

Section 4.2 justifies and outlines the case study approach, highlighting four main methodological issues.

Section 4.3 explains my approach to ethical appraisal and the implications of ethical considerations for the study, which include maximising the quality of the study.

Section 4.4 details the recruitment of a limited number of individuals (or cases) and the way a flexible research design was developed to negotiate their engagement.

The methods used in the study are presented according to two main methodological decisions:

- How to study participation over time (**section 4.5**)

- How to study learning through participation (**section 4.6**)

Supplementary data collection is outlined in **section 4.7**.

Section 4.8 outlines the development of analytical methods.

Section 4.9 discusses the synthesis which led to the generation of the biographical accounts, reflecting on 'voice' in these reports.

The subjectivity associated with meaning making relates as much to a researcher as the 'subjects' of the research:

> All inquiry reflects the standpoint of the inquirer. All observation is theory-laden. There is no possibility of theory- or value-free knowledge. (Denzin, 2001, p3)

This appreciation demanded a reflexive dimension to the study to ensure attention was paid to the role and impact of myself as the researcher. I needed to identify the 'bias' or subjectivity associated with being a researcher in my study, to acknowledge it in the work. This related to RSQ2d in the study, which considers the effect of the study on individual leaders. The resultant case studies are presented as learning biographies related to each leader's trajectories of participation and form chapter 5.

4.2 A case study research design

As indicated in chapter 3.3, Wenger (1998) took an ethnographic approach to his work in identifying communities of practice. Such an approach aims to describe and interpret cultures and typically involves extended participant observation (Robson, 2002). This approach matched Wenger's belief that participation could only be understood through observation of social practice. Instead, I wanted to understand what participants thought about themselves in the light of their experiences, not how observers understood their practice. I sought to access something autobiographical, as with Sfard and Prusak, 'an identifying story told by the identified person [A] herself. This story we call A's *first-person* identity' (Sfard and Prusak, 2005, p17).

Wenger and Sfard and Prusak agree that identity development is dynamic and processual, expressed in Wenger's (1998) notions of trajectories of participation. To study this required a longitudinal dimension to the study. Given that, as an

interpretivist, I believed individuals to hold both provisional and changing perspectives, 'stories' needed to be gathered in different ways and at different times. Thought was given as to whether the accounts could be supplemented by considering stories told about the leaders and/or other evidence to contribute to the leader's story-telling.

4.2.1 Case studies of individual emergent leaders

Case study is 'a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence' (Yin, 1994, p8). Authors talk about it being detailed, in-depth and intensive (Stake, 1978; Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). It is an approach that copes with complexity and subtlety in real-life situations (Denscombe, 2007) and was therefore a suitable approach for studying under-researched and under-conceptualised phenomena such as the focus of this study.

There are different forms of case study, which can be categorised in relation to different purposes (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Summary of possible purposes for case study (sources: Yin, 1984; 2003)

Purpose	Description
Exploratory	- generating hypotheses/questions - useful for pilot studies
Descriptive	- providing narrative accounts - needs a descriptive theoretical framework
Explanatory	- testing and possibly comparing theories
Interpretive	- used to develop conceptual categories inductively
Evaluative	- used to explain phenomenon and form judgments

This study encapsulated four of these possible purposes.

- It is necessarily 'exploratory' - although sought to go further than a pilot study (related to RQ1a/2a)

- It provided 'descriptive' accounts based on an application of Wenger's framework (related to RQ1b/1d/2b)

- It was also 'explanatory' through its application of Wenger's work to this new context and focus (related to RQ1c/2c) – reflection on its applicability was considered although the study did not aim to 'test' the theory

- It had the potential to be 'interpretive' by being attentive to themes emerging from the data (related to RQ1b/2b)

Case studies can also be categorised according to their overall form (Jensen and Rodgers, 2001). Again this study incorporated more than one of these possibilities. It was 'longitudinal', exploring identity development over time with the 'cases' being individual leaders. To explore the identity development of individuals required decisions as to who the 'cases' would be. The literature review heightened my awareness of the diversity both in background and role, as well as different career paths, of those who might be identified as 'emergent leaders'. This diversity could be recognised through studying a number of cases rather than a single case, although only a limited number of case studies could be practically attempted. Five were completed. This multiple case study approach allowed a 'comparative' dimension to the research design and cross-case comparison is presented as chapter 6.

To operationalise this case study approach required four methodological decisions:

1. To study learning through participation as a combination of access to practice and verbatim accounts of 'emergent leaders' about their participation.

2. To study learning trajectories through both past and current participation, which affected decisions about how, how often and how iteratively to collect evidence from participants.

3. To maintain rigour whilst paying attention to the subjective nature of the perspectives brought by both participants and myself to researcher-participant dialogue.

4. To resolve how autobiographical accounts can be credibly reported biographically.

The strategies adopted to deal with each decision are summarised below, and the sections discussing the methods developed indicated.

The design was based around a series of semi-structured interviews to engage 'emergent leaders' in discussions about their learning. These were open-ended, but guided, either to explore prior experiences or to gather information about current learning. Together these discussions allowed individuals to report their participation over time, focusing on who they wanted to become (RQ1) and the role of talk in their learning (RQ2). To support the discussions of contemporary learning 'emergent leaders' reflected on the nature and scope of their current learning opportunities generating 'maps' and collected examples of what they considered to be recent 'learning episodes'.

In summary:

1. To study learning through participation.

- Opportunities for learning were scoped through interviews and a mapping task, with participants playing an active role in collecting evidence so that

concrete examples of learning through participation could be discussed in subsequent interviews (section 4.6)

- Participants were encouraged to offer supplementary information to help contextualise their accounts and further inform the researcher-participant dialogue about learning (section 4.7).

2. To study participation over time.

- Trusting, respectful and responsive researcher-participant relationships were developed (section 4.5).

- Both life history interviews and contemporary data collection about learning were employed (section 4.5).

- An analytical framework which could draw prior, present and future dimensions together was developed (section 4.8).

3. To create credible accounts.

- The validity of accounts throughout data collection and analysis were discussed with participants in an iterative way (sections 4.5 & 4.6).

- Data and its interpretation discussed with and exposed to critique by other academics (sections 4.3.2 & 4.9).

- Biographies were constructed, first as an agreed record with participants, further developed by me as the researcher (section 4.9).

4.2.2 Phases of the study

As a result of these decisions, I organised the study into two phases of data

collection/analysis and one phase of biography production (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 An overview of the research design

Life history interviews X, Y, Z
Descriptive analysis
Trial of learning log
Feedback interview
} Phase 1

Revisiting interview 1
Learning Log
Progress interview 1
} Cycle 1

Analysis

Revisiting interview 2
Learning Log
Progress interview 2
} Cycle 2

} Phase 2

Biography production
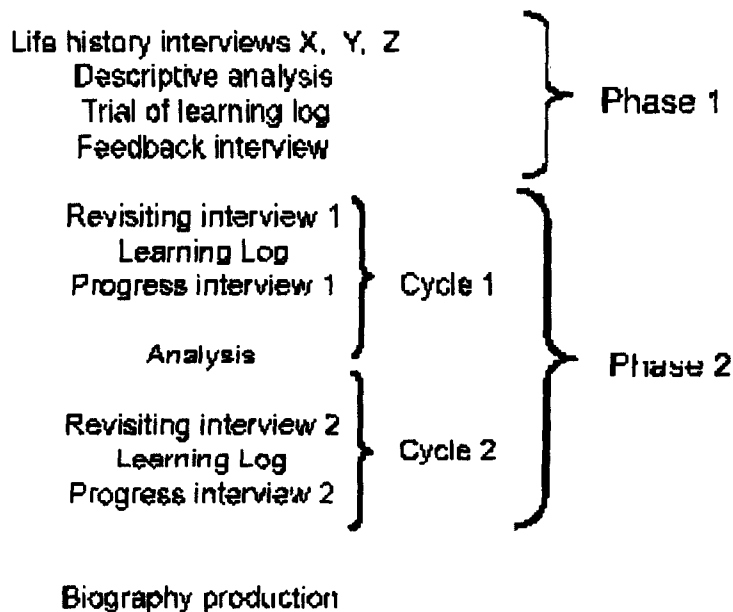
The iterative nature of this design was particularly influenced by Kelchtermans'

(1994) doctoral research about teachers' lives. Collecting data, then exploring an

analysis of it and subsequently, returning to the data, allowed me to engage leaders in

ways which increased their participation in the processes of inquiry. This allowed me

to deal with the bias I, and they, brought to the research, accepting our respective

developing understandings of the study as it was proceeding. I also hoped this level of

engagement would increase the value of the study to participants.

Phase one was termed 'exploratory' – exploring both prior experiences and piloting

methods of data collection and analysis. It also allowed the researcher-participant

relationship to be explored by participants for them to make a judgment about further

involvement in the study. Three life history interviews (termed X, Y and Z in Figure 4.1) were designed to explore prior experiences as they still influenced participants. This was to help understand the origins and early development of the leaders' trajectories of participation (important to addressing RQ1d). Each interview took a different approach to exploring these experiences and could be completed in any order, at the choice of the leaders. This choice of how to engage was important to the way I wanted to give the leaders 'voice' and empower them to participate. These interviews were followed by what I termed 'descriptive analysis' in Figure 4.1. This involved combining information from all three interviews using a heuristic tool being explored at that time. I represented an individual's learning outcomes and discussed this representation with each participant. This was to try to find out how leaders talked about social participation (RQ2a) and to look for differences between the leaders accounts (RQ2b). Each leader also generated a 'map' representing everyone they currently communicated with, which was used to trial the collection of images of learning episodes – called a learning log. This encouraged participants to engage with data collection and explore with me the nature of their social participation (RQ2a).

Phase two - termed the 'main phase' – was aimed, in negotiation with each participant, to form two cycles of data collection. The data generated was of accounts of social participation in 'real time' to understand how this related to earlier accounts of participation (further helping to address RQ1d and RQ2a). These interviews began with a 'revisiting' interview updating me on each leader's experiences and their current aspirations, followed by participant data collection (through the learning log) and subsequently a 'progress' interview which explored the learning log. It was important to review aspirations to connect accounts of participation with the views of leadership being developed (RQ1a) and to consider how these could be explained

(RQ1c). Review and revisiting was important not only to studying development but also because leaders' accounts were not expected to be fully formed. Hence any data collection about identity development was assumed to be necessarily partial and unstable. I built in an opportunity between the two cycles to explore further data analytic methods, discussed with each leader prior to a further cycle of data collection. It was important to discuss the analysis of a leader's data with each leader to improve the robustness of my analysis. This would be important when determining how to consider the differences between leaders' views of themselves (RQ1b), explain them (RQ1c) and examine the different ways leaders' talked about their learning (RQ2b and c). (Quality is discussed in section 4.3.2).

The final phase was of biography production, which integrated the data collected in both prior phases. It was here I developed my understanding of the leaders' learning systematically and holistically in relation to all three research questions. A rigorous and thorough examination of all the data collected was needed to increase the dependability of conclusions drawn. An outline of the processes within the phase of 'biography production' forms Figure 4.2, with more detail found in section 4.9.

Figure 4.2 The process of learning biography production
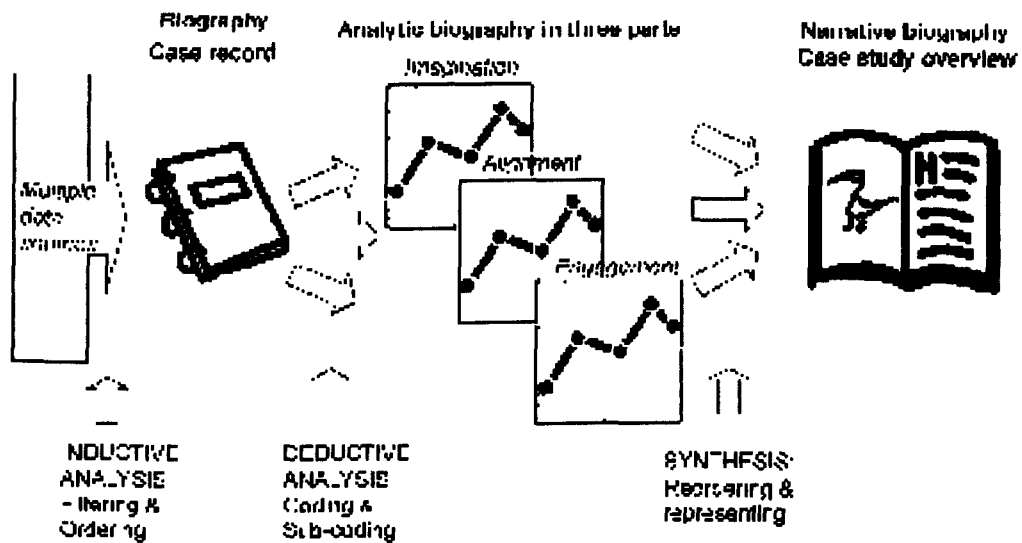
To generate the 'biography case record' all data was entered into Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis software. A filter was applied to extract all data related to a general application of the question 'who do the emergent leaders want to become?' and hence their identity development.

'Inductive analysis' involved inducing themes from the extracted data such as; the identities they were developing, how they had come to be a leader, what key personal beliefs they were developing, which school-based issues they were affected by and who they were learning from and with. A broadly similar structure was used to organise such themes and a biographical account, largely in each participant's words, returned to them. It was intended that participants would confirm this account, although they were not in the end prepared to fully engage with this request. This account became the 'case record' of data used for subsequent analysis (Stenhouse 1978; 1980).

'Deductive analysis' was then applied to each case record. This involved applying an adapted version of Wenger's framework of modes of belonging (Wenger, 1998) as a

coding framework using the Atlas.ti software. This deconstructed each original biography into what were termed three 'analytic biographies'; one relating to each of the 'mode of imagination', 'mode of alignment' and 'mode of engagement'.

The final learning biographies involved a holistic appraisal of what had been revealed from the earlier analyses such that narrative 'case study overviews' could be constructed for each case. These make up Chapter 5.

4.3 Addressing ethics and quality

I believed that developing productive researcher-participant relationships were central to the success of this study. Productive relationships were crucial to encouraging and enabling participants to tell their 'stories' and hence reveal meaningful and credible accounts of their identity development. I was to require of them their time and personal engagement, and therefore a good relationship was required to justify these requests. Thinking about the ethical basis for this study led me to consider how I wanted to benefit the participants and this I viewed in two ways: firstly, to benefit leaders personally through their involvement in the study and; secondly, as presented in earlier chapters, by publishing the work as a way of redressing the lack of voice of 'emergent leaders' in the research literature. These benefits required that the study was both ethically justifiable and academically defensible in terms of quality. What follows is an examination of how these two, related, aspects were satisfied.

4.3.1 Ethical appraisal

Ethical considerations can be condensed into four strands, each founded on a different tradition of moral theory (Stutchbury and Fox, 2009). Using moral theory to underpin research allows researchers to explain and justify beliefs, account for the judgments made and guide decisions on how to act. Ethics is therefore the understanding and

adoption of these moral stances. Four strands of ethical thinking derived from different moral traditions can be summarised as:

- Ecological/external,

- Consequential/utilitarian,

- Deontological,

- Relational/individual.

Taken together these offer a comprehensive, systematic and defensible framework for ethical appraisal of research. These strands can be deciphered both in the work of Flinders (1992), in relation to educational research, and Seedhouse (1998), in healthcare – hence the alternative nomenclature for some strands. Flinders saw each strand as an alternative stance, explaining that each has a different heritage. He operationalised these into four alternative approaches which could be applied to educational research. Seedhouse (1998) argued that all four strands need to be considered together. I began this study in line with Flinders' work by adopting one strand, the relational. However I found thinking about just one strand did not deal with all the ethical dilemmas I encountered and went on to develop my ethical appraisal to encompass all four (Stutchbury and Fox, 2009). I summarise each strand of thinking, as well as how it was applied to ensure this study was ethically justifiable.

Ecological or external ethics considers issues pertaining to the environment in which individuals are working and within which the research takes place. Whilst being out of the direct control of both researcher and participant it nonetheless impacts on the research. This included me being attentive to working within professional guidance, in my case from my research institution, the Open University, and the British

Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004)[15]. At later points I refer to how I satisfied particular articles of the BERA guidance. My attention to the term 'emergent leader' had come from my then recent work with the NCLSCS and its use in relation to the College's classification of leaders suitable for the LftM leadership programme. To find such 'emergent leaders' I approached the NCLSCS to ask for their support in gaining access to those on, or recently having completed, the LftM programme. After discussions about how my study would also meet their ethical guidelines (NCSL, 1999) I gained a written agreement from the NCLSCS. Negotiation with the NCLSCS as sponsors helped meet BERA articles 31-32. Attention to external issues I also found required sensitivity to expectations of me in participants' schools.

Utilitarian or consequential ethics are derived from ethnographic research and consider the benefits to others of a study. In my case this included the participants, their school, other 'emergent leaders', the teaching profession more widely, the academic community and myself. I particularly wanted to benefit the participants in return for the time they gave and to ensure that I did not embark on a study which 'appears to benefit the researcher more than the participant [and] comes under justifiable scrutiny' (Zigo, 2001, p351). I hoped to benefit the participants directly from the process as well as any benefits from later products of this study. To benefit others, beyond those participating in the study, makes quality an issue of ethical concern as, to be disseminated, the study needed to be of quality (explored in the next section). This would entail publishing. I began dissemination to academic audiences initially through conference and seminar presentations during the period of Doctoral

---

15 New ethical guidance has become available from BERA in September 2011: http://www.bera.ac.uk/files/2011/08/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf but too late to be applicable to this study.

study. Disseminating further, in particular to audiences in schools, is an urgent responsibility for me beyond the presentation of this thesis.

Deontological ethics, attributed to the influence of feminist traditions, is about issues of duty. Thinking in this way alerts us to the fact that researcher conduct cannot be justified entirely in terms of the consequences and must conform to 'standards such as justice and honesty' (Flinders, 1992, p104). This is another aspect to ensuring the study's quality and involved being fair, being honest and keeping promises. These were central considerations to me as I worked to develop longer-term relationships with the participants and I show in subsequent sections how I sought to achieve this.

Finally, *relational* ethics places our 'attachments and regards for others' at the centre of research considerations (Flinders, 1992, p106). It was this which I originally used as the over-riding moral stance underpinning my ethical decisions, drawing on Flinders' interpretations of it. He presented this as affecting recruitment, fieldwork and reporting stages of the research, which I interpreted as follows:

1. Recruitment - I invited emergent leaders to collaborate with me and explained my hopes that we would be able to work together towards mutually agreed goals (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Extract from the phase one ethical request letter- my aspirations

> I am both an experienced teacher (active from 1994) and researcher (on-going since 1999) and hope that there can be mutual benefits from this project in which I can share my experiences with you as much as you do with me. In this spirit of collaboration I hope I can build a positive working relationship with you which avoids imposition and through which we can both learn. I intend to keep an open agenda to search for areas of shared interest and which can be built into the research process...I see any interviews you agree to participate in as being semi-structured and building upon each other. I welcome comments on the process as well as the content to be covered and hope that the process can be beneficial to you as a chance to reflect on your career to date
>
> (extract from phase one ethical request letter)

2. Fieldwork – focused on avoiding imposition. This was important to me as an outsider researcher asking of the participants' time as well as expecting them to speak with me about personal matters. This required individual negotiation of all requests for data collection.

3. Reporting – required processes that allowed confirmation of accounts. 'Member checking' of interview transcripts between interviews was carried out and issues arising were discussed in subsequent interviews. Inviting participants to react and reflect on my interpretations of accounts aimed to develop a shared understanding of meaning and improve the quality of analysis. I had originally hoped that co-constructed biographical accounts would be generated. I believed I would then feel confident in their credibility and have ensured participants were happy that the accounts be made public. As noted, participants showed little interest in discussing the initial biography, although I did achieve their consent for me to use and develop them as case records (meeting BERA article 29)(Figure 4.2).

Conducting a full ethical appraisal according to these four dimensions allowed me to generate 'a personal code of ethical practice' (Cohen *et al*, 2000, p70) which recognised the subjectivity of this interpretivist study. Applying a comprehensive appraisal of all four strands raised four ethical dilemmas. These are discussed in the body of this chapter as they relate to:

1. using interviews as part of a developing researcher-participant relationship (section 4.5.2)

2. using images (section 4.6),

3. using interview evidence from other colleagues (section 4.7),

4. achieving the collaboration desired (section 4.9).

In summary, as a researcher I was clear of my intentions and aspirations as well as the rights of potential participants, such that each 'emergent leader' would only engage having voluntarily offered their informed consent (BERA articles 10 – 12; NCSL article 2.1.3) and aware they could withdraw at any time (BERA article 13; NCSL article 2.1.8). Participants were promised privacy and anonymity (BERA articles 23-26; NCSL article 2.2.2), involving me in careful data storage and the use of pseudonyms. I needed to show that I kept to these promises to gain the respect of each participant. Particularly important to me was to demonstrate sensitivity, responsiveness and flexibility by evaluating the impact of the research on each participant at any one time. To show open-ness to what the leaders had to say required me to be supportive and non-judgmental. Respect for the 'person' and for the 'democratic values' of freedom of speech are central to BERA's ethical guidance (BERA, 2004).

My role as a researcher was one of facilitating talk about the learning of participant

leaders (as a way of addressing my research questions). The way we talked about

learning was increasingly guided by my developing conceptual thinking in ways I

hoped would develop into a shared understanding with each 'emergent leader' of their

identity development; understandings I hoped would prove useful to the leaders.

4.3.2. Addressing issues of quality

Respect for 'knowledge' and 'the quality of academic research' are central to BERA's

ethical guidance (BERA, 2004). Planning for quality, the guidance says, is part of my

responsibility to the participants, the sponsors of the research and the community of

educational researchers. This chapter justifies how I believe the methods are fit for

purpose, selected from an awareness of other possibilities (BERA article 36). This

section in particular – along with reflections in chapter 7 - communicates the extent to

which I believe the study is one of quality (BERA article 37).

All researchers need to ensure 'that the findings of the inquiry are worth paying

attention to, worth taking account of' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 p290). I now present

my defence of its quality or 'trustworthiness' (Robson, 2002). The key dimensions to

consider in social science research design are discussed according to three main

issues, as summarised in Table 4.2, with two alternative sets of terminology offered

for each issue.

Table 4.2 Key issues to quality in social science research

Quality issues	Alternative terms applicable to qualitative research	
Ensuring study is dealing with what it claims to be; the findings must accurately describe phenomenon	Internal validity	Credibility
The way understanding is gained from the research and how replicable and stable the findings are likely to be	Reliability	Dependability
Degree to which the results can be generalised to other situations	External validity	Transferability

Sources: Robson, (2002); Yin, (2003), Cohen *et al*, (2000).

These same issues are interpreted differently depending on the paradigm taken for the research. As an interpretivist, working in a flexible, qualitative way, it was not appropriate to use the kind of strategies aimed at achieving validity and reliability usually associated with positivists, such as inter-observer agreement, applying quantitative measurement and tests to the data and direct replication (Robson, 2002). Instead quality was addressed in the following ways:

Internal validity or credibility relates to the extent to which it is clear a study is dealing with what it claims to be. In interpretivist research the aim is for confidence in the results (Hammersley, 1992). A study is credible if participants, and those who know the research context, accept it to be so. This is why getting 'emergent leaders' to confirm my records of their accounts was so important. It was also why I wanted to consider the possibility of talking with others who knew the leaders and their context in the generation of the accounts. I asked each leader to recommend a senior leader with an overview of their learning to be interviewed. This was not to seek triangulation of accounts, as my focus was on the participant's direct account, but to inform our discussions and my understanding. To reduce the criticism of relativism, in which any agreed account is credible (e.g. Wolcott, 1995), it was important to me that

both researcher and participant developed enough of a shared understanding of the purposes and conceptual territory of the study to reach 'informed' agreement of the accounts.

Credibility requires clearly articulated concepts to be used consistently. 'Learning' was a key concept and explicitly used as a term with participants from the outset of the study. As the 'emergent leaders' did not share the same conceptual understanding of learning to me, this could have been considered a potential threat to credibility. However, it was important to me to understand what meaning participants made of their learning and I used interview situations and the data they generated as opportunities to negotiate how learning could be understood. Participants brought accounts of their experiences: I brought the lens of my analytical thinking. The discussions aimed to maximise credibility by developing a shared understanding of the study's content and concepts (Cohen *et al*, 2000).

To allow for such discussions of meaning a respectful and trusting relationship between researcher and participant was needed, central also to my views of relational ethics. In terms of planning for credibility the implications for the research design were:

- prolonged engagement between researcher and participant (between 14-30 months)

- data collection centred around semi-structured interviews which were flexible to explore issues of meaning as they arose

- interviews beginning with a discussion of any issues or clarification of data collected during the previous interview, a transcript of which had been returned

- iterative data collection and analysis allowing feedback from analysis and subsequent discussion

- participants encouraged to support their accounts with images, documents and a chance to talk to a senior leader with an overview of their learning.

Semi-structured interviews were a combination of scaffolding and probing, together with scope for participants to develop accounts. During each interview it was accepted that participants, as all humans, rely on selective recall when articulating accounts and shape stories told either consciously or unconsciously (Berk, 1980). Instability of accounts also result from their being careless, tired, tentative and groping (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I identified three sources of such participant subjectivity or 'bias' with a further three brought by myself as researcher. All six affect credibility as outlined in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Summary of the bias brought to researcher-participant dialogue

Source	Factors affecting account	Threats to credibility	My response
Participant	Whether conscious or unconscious	An account may have been rehearsed to take on a form with which the participant is comfortable or may be told for the first time and is not yet coherent	Both were desirable and explored, in particular accounts of learning that had not been fully thought through by leaders – opportunities were offered for both participants and researcher to develop new appreciations of learning.
	Dealing with memory	Parts of the lived experience may have been forgotten or hidden. If these memories are probed and reconsidered an account may change over time.	If there were influences affecting current belief and practices from the past, it was useful to explore how. This was the main purpose of phase one interviews. Participants explored and were offered chances to develop their appreciations in later interviews.
	Impact of researcher as audience	Participants might tell an account that they think fits in with what the researcher's interests are or shows themselves in the light they wish to be seen, so filtering accounts.	A developing shared sense of understanding as to what the study aimed to explore was important and this needed to be mutually beneficial. Most importantly I expressed the exploratory nature of the study and that there was nothing I particularly wanted to hear.
Researcher	Which questions are asked or not asked	Whether the questions are fixed, the form of the question and which questions are not asked affects the scope and nature of accounts such that aspects of experience might not be revealed.	Interview schedules were guides. In particular in phase one, as long as the key focus on influences on learning was maintained, interviews developed as conversations. As conceptual ideas and analytic methods clarified so interviews became more structured to explore developing understandings with participants.
	Way questions asked and listened to	Non-verbal and verbal researcher responses affect future participants accounts.	I paid attention to nonverbal signals from the participants in all phase one interviews and used these and my research diary to raise issues in subsequent interviews.
	How responses are analysed	By bringing conceptual ideas to the accounts, a filter is applied and some aspects given priority over others. This is a potential threat also to dependability.	I discussed analysis with participants. Iterative feedback on analysis and further dialogue was built into the study.

Overall, the iterative nature of the research design and the exploratory nature of the study aimed to overcome such concerns, together with the transparency this chapter offers about data collection and analytic methods.

112

The need for consistency in construct use also applied to the analytical processes used to explain the data. What I aimed for was a fair 'representation' that 'brought to life' the emergent leaders' identity development, rather than any sense of 'reproduction' (Hammersley, 1992). As well as the participant-researcher discussions I opened my interpretations to peer scrutiny. I presented developing work at two conferences (Fox, 2008; Fox, 2010) and gained useful feedback which affected my understanding of the research. I also exposed data analysis to my supervisors and found three peer students to work with at different stages of the research.

1. A peer doctoral student and I discussed and explored our two different approaches – both methodologically and conceptually - to gathering credible data about school leadership (Pegg and Fox, 2007).

2. A colleague and I discussed and explored our understanding of the ethical dimensions to our respective work (Stutchbury and Fox, 2010)

3. More substantially a further peer doctoral student at another university, also studying leadership in schools using narrative methods, acted as a valued critical friend during the process of case study production.

Reliability or dependability relates to the way understanding is reached through the research. To be dependable hypothetically, if I did the same research again with the same people at the same time, similar, although not necessarily the same, data would be generated. Each 'emergent leader' and their experiences are unique and I accepted that they could not be replicated but that I could reduce the possible threats to dependability by being transparent about the research process and how I was dealing with threats to credibility (as just discussed). Robson asserts that:

Processes that are clear, systematic, well documented, providing safeguards against bias, and so on, [...]constitute a dependability test. (Robson, 1993, p405)

The prolonged engagement between myself and participants in the study and the iterative nature of the design allowing multiple opportunities to return to the data and explore its interpretation were important in dealing with the inevitable instability of data associated with collecting from humans (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

External validity or transferability relates to how well generalisations can be made beyond the study such that the study can have applicability to others. I could not claim that the cases in this study were representative of a particular population. Indeed identifying leaders as 'emergent' had no clear conceptual basis. The diversity of roles and of backgrounds of such leaders was also high and so I could not expect to include all possible circumstances. By including a number of individuals the cases do at least reflect some of this difference.

For transferability what was more important was to allow readers the chance to consider the study's applicability to their own contexts. For readers to be in a position to do this 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973: 1988; Hammersley, 1990; Lincoln and Guba, 1985) of each case was important to report. This was achieved by taking a biographical approach. The case studies offered a chance for practitioners to recognise themselves or their colleagues in the accounts, allowing them to 'realize we are not alone; we can identify with another human being' (Oates, 1991, p7). Researchers with an appreciation of contemporary school contexts would also be able to appreciate the accounts of those in the study. Covering a range of school contexts and individual backgrounds increased the range of readers who could find this work applicable. It is left to the reader, holding a rich understanding of their own context, to apply the work

114

elsewhere (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Robson, 2002). For academics it is important that the analytic methods are made transparent to allow for analytic generalisation to other research contexts (see sections 4.8-4.9).

Four potential audiences are thought likely to have interest in the findings of the study:

1. Other 'emergent' leaders,

2. Teachers yet to take on a leadership role in school,

3. Those who support 'emergent' leaders either in or beyond school,

4. Other researchers interested in the learning of school leaders.

4.4 A study of individuals: Recruitment

To address the issue of how to invite 'emergent leaders' to my study, I needed to find those in schools identified as such. Given the origins of the term (section 1.1) it seemed appropriate to choose the selection criterion as those teachers/leaders schools select for the NCLSCS's LftM programme. I negotiated with the NCLSCS access to their regional centres for details of schools with leaders registered on this programme[16]. Where such information was made available, 'cold' calling of schools was in fact unproductive. Instead, using the same criterion, I contacted schools related to my own previous or my colleagues' research to generate a number of potential participants.

Informed consent was only sought in the first instance for phase one of the study, through contacting potential leaders by email or phone call followed up with a written outline of the purposes of the study. I shared with them my aspirations for the study,

---

[16] This was the limit of the NCLSCS's support.

my expected requests of them and outlined their rights and my responsibilities. Consent was renegotiated for the main phase. Exemplar letters for each phase and the grievance procedure offered forms Appendix A.

In total 20 schools were approached. Recruitment was difficult. In addition to the lack of response from schools, there was a reluctance by gatekeepers to offer contact details of potential participants as well as a low response rate from leaders identified. This lack of engagement was understandable given the potentially demanding nature of the request being made. By Autumn 2005 three 'emergent leaders' were recruited, two from the same school and all three from the primary/middle school sector. All three were female. I decided to begin with these leaders whilst continuing to search for other leaders, focusing on the secondary sector and on finding male participants. The eventual set of seven participants is summarized in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Summary of the emergent leaders who participated in the study

	Pseudo-nym	Gender	School sector	Local Autho-rity	First Degree	Age	Years of teaching	Role
								at the start of the study
Phase 1 only	Laura	F	Primary	Cambs	History	31	4	Personal, Social and Health Education & History coordinator
	Sandra	F	Secondary	Herts	Social Science	51	17	Head of Information and Communicatio n Technology Department
Phases 1 and 2	Aimee	F	Secondary	Herts	English & Drama	29	4	Head of Drama
	Amanda	F	Primary	Cambs	Music	27	2	Music, Foreign Languages and Geography coordinator
	Jacky	F	Primary	Cambs	Sports Science	31	2	Numeracy & Physical Education coordinator
	Phillip	M	Secondary	Cambs	History	36	10	Learning Director
	Margaret	F	Middle	Norfolk	Social Science	51	6	Humanities coordinator

Although a wider range of LAs and more equity across the genders were desirable, Table 4.4 indicates a spread of participants' characteristics and contexts.

Participants varied in their length of involvement in the study. In part this was due to when participants were recruited and in part due to the impact of changing personal circumstances which, for three of the participants, resulted in temporary or full withdrawal from the study.

The study began in a staged way to allow it to begin, whilst continuing to recruit:

- Amanda, Margaret and Jacky, from primary/middle school settings, joined in Autumn 2005,

- Phillip, Sandra and Aimee, from secondary settings, were recruited in Spring 2007.

There were changes in personal circumstance which impacted on recruitment and retention (see Appendix C):

- Jacky took maternity leave for two terms. Laura was recruited from the same school in case Jacky did not return to work and the study. Laura too took maternity leave and left the area and the study after completing phase one,

- Sandra completed phase one but then left the area moving to an independent school in which she did not feel she could continue the study.

Five leaders were retained into the second phase of the study:

- Amanda and Jacky agreed to continue in Summer 2007, remaining in the study through to Summer 2008 – a total of 28-30 months,

- Phillip, Margaret and Aimee agreed to continue in Autumn 2007, also remaining in the study through to Summer 2008 – a total of 14-15 months.

No further reference will be made to Laura and Sandra's data and this study is based on case studies drawn from the five participants who participated in both phases. Full details of the data collection are found in Appendix C.

4.5 Studying learning over time

In sections 4.5 – 4.9 I discuss the methods used in the research design to show how they were used to collect data which could address the research questions. I first present the data collection methods for phase one.

4.5.1 Exploring prior experiences

The significance of prior experience is highlighted by those considering leadership development (e.g. Gronn, 1999; Gronn and Lacey, 2004; Gronn and Ribbins, 1996) and in the wider field of teacher and workplace learning (e.g. Billett, 2001, 2008; Day *et al,* 2007; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2003; Hodkinson and Bloomer, 2002). The importance of this was summarised by Day and colleagues when contextualising the rationale for and findings of the VITAE project:

> There is a developing awareness of the connection between teachers' private lives, the personal and biographical aspects of their careers and how these intersect with and shape professional thoughts and actions (Day *et al*, 2007, p26).

Phase one allowed 'emergent leaders' the time and scope to tell, reflect and build on accounts of what and who had influenced them. This information was to be used to help explain differences in their developing views of leadership (RQ1c) as well as examine how they talked about social participation (RQ2a) to reveal and explain differences in their accounts (RQ2b and 2c). The first three interviews (X, Y and Z) explored learning up to that point in time. In these 'life history' interviews leaders were asked to think broadly about whether personal as well as professional experiences had affected their aspirations, thinking and practice as a teacher and school leader.

The briefs for the three phase one interviews (Figure 4.4) were shared with participants and time, location and order negotiated. It was agreed (and held to) that no interviews would exceed 90 minutes.

Figure 4.4 Briefs for the three phase one interviews

Interview X: Who are you; your history? What and who have influenced you? Until you started your current post. Please supply a C.V. in advance of this interview if possible.

Interview Y: Who are you; when, where and with whom do you learn? You will be generating a network map of connections.

Interview Z: Who are you when you are at school? Based around your current weekly diary.

Flexibility allowed participants to exert control over the imposition being asked of them and negotiation was a feature of the study throughout.

- Participants chose where they were interviewed (whether at home or at school, in offices or classrooms, with others present or privately) and these decisions respected.

  o Most chose to be interviewed at school, usually after teaching hours.

  o Sandra and Amanda requested to be interviewed at home on occasion.

- Participants chose the order for phase one interviews to control how they wanted to introduce themselves, either through discussing current practice first (interview Z) or their fuller biography (interview X)(see Appendix B).

- When participants questioned whether there was any flexibility in the mode of interviews, email versions were offered (used by Margaret and Phillip at times – see Appendix I).

- Some interviews were merged to be more efficient in use of time (second set phase one interviews – see Appendix B) or when participants needed to rearrange timings (phase two interviews – see Appendix I).

- Development of the learning log as a data collection method was trialled and adapted for each individual (see section 4.6).

4.5.2 Reflections on the developing researcher-participant relationship

The first ethical dilemma related to engaging participants in a one-to-one researcher-participant relationship such that participants felt safe to reveal personal thoughts about their aspirations and their learning. This required them to decide on the boundaries between private thoughts and those they were prepared to make public. Constant negotiation with each leader and assurance that boundaries had not been exceeded was necessary to ensure that respect, as central to BERA guidance, was being shown. I quickly realized that there were also deontological and utilitarian considerations when conducting life history interviews by accepting that they carried the potential to do harm (Chapman Hoult 2010; West *et al.* 2007), for example when discussions reflecting on past events uncovered uncomfortable memories. Participants could either be unprepared to share or, in sharing, expose themselves to dealing publicly with the impact of discussing such memories. This required me to act supportively to participants. Whilst psychoanalysts and therapists have appropriate expertise to deal with such discomfort, I personally considered myself unskilled. I advised participants to prepare someone with whom to debrief (planning in line with BERA article 21) and I promised to be alert and responsive to any manifestation of discomfort. Life history interviews were transcribed with attention to non-verbal signs and I reflected on any potential issues in a research diary.

Any such issues were raised in subsequent interviews. Some of these, my concerns and participant responses, are exemplified in relation to Jacky's life history interviews

(Appendix D). Decisions to follow up any sensitive issues depended on whether they seemed to affect learning or not. Some issues, such as Margaret's early confinement to hospital and the impact on her views of parenthood, were not interrogated but I decided to raise something with Jacky relating to her feelings about previous academic achievement, hoping that this would not be considered coercion. This decision was central to understanding Jacky's identity development and the exploration was supported by the reassurances Jacky continued to give.

4.6 Practice and talk: Learning opportunity maps and learning logs

Perceptions of participation were collected through interviews, by using a mapping task, and then examples of learning in practice collected by participants as part of a learning log. Theoretically it was important to explore through talk (RQ2) how participants thought about their social interactions and relationships and hence developed views of themselves as leaders (RQ1). Interview Y asked participants to consider all the communications they were involved in as a way of participants reporting their learning with others. This interview was based around a device adapted from previous and current research work into personal networks (Fox *et al*, 2007, Fox *et al*, 2010: McCormick *et al*, 2010). The *learning opportunities task* is summarised in Figure 4.5 and generated a map. An example forms Appendix E.

Figure 4.5 Brief for the learning opportunities task (extract from interview Y)

Task 2: Mapping task: Who are you: What do you do?

On an A3 sheet of paper show the people with whom you communicate and the source of resources you use in your professional life.

Using pictures or text, and lines to link the pictures/text to show connections, show **with whom and <u>how</u> you relate to these people and resources?** Annotate the drawing as much as you like.

Probing questions:

> *Can you outline what is foremost in your mind as you construct this drawing?*

> *Can you explain what the features mean to you? i.e. the different symbols you have used as a sort of verbal key.*

> *Do you feel this now fully represents how we can view your links with other people and resources?*

Once generated these maps were offered to participants as a representation of their learning opportunities. Maps were reviewed at each revisiting interview to ensure that up-to-date appreciations of the scope of their social participation was considered and discussed. This was particularly important for participants whose circumstances changed.

On the basis of the first map of the leader's learning opportunities, generated in interview Y, participants were encouraged to trial collecting images of their learning over a month period prior to the final, feedback interview. Inspired by the potential for images to be used in research, as advocated by Pink (2001) and Prosser (1998; 2006), I had used a similar approach to collecting examples of learning in a previous study focused on online learning (CREET, 2006). Images offer rich potential for exploratory talk about practice and were thought an important way to provide evidence about 'engagement' as a mode of belonging, which proved to be the most difficult methodologically to access.

My original suggestion was that participants collect ten photographic images which they felt represented their learning, mostly 'as a leader' but also 'as a teacher'. This

was intended to act as what I termed a learning log[17]. I explained that the purpose of this log would be to discuss learning episodes in the subsequent interview. No suggestion was made for participants to make any notes. By making this request of leaders I sought to gain some access to their practice, even if only partial and by representation. Observation of practice Wenger asserts is important to understanding learning as participation. That the leaders were selecting learning episodes offered another way to reveal *their* perspectives on their learning and therefore increase their voice in the study. These images could then act as a stimulus for rich discussions about what they showed, during which co-construction of their meaning could be explored. It was important, ethically, that the collection of these images was of minimal imposition and, for quality, that these images were meaningful to the leader. In terms of imposition, still images were thought to be time efficient, with video footage not practical to ask participants to collect. I offered each leader a disposable camera to use and return for me to process the images to reduce any expense on their part. In the final (feedback) interview of phase one, after being asked to collect images in this way, each participant was asked to reflect on this as a data collection method.

Asking for still imagery raised the second ethical dilemma. Participants asked 'How public would the images be made?' Whilst it was left open that images with adults who had given consent might be included in public outputs, it was agreed that children would not be featured on any images publicly available. To allow for such consent by adults we (the participants and I) decided that those likely to be captured

---

[17]As a methodological tool, although the learning log is related to data collection instruments such as research diaries, journals or logs, it is being used in a very specific way to allow access to the practice of leaders when the researcher was not present to counter the absence of observation/shadowing possible in the research design.

on any images should be given prior warning and a choice. This was done in negotiation with each school's headteacher who was then responsible for briefing staff in school. One statement for gaining this passive but informed consent was developed for use in school and one at external events – for examples see Appendix F. This enabled me, when using images, to be sensitive to the contexts in which participants were working (Pink 2001); an ecological ethical issue. In some schools the taking of images for professional development or display purposes was already prevalent, for example for Margaret:

> I take photographs to show learning has taken place where children don't write things down. So if I've taught something or taken the children somewhere, or we have done an activity I like photographic evidence of learning taking place anyway so that will be no problem for me (Margaret, interview Y, January 2006)

For others, such images were viewed more problematically and would normally never be taken without careful negotiation with parents/carers.

In reviewing the learning log with each leader at the end of phase one some participants raised how difficult learning was to capture as images. They explained that learning was not necessarily planned, that it was not always easy to capture visually and mentioned the inappropriateness of getting out a camera when sensitive inter-personal situations were the subject of the learning. Whilst all participants trialled collecting images in phase one, only Margaret and Aimee collected these throughout. These leaders chose to use their own digital cameras and email the photos to me in advance of the subsequent interview. Phillip, Amanda and Jacky chose to make notes of learning episodes in ways particular to themselves. Amanda used her school planner to jot things down in and brought phrases which would remind her of the episodes; Jacky used post-it notes similarly and Phillip typed a list of episodes. An

example of these record cards is included as part of Appendix Gii. The interview

schedule planned required that there was something concrete to focus on and so either

photos were printed in advance (for Margaret and Aimee) or, at the start of the

interview, for Amanda, Phillip and Jacky we transferred their notes onto record cards.

It was therefore accepted that either record cards and/ or images could form a

participant's learning log and these were the data source through which the mode of

engagement was explored through discussions with participants.

The *learning log* (see Figure 4.6 for the brief as used in phase two) allowed

participants in subsequent interviews to talk about concrete examples of participation

(RQ2a, 2b).

Figure 4.6 Brief for the learning log task

BETWEEN INTERVIEW TASKS: A LEARNING LOG

Over the next month please collect evidence of:

Task 1: At least 8 examples, either with images or notes in your diary as prompts, which represent your learning as a leader.

Be prepared to say what you learnt, how you learnt it, where you learnt it and how it has been helpful to you. Include examples which show where most of your learning as a leader takes place.

Task 2: At least 2 examples which highlight where most of your learning as a teacher takes place.

Be prepared to discuss how your learning as a teacher differs from that as a leader.

The full interview schedules for the two types of interview in phase two, termed

'revisiting' and 'progress' (Figure 4.1), form Appendix Gi and ii. Whilst revisiting

interviews were more general, progress interview discussions focused on concrete

examples from the learning logs, allowing access to a selection of recent experiences

identified by participants as significant learning episodes. Participants started

discussions by selecting the episode which most represented their learning as a

teacher then as a leader (see Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 Extract from interview schedule used for progress interviews

---

Task 1: Exemplification of the major sites of learning

In the last interview you said that most of your learning as a teacher took place ....Can you exemplify this learning?

In the last interview you said that most of your learning as a leader took place ....Can you exemplify this learning?

For each example:

What was learnt?

How did you know that you had learnt something?

What were the motivations behind this learning?

What agency (control) did you have over this learning experience?

Was it significant as to where this learning took place?

Because I had decided to focus on their development as 'emergent leaders' rather than as 'experienced teachers', I tried to bias participant data collection to their learning as a leader rather than as a teacher (Figure 4.6). I was to find that the identities they developed were more complex than this apparent dichotomy.

Discussions were then scaffolded using the interview schedule to make sense of the episodes as learning experiences towards reaching a shared understanding of the learning each leader exemplified. Participants were asked to talk about each episode in different ways, with the images or record cards acting as triggers. After initial questions about each episode separately leaders were asked to rank the set of images/record cards according to three continua: how formal, how planned and how social the learning was (Appendix Gii includes the brief for this task and an image of one of these card sorts). This activity encouraged participants to engage in interpretation that would support my further analyses. The themes of these continua arose from analysis of phase one data and were helpful in interpreting Wenger's mode of engagement (Wenger, 1998).

4.7 Supplementary data collection

In addition to the researcher-participant interviews three other data sources informed the ongoing dialogue about learning with each leader:

1. Interviews with a senior leader recommended by each participant were requested to gain a further perspective on their learning. The interviews also offered a chance to talk about the way the school viewed professional learning. The full interview schedule forms Appendix H. As outlined earlier, interviewing 'significant others' recommended by the participants offered me a chance to hear yet another version of identity stories about, and discuss them with, the participant leaders. By talking to someone about the participant (A) I would be hearing 'a story about A told by a third party to a third party. This story we call A's *third-person identity'* (Sfard and Prusak, 2005, p17). The design of this aspect of the study required the third ethical dilemma of sharing interview evidence between colleagues to be negotiated. The two senior leaders who agreed to do this welcomed this opportunity as an additional chance to feedback their views to participants and wished the accounts, which they checked carefully and agreed, to be shared with participants. This decision may have affected what they said in these interviews. If they had refused I would have been unable to use this data in the biographic case records or discuss it with participants.

2. Participants were regularly encouraged to offer documentary *supplementary evidence* as appeared relevant to their accounts of learning. A range of documents were provided which informed my understanding of their accounts (see Appendix I). Other than the C.V. or application letter, which was used in conjunction with interview X (Figure 4.4), these were not systematically

analysed. The only one which was incorporated into the case record of an 'emergent' leader was an induction pack created by Aimee for new staff which Aimee offered as a reification of what she believed.

3. My research diary (Burgess, 1982) proved valuable – see for example Appendix D. After every interview I recorded orally and transcribed as part of the interview my immediate reflections. These were shared with participants at subsequent interviews and aided in clarification and developing a productive researcher-participant relationship. This process was particularly helpful in allowing participants to challenge researcher inference.

The complete data set for each participant leader is summarized in Appendix I.

4.8 Conceptual and analytic method development

Although intentionally longitudinal to study trajectories of participation, the length of time of the study also generated tensions, only resolved on the completion of this thesis. This centred around the development in conceptual understanding anticipated in the flexible research design. I outline this development and its implications for analytical method development.

I began the study not focused on 'emergent leaders' and on 'identity development' but rather with a vaguer interest in exploring the learning experiences of teachers. I moved from a title of 'an exploration of how *experienced teachers* personalise their professional learning' to 'an exploration of the management of learning by *emergent leaders*'. It was suggested at my probationary review that I reflect on how the 'management of learning' might be thought about and to revisit my research questions. It was through my work as a researcher in an inter-university team which was exploring conceptualisations of learning that I came to appreciate the potential of

a socio-cultural perspective to advancing my research interests. I needed, however, to develop my understanding of this perspective to use it analytically. As I worked towards understanding and applying a suitable analytical framework I changed my research questions several times.

By the time of recruitment I was exploring questions about the origins of personal aspirations and how these were reconciled with school goals through learning (see Appendix A[18]).

By the end of phase one I wanted to draw together and represent the learning participants reported from the life history interviews. For this analysis I adapted a model of teacher knowledge developed by a group of researchers sympathetic to a socio-culturalist perspective (Banks *et al*, 1999). I drew on the work of Elbaz (1983) and Eraut (1994) and my reading of the leadership literature to construct a map of categories of knowledge, which could be considered the result of participants' learning (See Appendix J for the model and an exemplar 'knowledge map'). At the time I believed this model to reveal learning from an individual perspective. Data was mapped onto this model for each participant and this formed the focus of the feedback interview concluding phase one. However I argued with my supervisors whether this model was in fact grounded in cognitive views of knowledge, as discussed in chapter 3, rather than on participatory learning. This line of inquiry did appear to restrict me to identifying what had been learnt, with 'learning' restricted to being represented as arrows (Appendix J). It did not help further a conceptualisation of learning as

---

[18] It should also be noted in these ethical permission letters that I intended to use a questionnaire with nominated colleagues in each school. These were questionnaires developed as part of the TLRP/ESRC funded 'Learning How to Learn – in classrooms, in schools and in networks' project. I had thought it might be useful to gather information about colleagues' values and perceptions of practice to provide another perspective on the culture of the school in which these 'emergent' leaders worked. Although these were collected during phase one and analysis fedback to schools as agreed with each participant I decided that this did not provide information about a participant leader's identity development and this data is not included in this thesis.

participation. In particular it did not aid an understanding of its social, cultural and historical dimensions. I acknowledge that the use of this model with participants has influenced the data set but it was decided, and the decision discussed with participants, that this was an analytic 'dead-end'.

By this time it was clear that it was productive to think about the learning of the leaders as their identity development and, for the next stage of analysis after cycle one of phase two, I applied Wenger's ideas of membership of communities of practice and modes of belonging to these communities (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al, 2002). For each 'learning episode' emergent leaders had collected and discussed I asked the questions 'who is the leader learning as?' i.e. how can their identity be described?, and, 'with whom does the leader identify while learning?' i.e. how does it relate to any membership of communities of practice? The component roles of modes of imagination, alignment and engagement were explored. The results for this stage of the study for Aimee and Margaret, as presented at a European conference on adult identity (Fox, 2008), form Appendix K. The dependability of this analysis was discussed with the participants, my supervisors and at the conference. Despite being able to attribute membership, any communities mentioned did not meet Wenger's criteria for communities of practice as clearly bounded and working in mutual engagement towards a shared repertoire and with joint enterprise. Looking for communities of practice was considered a second analytic 'dead-end'.

Two aspects of Wenger's conceptualizations of identity development were however productive. Firstly, the notion that identity development is processual and happens over time when seen as trajectories of participation, was helpful. This allowed comparison of how the leaders' identities developed (RQ1b, c and 1d). Secondly, the dimensions of modes of belonging in understanding learning as identity development,

taken together with recognizing the role of talk, was helpful in understanding leaders' accounts of social participation and the differences between these accounts. Senses of belonging needed to be interpreted inductively, rather than deductively looking only for communities of practice.

While I found I could apply the characterizations of Wenger (as presented in Figure 3.4) to modes of imagination and alignment, I found his mode of engagement to be less tangible in the data. What I found arising from discussions about learning in relation to concrete examples of practice were a number of dimensions to this learning 'through' and 'in' practice. During 'progress interviews' leaders had been sorting their learning episodes as to how formal or informal, how planned or incidental and how social these had been (Appendix Gii). It was also important how conscious the learning appeared to be. For the phase of deductive analysis of modes of belonging (see Figure 4.8) I drew on Mumford's classification of learning from within the leadership development literature (Mumford, 1993). This accommodated all the dimensions of interest. It did not, however, help develop my thinking about identity development. Although it was used as a heuristic tool for analysis, it formed a third analytic dead-end.

4.9 Synthesis: Learning biography generation and the limits of co-construction

The first biographical product or case record (Figure 4.2) was the result of inductive analysis. As I began this analysis my research questions, relating to Wenger's framework, were:

1. Who does the leader want to be?

2. What have they engaged in to get there?

3. How active have they been in the process?

4. What factors have affected this process?

These questions were used to chunk data sets entered into Atlas.ti qualitative software in a non-mutually exclusive way. I decided during this analysis that I would focus only on question one, which became RQ1, with other data filtered out. This data set was rich enough to explore how leaders talked about their learning (RQ2). I then ordered the resulting data for each participant through progressive 'grounded' sub-coding to raise emergent themes about each emergent leader's learning.

The resultant biography was given a general structure across the five cases, sub-sections showing themes particular to each leader and each 'topped and tailed' with an explanatory prologue and epilogue (exemplified for Phillip's case record as Appendix L). Apart from the prologue and epilogue the content was drawn from the data set and hence was presented to participants as a product largely in their own words. This was designed for the account to be in the leaders' autobiographical 'voice'. I encouraged participants' reactions but with little success, other than to gain agreement for its further use.

Once agreed, this case record was analysed deductively using an adaptation of Wenger's framework of modes of belonging (Figure 4.8 being an adaptation for this study of Figure 3.4).

Figure 4.8 Sub-coding framework applied to data 'chunked' according to Wenger's modes of belonging

Images, aspirations, beliefs as:
Teacher
Leader
Other identities

imagination — alignment

Discourses
Co-ordinated enterprises
Compliance
Complexity
Styles

engagement
Learning through practice:
Intuitively
Incidentally
Retrospectively
Prospectively
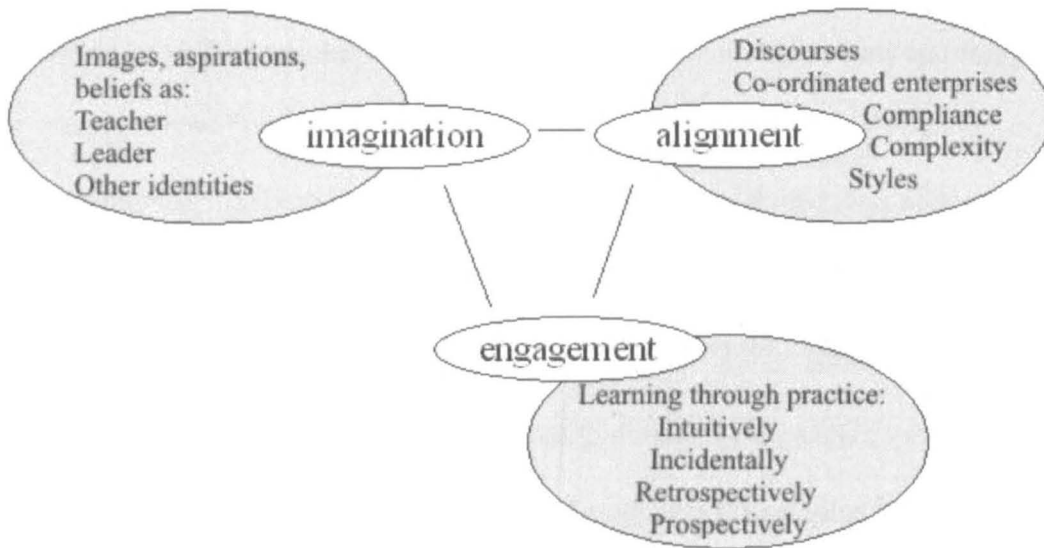
This coding was again using Atlas.ti software of the case record, but this time using mutually exclusive coding. This produced three analytic biographies for modes of 'imagination', 'alignment' and 'engagement' (Figure 4.2) as tabulated data with associated commentaries. These were sub-coded based on categories derived from Wenger's model (see Figure 4.8).

- The mode of imagination codes refer to aspects from Wenger's original model related to identities induced from the data.

- The mode of alignment codes referred to aspects drawn directly from Wenger's model.

- The mode of engagement codes used categories drawn from Mumford's work as a way of codifying Wenger's ideas.

How these aspects related to particular identities such as 'as teacher', 'as leader' etc (derived initially from data about the mode of imagination but informed by analysis of the other two modes) were considered.

It was important to answer research question RQ1a to explore, through all three modes, how leaders reported the type of leader they wanted to become. Although I tried to distinguish between learning 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader', this was not adequate to chart the trajectories of participation (RQ1d). Not only were different identities represented, for example Margaret 'as a learner' (see Table 4.5 below) or Phillip 'as a historian' (see examples of coded data for Phillip in Appendix M), but these identities were not always seen as separate by 'emergent leaders'. The labeling of particular identities were artifacts of the analysis and needed to be thought about in terms of how they affected the type of leader an emergent leader wanted to become (RQ1a) and how they talked about their learning as an emergent leader (RQ2a).

Table 4.5 Subcodes applicable to the deductive analysis of Margaret's case record

By mode of belonging	Imagination– by identity	Alignment – by identity	Alignment – by aspect (Wenger)	Engagement – by identity	Engagement – by learning approach (Mumford)
Sub-categories	As teacher	As teacher	Co-ordinated enterprises	As teacher	Intuitive
	As leader	As leader	Compliance	As leader	Incidental
	As learner	As learner	Discourses	As learner	Retrospective
	As mother		Styles		Prospective
		As manager	Complexity		

I attempted to count the codes by category but had no confidence in the extracts acting as units of comparable nature. Effectively the individuals were now deconstructed and this left me with a methodological problem of how to achieve credible accounts. I took this problem to a European conference on biographical research (Fox, 2010) debating the science and poetry of this genre and discussed how to achieve lifelikeness or 'verisimilitude' (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p7). This, as

well as feedback from my supervisors and critical friend, was helpful in moving me on to produce the final narrative biographical case study overviews in chapter 5.

I accepted that I had already explored and examined the data systematically and now needed to step back to generate learning biographies which I believed best represented these five individuals who I had got to know well. This draws on the biographical tradition underpinning work which takes a holistic and empathetic view of biography generation (Merrill and West, 2009; West, 2010) based on feminist and psychological origins.

I address the final methodological and ethical issue, that of whose account was being reported in the biographies. This relates to how much collaboration and co-construction of the biographical account I succeeded in creating, given the relational ethical aspirations cited as my basis (section 4.3.1) for the study. How much did the leaders' have 'voice' in this study, which was designed to give them a 'voice'? The accounts were never planned to be autobiographical as the leaders talked about their learning in conversation, rather than alone. There were opportunities for participants to engage with data generated up until biography production and this did allow participants to confirm the basis of what would be reported. However, the decision to explore particular analytical lines of inquiry saw me, rather than the participants, leading analysis. Participants engaged very little with the analyses presented to them in advance of interviews and certainly did not suggest lines of inquiry. There was some evidence of a shared understanding of identity development being conceptualized during later interviews, particularly by Aimee.

I could not claim any co-construction of accounts in the generation of biographies. Participants did not respond to requests to discuss the initial biography (or case record). Either the imposition on time had been exceeded or this final stage had little

value to them. I found it helpful to read that the final stages of biography production might be viewed as 'a moving out of the collaborative relationship to a relationship where we speak more clearly with the researcher "I" (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p10). This gave me the confidence to step away and immerse myself in the data generated. In writing the case study overview biographies I applied the conceptual framework, in keeping with my understandings of it, as well as aiming for 'verisimilitude'. To aid the former I used the support of discussion with academic colleagues, to aid the latter I kept in mind how comfortable I would be in discussing the products with each leader, knowing them as I did by then. These were useful checks on the credibility of the analyses.

The five case studies in chapter 5 are therefore informed by the earlier processes of inductive and deductive analysis of the data set, but go further to 'bring to life' the 'singers' in this study - giving them a voice in the academic literature about leadership development.

Chapter 5 The learning biographies of five 'emergent leaders'

The following five narrative biographical accounts reveal who each of the five leaders wanted to become (to address RQ1) as well as how they talked about their learning (to address RQ2). As 'learning biographies' they can be interpreted in terms of the trajectories of participation they reveal, when viewed through a social participatory lens. Emergent leaders' learning over time is *described* in terms of how they participated with others and their identity development *explained* with reference to the notion of three modes of belonging (of imagination, alignment and engagement). The purpose of these biographies was to reflect on how the notion of 'emergence' could be applied to the experiences of these five 'emergent leaders' (RQ3).

The five leaders were first introduced in pen-portraits in Chapter 1.4, and a summary of their experience tabulated as Table 4.4. I now capture their trajectories of participation in a simple phrase or sentence for each 'emergent leader' (Table 5.1) to support the reader in recalling each leader. These characterizations do not refer to particular roles, because they summarise participation evidenced across roles.

Table 5.1 An overview of the five emergent leaders' learning biographies

Section	Leader	Characterisation of the trajectories of participation
5.1	Amanda	Driven by first a passion for participation in Music then a search for efficiency in organisations
5.2	Margaret	Ever curious, trusting and wanting to belong; as a learner
5.3	Phillip	Constantly balancing expectations of him against personal aspirations
5.4	Aimee	Wanting to make progress, developing a vision of leadership but with 'real life' getting in the way and needing to constantly review and readjust
5.5	Jacky	A team player: whose team dissipated and became isolated

I have chosen the order of these accounts to offer contrasting accounts. For example I separate the accounts of Amanda and Jacky, despite their beginning the study in the same school, as they reveal very different identity development. I conclude with Jacky as the most dramatic account.

Within the biographies I indicate particular identities developing, such as 'as teacher' or 'as leader' but show that such identities are complex. How problematic it is to 'label' identities is discussed in Chapter 6. Such 'labelling' does not imply stasis or simplicity but is a device that can be helpful in understanding the complexity of identity development for any one individual. The biographies communicate, when all five case studies are considered, the differences between individual leaders - even when they are all considered to be 'emergent leaders' in contemporary English schools.

Seven schools are represented by the leaders' experiences throughout the study as summarized in Table 5.2 below. This provides some detail of the contexts in which each leader was working and might be useful for readers to refer back to when considering the discussion of leaders' experiences across the accounts in chapter 6.

Table 5.2 Characteristics of the seven state schools experienced by the five leaders

School		1.[19]	2.[20]	3.[21]	4.[22]	5.[23]	6.[24]	7.[25]
Environs	Location	Large Cambs village with one primary, one infant, one junior school and one secondary school.	The same large Cambs village as 1 but now, since 2007, with two primary schools and the secondary school.	Large Cambs town, in Eastern suburb of social deprivation, one of seven primary schools. Includes children's centre. Two local secondary schools.	Large Cambs village (the same as 1 and 2). The only secondary school as an 11-16 Community College.	Large Herts town, in a Northern suburb. One of four large secondary schools in close proximity.	Small Norfolk village with the first, middle and 11-16 secondary schools all drawing children from a wide rural area.	The same small Norfolk village with now, since 2007, one primary school with children's centre and secondary school.
Pupils	Age range	7-11	4-11	3-11	11-16	11-18	8-12	3-11
	Roll	160	250	284 (high turnover and falling roll)	1028	1100 (high turnover and rising roll)	500	524 (expected to fall after merger)
	Characteristics	Below ave FSM[26] Above ave SEN[27] Most white British, <1% EFL[28]	Ave FSM Ave SEN Most white British with 4% EFL	Above ave FSM Above ave SEN Most White British	Well below ave FSM Below ave SEN Most White British <2% EFL	Below ave FSM Slightly below ave SEN Most White British	Slightly below ave FSM Ave SEN Most White British <2% EFL	Ave FSM Ave SEN Most White British
Staff	No. teachers	10	13	13	64	80	16	14
	Leadership	HT, DHT & 2 TLRs	HT, DHT	HT, DHT & AHT	HT, DHT & 2 AHTs	HT, 2 DHTs & 4 AHTs	HT & 2 DHTs	HT & 2 DHTs
	Case emergent leaders	Jacky & Amanda 1st schools	Jacky 2nd school	Amanda 2nd school	Phillip	Aimee	Margaret 1st school	Margaret 2nd school

[19] Data from 2003 Ofsted report.

[20] Data from 2009 Ofsted report.

[21] Data from 2004 Ofsted report/2008 school prospectus.

[22] Data from 2006 and 2008 Ofsted reports and school website.

[23] Data from 2006 Ofsted report.

[24] Data from 2002 Ofsted report.

[25] Data from 2008 Ofsted report and 2010 school prospectus.

[26] FSM = Free School Meals (a measure used by Ofsted of social deprivation, although all eligible families do not necessarily take up this offer)

[27] SEN = Special Educational Needs (in the case a summary of the general level of children registered with learning difficulties, rather than only those with a formal statement of need)

[28] EFL = English as a Foreign Language

Each biographical account begins with a short descriptive account of the educational

background of each leader. They conclude with a summary of the identities developed

by each leader.

5.1 Amanda: Driven first, by a passion for music, then a search for efficiency

Amanda began her education in the state sector at a rural Cambridgeshire primary school. She then boarded in Nottinghamshire at a co-educational independent school for both day and boarding pupils from the ages of 13 to 18. She delayed applying to university to read music, first spending a year teaching music at a similar independent co-educational day and boarding school to her own. She then completed her undergraduate music degree at a Russell Group university[29] in the same County as her upbringing and went straight on to a PGCE at the same university. Amanda then went straight from this qualification into her first teaching post, also in Cambridgeshire.

Amanda and Jacky both worked in the same small, rural junior school in the South East of England (covering 7-11 year olds). They were introduced to me by their headteacher as two 'emerging leaders' about to start the LftM programme. Both teachers had joined the school as NQTs two years previously. They were to follow very different trajectories over the course of the study.

When Amanda joined the study she was teaching 7-9 year olds as one of a team of three class teachers. She also coordinated music (her main specialism), modern foreign languages and geography and had recently been invited to become both the deputy special educational needs coordinator and assessment coordinator. Soon after joining the study, Amanda (and Jacky) were invited to form a new senior leadership team, together with the longstanding head and deputy headteachers. This was at a time when the school was receiving LA support due to poor pupil attainment.

---

[29] This group represents what might be considered the top 20 Universities in the UK. See also: http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/

The school then found it was to merge with its feeder infant school. The impact of this restructuring was stressful for the incumbent school leadership resulted in long-term absence by both head and deputy headteachers. This left Amanda at times in charge of the school in her third year of teaching. Although Amanda rose to this challenge, she reported how she was looking for more support in emerging as a senior leader and successfully applied to another primary school in the same LA as an assistant headteacher. This account explores what Amanda thought about how she had come to be a primary school teacher and leader, what she was trying to achieve and how she was 'becoming' a senior leader.

Music teaching as a career?

Amanda excelled at music when she was at school, taking music GCSE two years earlier than her peers and specialising in playing both organ and piano. Her identity as a musician was influenced by her family, who were also musical and keen to support the development of her musical skills from a young age. She said:

> We had always done a lot of music in the family because [...] my brother was into singing and both my parents are musical[...]and because we went to church, I had always sung in church choirs. Neither of my parents are formally musically educated. My mum had really wanted a piano so decided to do A level music thinking that if she did then her parents would buy her a piano[...]She did the A level and didn't get the piano and got a bad A level and no piano so she probably then thought, 'I didn't get these opportunities, so my kids will!'[...]So, I started piano lessons when I was about 6[...]I went through a phase of really hating the practice and absolutely adamant I was going to give up. Now I am very glad no-one did allow me to give up (first interview, Jan06, 2:9-10)

Once in the sixth form Amanda was encouraged to apply for an organ scholarship at university. She explained that her peers and teachers also saw her as a musician such

that it was assumed that she would go on to study music. The way she came to view herself as a musician relates to her mode of imagination. An accident to her hand just before the organ trials meant that she had to defer applying for a year, during which time she decided to gain some music teaching experience and, through an advert placed at her own school, took on a role as teaching assistant at another independent secondary school. This began to offer her 'images' of potentially 'becoming' a teacher (mode of imagination). Amanda explained her interest in teaching also originated in her family, which contained a number of teachers. She began to explore teaching as a way to respond to the expectations of others that she would pursue a career involving music. She decided that she was not suited to 'becoming' a secondary school music teacher:

> I had done my 'gap' year before which was working in a school so I think I had decided that I was going into teaching. I did do some work experience after my first year at university in secondary school as a music teacher and went off the idea quite rapidly[...] (first interview, Jan06, 2: 36).

This view was despite her being an organ scholar when reading music at university. Amanda became increasingly dissatisfied with both the academic study of music as a subject and her perception of her skills. Amanda articulated the 'images' of the kind of secondary music teacher she would have wanted to become, explained in relation to her own teachers (mode of imagination), but that she could not see herself 'becoming':

> I keep saying I can't teach A-level in school because I am not good enough. If someone brings along their grade 8 pieces in and says, 'Can you accompany me?' I can't sight-read the part which all sorts of music teachers can do. They can sight read it and they can look at your GCSE composition and busk an accompaniment, which again I just can't do. So I can't do what I saw teachers could do for me. So I didn't think I should be doing it. I am sure there are

people teaching A level who are far less qualified than I...but I don't feel that I could do the subject justice (first interview, Jan 06, 2: 65).

Amanda, however, retained a commitment to music and her identity as a musician developed by playing for and conducting a local choir and teaching a wide range of pupils privately. In these ways she matched her mode of engagement with her mode of imagination. She continued both with the choir and private teaching from her time at university through to, and throughout, this study. On graduating, she decided to train as a primary school teacher, as a way of expressing her music specialist skills and enthusiasm for music and took over music coordination during her first year of teaching. Her identity as a teacher included the aspiration to try to increase participation in music in the school (mode of imagination). She explained:

> I was determined to get more people playing instruments, both groups in school like recorders, and outside school, because I felt there were about 20 people out of 170 doing anything, and I thought a lot more should be doing something[...]To start with I thought I couldn't see who would be wanting to do it because nobody seemed keen on anything, but I just worked on it and got people playing, mostly more people playing the recorder and got various extra staff in to teach that ...and then did a huge plug when it came to see who wanted to start other instruments the following year (third interview, Mar 06, 4: 7).

Within a year, nearly half of the children were involved in practical music. Amanda's success in this mission saw her needing to coordinate with external music providers, support staff, parents and bring on board other teachers, including one from the local secondary school (mode of engagement). This collaborative way of working broke new ground for the school. This related to her identity development in relation to the mode of alignment and she began to identify as a leader able to transform aspects of a school. In addition to her vision of widening participation in music, her success also

related to the ways she 'engaged', through her proactivity, confidence, relationship-building and creativity.

Eager, confident and creative

From arriving at the school, Amanda was keen to volunteer for anything she saw needed doing, taking on other subject coordination roles when offered in staff meetings. The subjects she coordinated were not necessarily ones she had formal qualifications for, but ones she had developed an interest and confidence in (her mode of engagement matching her mode of imagination). Her interests in languages and geography she attributed to her family experiences and her father in particular (mode of imagination). Her enthusiasm and capabilities as a leader were noted quickly by the headteacher (Paula) who invited Amanda to form part of a new senior leadership team. Amanda was cynical about the intentions of the headteacher in promoting her. She said:

> Basically [Jacky and I] were put on the leadership team. Paula was thinking about the future, and wrote the job descriptions to fit what we were already doing. The job descriptions she's written are intended to be what we already do, which isn't the point of TLRs[30]. She's doing it because she doesn't want us to leave (second interview, Feb 06, 3: 24).

Amanda was uncomfortable with the job descriptions for the TLRs having been written specifically for the two 'emerging leaders'. She thought this was not necessarily in the school's best interests, nor those of future incumbents of these posts, explaining that she felt their responsibilities were split between them arbitrarily and not as the result of strategic thinking. Despite her misgivings, Amanda began to see herself 'as a school leader'.

---

[30] For an explanation see the glossary and section 2.3.

Shadowing the special needs coordinator proved a valued experience for Amanda. She could work closely with the respected deputy headteacher (Lucy), being offered chances to gain different experiences related to the role in what she termed a 'safe' way. This related to her mode of engagement. The newly formed assessment coordination role proved more challenging. This was a role she shared with Jacky. Jacky's role was to use the data to inform teaching and learning, Amanda's to ensure assessment data was gathered and managed in school. There were no clear ways offered to the leaders as to how to go about these tasks. Amanda felt confident, competent and enthusiastic about using technology to support her role. She could identify what technical support was needed when bringing in new data handling software to the school and did this both by finding help as well as teaching herself the necessary skills. Current senior leaders could not help with this and so there was no-one with whom to identify in leading this aspect of school development. She recalled:

> We were supposed to have been using a programme called Assessment Manager, but there was nobody in the school that knew how this programme worked, so at the end of the year (my second year) people started saying, 'can you tell us what teacher assessments you have so we can update them?' Target tracker was then brought from a course, and I went on this course which made me think, 'OK, this is what we should be doing, but how do we do it?' (third interview, Mar 06, 4: 16).

By developing further personal expertise in data handling, Amanda was able to develop her understanding of the potential and purposes of such software; introducing this to the school and training her colleagues. In this way she balanced modes of imagination (her aspirations) with modes of alignment (fitting in with school systems) and modes of engagement (the way she went about bringing in the use of this

software). Amanda had begun to see duplication of effort and, through trial and error, sought the most efficient way of using data in the school.

Amanda remained excited about the opportunities to take on further responsibility but also cautious of the repercussions these responsibilities might raise, in terms of accountability. She was particularly concerned by the way the headteacher was ambiguous about what needed doing and was starting to become absent at short notice. Amanda reflected:

> It's one of those things that you think, a few months ago I'm never going to be Deputy for years and years, and how on earth would you become one anyway, and then find it's purely circumstances[...]It's all a bit of a shock to the system really, but I'm excited about it...But also I don't know, basically I've sort of said to myself 'Should I do it? Is it safe?' Because if Paula suddenly threw a wobbly and left or something, it would be very awkward (third interview, Mar 06, 4: 22-23).

Amanda found reassurance from the current deputy headteacher and discussed hypothetically with Lucy, Jacky and her partner how to cope with any blame that might become attributed to them. She decided that she could 'imagine' being a senior leader and was prepared to accept these risks, despite coming to the conclusion that her headteacher was unlikely to offer much support or guidance. Amanda was aware that there was a lot of freedom in how to go about the role and tasks. This perception related to her mode of alignment and was confirmed by later experiences:

> I think from my own perspective I have very rarely been given an instruction. The Head didn't ever advise on anything and I could have done nothing or anything. She did complain about other members of staff not doing something or other but then I thought if they hadn't been asked then why would you expect them to have done it? That could have been what she had been saying about me if I hadn't second-guessed what needed doing. When I did try things it was just

because they felt like a good idea to get things done (fifth interview, Jun 07, 10: 16).

Amanda enjoyed this freedom to come up with ideas and experiment with them. She was confident and creative enough to enjoy such a challenge. She identified problems in the organisation of the school and drew on advice from outside school to 'imagine' how to tackle tasks more efficiently, as well as becoming clearer about the full range of tasks expected of a school. This saw her developing a strategic vision relating to the mode of imagination. Acting as a governor also helped her understand the context in which the school was working and school priorities. However, when she did need support, she often found that it was not there either because the skills she wanted advice for were not available in school, or because the two more senior leaders became increasingly absent. Amanda explained that:

> [...] not having enough guidance regarding prioritising [has been a big demotivator]. Help in how to break down big tasks. As a leader I hate it when I think I have ended up wasting time (fifth interview, Jun 07, 10: 31)

Her mode of alignment with school did not support her mode of engagement. Amanda was clear that she saw herself as potentially becoming a capable senior leader. She felt that she needed more help in acquiring a fuller understanding of the scope of the roles of deputy and headteacher, such that she could better 'imagine' how to inhabit these roles. Once acting as a senior leader, Amanda talked little about her learning as a teacher, either in relation to her classroom practice or to the development of her subject specialisms. She continued to teach a class, coordinate three subject areas and teach music privately. Her main focus now was on developing her identity as an aware and effective 'senior leader'.

149

Early senior leadership experience

Because the school was identified as having poor pupil attainment, the new senior leadership team were invited to join a primary Leadership Programme organised by the LA. This involved a series of day attendances by the whole team at off-site development days and consultant support from the Authority. Without explanation to her colleagues, Paula did not attend many of these days.

Amanda explained that this programme was designed to give leadership teams time to develop a vision for their school and action plans for leadership towards this vision. She highly valued the days out. They made her aware of a range of processes she believed should already be in place in school, as well as alternative ways of organising school leadership. These 'images' of leadership offered new possibilities for her developing identity 'as a senior leader'. Some of this information she gained from the formal sessions and some from informally talking to other attendees. Amanda came back from these sessions determined to bring the school into line with what she now saw were normative expectations of it, despite what she considered inertia by Paula. In particular she led the introduction and setting up of a performance management system, reporting:

> In the last three years we have never had performance management in school, it hasn't been in place for anyone[...]It has never been mentioned. Because of the primary Leadership Programme we flagged this up with the headteacher and her initial response was 'Oh yes you had that because you got a TLR point'. So that's not at all in place although she believes it sort of has been so I'm now doing performance management for TAs and basically once Lucy, the Deputy headteacher, is back we will sort out exactly who does who (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 8).

By this time, in the run up to the planned merger, Paula or Lucy were hardly in school and Amanda was either acting as deputy or headteacher. Although she considered she was able to 'manage' what needed to be done, Amanda did not enjoy being 'thrown in at the deep end' without support. She reported learning through her mistakes rather than either proactively drawing on advice or learning from observing others. Amanda's account of engagement in leadership practice therefore does not fit well with Wenger's notions of apprenticeship or with the communities of practice model.

Amanda applied for an assistant headteacher's position at another school, specifically seeking support in developing the skills, knowledge and understanding to inhabit senior leadership positions with confidence. She desired a position that would feel more like an apprenticeship guided by a more senior colleague. She reflected:

> I am glad that my time as deputy and head has been time limited but was interesting at the time (fifth interview, Jun 07, 10: 22).

As with her first school, her second was also identified by the LA as having poor pupil performance. In addition to the school being in a relatively deprived area Amanda quickly deduced that the problem seemed to relate to problems with staff motivation. She was informed by a friend at church that the current deputy headteacher was considered resistant to change and her appointment was made to help overcome this. Simon, her new headteacher, explained to Amanda that she had been appointed to model good teaching practice and to bring in new ideas about teaching and learning to the school. Amanda felt confident that she could do both, but was to find this emphasis on her teaching problematic because she saw herself developing more 'as a leader' than 'as a teacher'.

At interview Simon had explained that he would support Amanda in her 'emergence' as a senior leader, allowing her opportunities to experience and discuss any aspect of

school leadership. Theirs was a relationship she came to perceive as a mixture of shared leadership and mentoring. She summarised this as follows:

> [My relationship with Simon is] a partnership but he's sort of mentoring me, but at the end of the day he is the boss. A wonky partnership in that we're supposed to be doing things together, it's not equal (seventh interview, Apr 08, 8: 2).

In this second school Amanda's accounts did not mention music teaching or coordination in school, although she did refer to still running the local church choir and taking private pupils. Her music teaching now seemed completely separated from her sense of herself 'as a senior leader'. However, given the expectations of her headteacher, she needed to pay more attention to her identity as a classroom teacher than she wanted to. When she talked about how it was difficult to transfer her good teaching practice to new children with different needs this related to her mode of engagement. She was surprised and frustrated by the low expectations and slow pace of pupil learning at this school. This implies an imbalance between the mode of alignment and the mode of imagination. On the one hand, she tried to adjust her practice in line with observation feedback from her headteacher (related to the mode of engagement). On the other, she tried to explore with other teachers the basis for this school culture (related to the mode of alignment). She also talked about the frustrations of mentoring a teacher identified as having competency issues. With reference to her role in peer tutoring this colleague she reflected how:

> [...]you must show your working to show them. Even if you can do it in your head you must show the working. I know a kid feels frustrated when they have to do that. To what extent should I be doing that because I'm being used as the model teacher? (sixth interview, Dec 07, 6: 48).

Amanda expressed frustration at the time needed for this one-to-one mentoring role, something she did not see as a central part of her view of herself 'as a leader', as well as on the attention to her as a 'model' teacher by the headteacher. She reflected:

> Hypothetically say I'm very good at teaching something and therefore I might be able to 'wing' a lesson without a plan, well [the teacher I am supporting] would need a detailed plan. To what extent should I be doing things in more detail if it's not necessarily for me to teach effectively just to prove to the other teachers that I am doing things properly? Is that good use of my time? Just hypothetically (sixth interview, Dec 07, 6: 47).

As a result of her experiences in her first school Amanda had prioritised her development as a leader over any development as a teacher and she was finding it difficult when expected to 'reconcile' these two identities at this second school.

Working 'in the middle'

Amanda was keen to make a difference in her second school as a leader and decided to focus on two strands. The first was in making the work of the school more efficient, continuing her focus from her previous school. The second was in motivating the staff to show more commitment to the improvement of the school. While Amanda found it easy to analyse the new situation in which she found herself, she was not immediately sure how best to respond.

She had come to view schools as inefficient organisations. This 'image' was derived from her feelings of frustration, her conversations with other leaders on courses and those she spoke to who worked in other types of organisations. She regularly asked her partner, an actuary, and his friends for their perspectives on how systems and tasks could be carried out. Her reflections on these discussions offered alternative 'images' of leading and managing. The staff motivation issue was not something she

had experienced before with colleagues and to tackle this she also needed to be creative. Amanda explained:

> It would have been more ad hoc in [my old school]. We basically would have sat around over a cup of tea, and said, 'shall we all do it together tonight?', 'Yeah, why not? Otherwise we'll never get it done'. We were honest with ourselves[...] 'It's a nasty job, let's get on with it and do it together'. Whereas this is me doing it from above basically - it is similar but different (sixth interview, Dec 07, 6: 25).

When interviewed Simon explained that he hoped Amanda's own behaviour would act as an inspiration to the others. Amanda however did not think that modelling was enough and wanted to develop a culture of improvement. This sees a contrast between their two views of leadership and helps to explain the tensions Amanda was reporting. Amanda sought to contrive what had developed naturally in the culture of the previous school by offering teachers support sessions for tasks, providing biscuits and adapting the agendas of meetings to become productive working time.

One of the reasons Amanda found it difficult to 'reconcile' her identities as a teacher and leader was that being expected to be a model teacher appeared to her to be counter-productive to what she was trying to do in creating more equable, collegial conditions for staff to work as peers. Amanda cited being 'in the middle' as a particular challenge for her in working out who she was in the school in relation to who she wanted to become, reporting:

> It's almost now like he can use me to tell them what to do in a different sort of way, but that means I've got to learn how to handle it, because obviously I don't want to, for my own sake, fall out with them as we've still got to find a way of getting things done. If I fall out with him, that's not good either. So it's sort of treading the middle line and staying on the good side of both (sixth interview, Dec 07, 6: 33).

As Simon observed, Amanda was developing no close friendships in the school:

> I get a bit concerned that she's good at not having the personal friendship side with some of the staff but at the same time her role as assistant head can be isolating. She gets on really well with everyone but I don't want her to be an 'alone' person. (headteacher interview, Jan 08, 7: 38).

Even thought this was in contrast to her previous school Amanda was not concerned by the lack of in school friendships, finding enough support from her headteacher, the external consultant and outside school friends, some of whom were also school leaders.

Confidence and competence

Amanda's practice as a leader, her enthusiasm, diplomacy and the strategies she employed, began to overcome what she saw as staff inertia. Her progress was evidenced and supported by a LA advisor working with the school to raise attainment. It was also appreciated by her headteacher, who reported:

> I've been really impressed by the way she is working alongside teachers and getting in there. The approach that, if you all come on Thursday night I will do the coffee and biscuits, is working quite well and people are using her now as a reference (headteacher interview, Jan 08, 7: 21).

Amanda grew in confidence in her skills and potential as a school leader such that she felt happy to challenge rather than merely accept Simon's approaches and he was happy for her to do so, as reported below. These responses provide insight into the 'wonky partnership' Amanda referred to earlier:

> I was going through the school development plan again so we had a day of two where we could work together and she was extremely useful in moving us forward just by having someone else there[...]being able to write together was

very useful[...]I used Amanda as an outsider coming in with a new, useful view point (headteacher interview, Jan 08, 7: 41).

She's teaching me. I don't do it so much these days[...]I'm fairly in touch on the theoretical side. She needs to keep me in touch with the practical side (headteacher interview, Jan 08, 7: 49).

Although Amanda did not say explicitly, it was apparent that Amanda aspired to become a headteacher in the near future. She displayed competence in awareness of current school issues related to teaching and leading, leading change, managing tasks and budgets and thinking laterally as to how to solve problems. For Amanda these appeared to be the success criteria for her 'emergence' - achieving efficiency and effectiveness. To fully achieve them she would need to take overall responsibility for a school, hence promotion to a position of Headship.

Summarising Amanda's identity development

A narrative summary of Amanda's identities and their development is followed by a visual representation of her identity development. This approach to visualising identity development is discussed and reflected upon at the end of section 6.1.2.

Amanda left school with a strong identity 'as a musician' supported by the views of others in her school and family who saw her engaging in and excelling in playing and leading music. However at university she decided she did not see herself as good enough to perform and lost interest in the study of music academically. She decided that she enjoyed encouraging and supporting others to participate in music and so developed an identity 'as a potential teacher'. Again, she decided she was not a good enough musician to teach at secondary school level so chose to train as a primary teacher and take an active role in increasing music participation. In this way she could

match her mode of engagement in practice with her mode of imagination in valuing music participation.

After a couple of years in school one, Amanda became more interested in improving the organisation as a whole, than developing her classroom practice or music tuition and developed the identity 'as a school leader'. She paid attention to the discourses, ways of working and complexity associated with her school through the mode of alignment and decided that they did match her increasing understanding of how an organisation could work (mode of imagination). Her developing view of leadership aimed at making a school an efficient and effective organisation was informed by her participation on the primary leadership programme and through discussions with others working beyond education. This involved her in analysing problems in the school and being creative in how to solve them (mode of engagement). Circumstances found her needing to take on senior leadership roles. Despite a lack of support in how to go about this the freedom she experienced to act as a senior leader resulted in her growing in her capabilities and confidence to do so and she developed an identity 'as a senior leader'.

To further this aspiration, she moved school to find a more supportive environment in which to develop her practice as a senior leader (mode of engagement) and she found a post in which she had the support of a headteacher. He refocused attention on her teaching role, which caused tensions between her identities 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader'. This tension is explained by their contrasting views of how leadership can be used for school improvement. Whilst Amanda wanted to develop school culture and make systems efficient, Simon wanted to use Amanda to inspire others through 'model' teaching and mentoring. He did offer Amanda opportunities to talk about her ideas of leadership (mode of imagination) and to develop her practice as a leader

(mode of engagement) and, beyond the study, Amanda successfully applied for a headteacher position, now in a third school.

Figure 5.1 A representation of the development of Amanda's identities
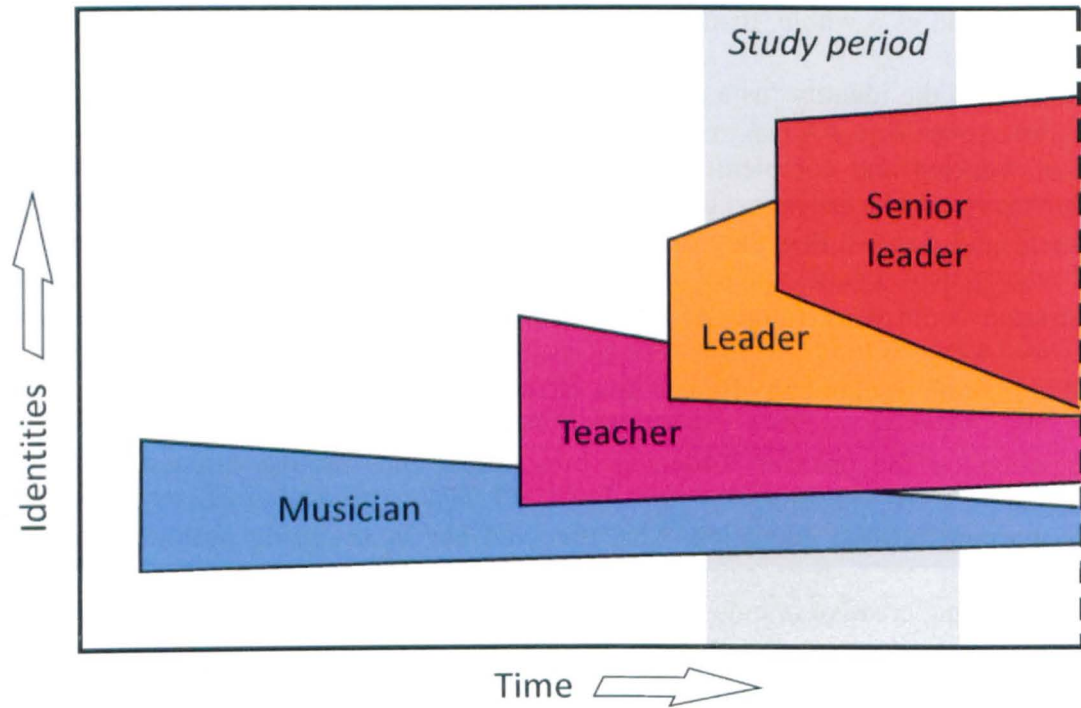
5.2 Margaret: Ever curious, trusting and wanting to belong – a learner

Margaret's primary education was in an Essex Convent school. She then went on to a Roman Catholic High School, also in Essex. She moved in the sixth form to the local further education college to study A levels. She then studied social science as an undergraduate degree at, what was at that time termed, a Polytechnic university in another County. She moved to Norfolk to work and raise a family and did not return to formal education until 19 years later when she studied at the local university for a second first degree, this time in education, followed by a PGCE. Margaret went straight on from these qualifications to teach in Norfolk.

Margaret trained specifically for teaching in middle schools, which, as outlined in Table 1.1, cater for the 7-13 age range and are found in only a few LAs in England. By the end of the study Norfolk Local Authority changed its policy about having such middle schools and, along with others in the Authority, the school was restructured to become a primary school.

Teaching was a second career for Margaret, having originally trained as a retail manager. She only considered teaching when acting as a teaching assistant (TA[31]) in her daughters' schools. There she was encouraged by teachers with whom she worked to train as a teacher. Margaret was in her sixth year of teaching and in her second school when she joined the study. She had held responsibilities as deputy literacy coordinator and coordinator for senior pupils and, two years previously, was offered the more substantial role of Humanities (history, geography and RE) coordination. This matched her interests, if not any particular academic background other than an A

---

[31] See also the explanatory note in the glossary.

level in geography, in these subjects. To support her understanding of the potential of such a role she had been invited onto the LftM programme, which she had just completed when starting this study. Although Margaret was prepared to talk about how she was developing as a leader this account shows how she much preferred to talk about her teaching and learning.

Margaret held clear views on who she wanted to become and was proactive in ensuring her participation matched such views. On occasion, however, Margaret reflected that she felt frustrated not to have achieved further status as a leader, for example gaining a TLR point. However in many ways role progression was incidental to her development of her passions as a teacher and her loyalty to the school and headteacher.

Under-confidence and vision: Teaching as a second career

On starting a family when working as a retail manager, Margaret took a complete career break. This was important to Margaret and her husband, as it had been for her mother. When her children started school Margaret did not return to this line of work as she wanted to work part-time and continue to support her children. She took part-time work first, as a book-keeper and receptionist and later, as a TA in her daughters' school. She also became a school governor of their secondary school, a role she held for eight years. As a mother Margaret referred to how she empathised with colleagues who had made a similar career break:

> Both of the [the class teachers I was an assistant in] were female, vibrant, engaging. I was inspired by how they looked - warm and approachable. Both shared my values of being at home full-time with small children and had come back into teaching after time off. I still keep in touch with them both (second interview, Feb 06, 2: 12).

Margaret was encouraged by one of the class teachers she supported, as well as the chair of governors of the secondary school, to consider teaching. This required a huge effort by Margaret as her first social science degree was not considered to contain enough subject content to take a PGCE directly, having been in social science which is not a National Curriculum subject. Also, this Ordinary degree she only obtained at a Pass level. Margaret chose to study part-time for a BEd degree, negotiating to use her work as a TA to gain the necessary practical experience. This Honours degree she completed with an Upper Second level. She then, again part-time, studied a PGCE. This background led Margaret to feel that she was not highly qualified in terms of subject expertise. Although Margaret's mother also retrained as a teacher at a similar age and went on to become a primary school deputy headteacher Margaret did not cite this as a reason for her own decision to become a teacher.

Having worked as a TA, Margaret retained a lasting interest in this role. Her undergraduate thesis explored the responsibilities of TAs across three LAs. This offered her 'images' of how this role was experienced. Margaret did not talk about how she had felt when working as a TA but she developed a vision of how she envisaged working with them 'as a teacher' (the mode of imagination). Rather than 'imagining' herself as a teacher as an isolated actor in a classroom, Margaret saw anyone else in the classroom as having a role in supporting pupil learning. She referred to assistants in her classroom as 'classroom' (CA) rather than 'teaching' assistants (TA), perceiving them as peers (relating to the mode of alignment), and talked about how this affected her classroom practice:

> I don't always using the additional adult in the class for special educational needs (SEN) children. I let them have the higher ability and I have the SEN. It is good for the CA and for you. I think working through the ranks as it were, I realised how 'put upon' CAs were[...].The teacher should sometimes sit with

[SEN individuals] and the CA be responsible for the rest of the class and I'm more than happy to do that. That's why I like table groupings and that is why some of the tables have more chairs because another adult can sit here or here [with reference to an image] (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 14).

Her relationship with TAs became important to her learning 'as a teacher' and she reflected with them during and between lessons about pupils' learning needs, progress, her practice and possibilities for using their support.

Despite Margaret's strong belief in taking a career break, this affected how she viewed herself compared with her younger peers. She judged that the teachers and support staff at her current school were excellent practitioners and explained that she felt she needed to earn their respect, to be considered their equal:

> Most people have [influenced me here] actually. It's quite an inspiring staff here. In fact probably until recently I'd have thought I wasn't worthy to be here[...]It's a very high standard of staff, and I think I've learnt something from everybody. I have never been given the opportunity to watch other people, although the girl I teach next to we often team-teach so we watch each other[...]She's only a second year. That's what I mean, that's what you're up against (third interview, Mar 06, 4: 8).

One response to this appreciation of her colleagues was the way Margaret made sense of her role as a leader. This had been helped by the LftM course which, although she found largely irrelevant to her role as a subject co-ordinator, inspired her to act as an advocate for what she was passionate about. The identity she developed 'as a leader' of offering a service to her colleagues was akin to the ideas of teacher leadership discussed in chapter 3; she developed this view not from hearing about such a theorisation but as an outcome of the way she made sense of her experiences. Margaret explained:

There is a culture in the school that we are always available to one another during the day whether we are teaching or not. I would always help if there was a query and would contact someone as soon as possible that day. It is better to catch me in my room where my store of resources and ideas is (sixth interview, Jul 07, 8: 8).

To enact this view (to match the modes of imagination and engagement) Margaret wanted to be organised, up-to-date and proactive in sharing her developing expertise. This she perceived her colleagues were doing for her (relating to the mode of alignment). This was evident when asked about her goals as a leader:

As a leader I hope I am supportive, approachable. If I hadn't got something I would set a deadline and do my best to answer any query or offer ideas. I always manage tasks set for me and try to include others in achieving these, trying to keep us all to clear deadlines e.g. when writing new schemes of work. I am organized, which helps me help others (sixth interview, Jul 07, 8: 20).

In this way Margaret made sense of her identity 'as a leader' with that of 'as a teacher', making sense of both roles together.

Sources of Inspiration

When Margaret was asked about influences on her as a teacher and leader she referred to a number of role models and aspects of their classroom practice she aspired to incorporate into her own. Her identity 'as a teacher' was informed by 'images' of teachers from when she had been at school, from her experience as a TA, teachers from her training and colleagues at her previous and current schools. An example of one of these role models Margaret recalled on a couple of occasions:

I remember the male teacher I chose to write about in my PGCE application as someone who had inspired me. (second interview, Feb 06, 2: 13)[...]He was very relaxed and he brought in Star Trek wallpaper and letters - personal experiences - that might be nothing to do with the subject, like he was interested

163

in Star Trek, he was a Norwich City fan through and through and the children latch on to that - him as a person (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 10).

She could clearly articulate how such role models influenced the kind of teacher she did, and did not, want to become. For example she did not believe in formality and 'rote' learning and instead wanted to make connections for children between school and personal lives, to develop meaningful pupil-teacher relationships and to create a purposeful and enjoyable learning environment. This she exemplified with reference to her earlier experiences:

> Many of the teachers were very heavy on discipline[...] It made me realise that rote learning is not very effective. I remember being rapped over the knuckles for not knowing times tables and, although I can recite them as a result, feel I did not really understand them until I retrained as a teacher and began teaching my own pupils (second interview, Feb 06, 2: 3).

> I always give my class time to read, or I read to them because I think they need to hear sometimes too[...]At the moment I'm really into reading biographies, and so I might perhaps choose a biography of someone that I think the children might be able to relate to and tell them about that (second interview, Feb 06, 3: 18).

> If you have the chance to go down to Eric he plays the guitar and the children watch and learn things from that and I remember Sister T always used to play the guitar and have music on and it did make a difference. I try to play music too, I often have music playing when the children come in to calm them. I have CDs on El Divo or Enya or something like that (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 9).

Margaret referred to the influence of one of her own teachers, Sister T, and her work as a TA observing a classroom teacher, to explain her ongoing interest in facilitating dialogue in her classrooms and the role of group work in pursuing this interest:

> One nun, Sister T, from the convent school seemed a bit different. She had some hair that escaped her habit. She made things fun[...]I don't remember writing

much in her lessons: There was lots of discussion in which you were not scared to contribute. I still value the joint work aspect, the children knowing there are no wrong answers and that they can express their feelings and the value of discussion and speaking to learn (second interview, Feb 06, 2: 4).

I think [working with that middle school teacher] that's why I like small groups, I think that's where I would have got it from - not always grouping SEN children together and not always using the additional adult in the class for SEN children (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 13).

She came to appreciate that group work, as well as allowing pupils to learn from each other, allowed her as their teacher to learn more about their knowledge, understanding and needs as learners. It can be seen how Margaret's mode of engagement in relation to her classroom (discussed below in relation to a learning episode) affected her mode of imagination by helping her realise she could learn from anyone, including children, and that she therefore saw her role to share this learning:

This picture shows two able boys showing the learning support assistant [LSA] something they can do - annotating images on the screen. They had just fiddled around until they could do it. That surprised the LSA, who then showed me. I don't mind not knowing anything and now the LSA and I can do this so we shared this around as we circulated (sixth interview, Jul 07, 5: 13).

Because Margaret did not view her role 'as a leader' as separate from her role 'as a teacher' she was less able to talk about her learning 'as a leader'. She did not refer to any particular role models affecting her 'as a leader', referring only to the desire to support others in the school as they supported her in that this related to her vision as a teacher, rather than as a leader.

165

Teaching requires learning

Learning from all those with whom she interacted was central to Margaret's excitement about her work as a teacher. She enjoyed working with a different teaching team each year and saw learning opportunities at any point of the day. She explained:

> We have those discussions all the time, all the time, even at the back of assembly, anywhere where you sit down, you might say, 'this went really badly'. That's what happened yesterday, I said to the maths coordinator, 'oh you know I just can't cope with this long-division, can you show me another way?', and she just went 5 minutes showing me (first interview, Jan 06, 1: 20).

Margaret felt that her school was a safe place to experiment with her teaching. In particular she enjoyed opportunities to team-teach with a younger colleague, Kristine, identifying with her with a similar view on learning 'as a teacher':

> We team teach and share [...] although she is young enough to be my daughter we have a thing - a bond - because she came in as a NQT and we both went to the [same teacher training university] and had the same tutor (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 16)

> I think it's the discussion I value, we discuss things we will try and reflect on them afterwards[...]She's taught and I have been her assistant and vice-versa (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 17).

This practice (mode of engagement) reinforces the unity of her teacher and leader identities. Margaret explained that the confidence to take risks was something she attributed to a tutor from her initial teacher training, someone who had also influenced her colleague Kristine:

> [The tutor] would come out and do all my observations when I was on teaching practice, and she was just a very inspirational woman, and I think she's influenced others too like Kristine [...] I know that she influenced her

greatly[...]I just found that she made you take risks (third interview, Mar 06, 4: 1)

I think just [by team-teaching] we are taking more risks and just supporting each other. You know saying 'That's good' so you feel more confident (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 17).

Margaret saw team teaching as an opportunity to put this idea about how to learn into practice. This helped overcome Margaret's lack of confidence. She, in turn, strove to create safe learning environments in her classrooms in which pupils could take risks and share thoughts in an all-inclusive way. This is another way in which Margaret showed she was able to marry all three modes of belonging through the development of her identity 'as a teacher'. This was exemplified in her discussion of a learning episode:

The children don't always know what they want and I am happy to let them experiment with styles so say 'Just try things and explore what the programme can do'. All I stipulated was that they needed an output (sixth interview, Jul 06, 8: 6).

Judith, a deputy headteacher, also offered support and challenge to Margaret - this time in her role as a subject coordinator. Judith was locally recognised for her expertise in RE and acted as a consultant to the new curricular developments, which Margaret, as humanities coordinator, needed to ensure the school adopted.

Because I haven't got a degree in history, geography or religious education I am willing to do the work but I don't necessarily have the know-how of the subjects so I'm learning it on the job as it were and from Judith particularly with the RE, I mean she is a lay-preacher and she actually sat on the Board that wrote the new RE syllabus so she can give me an insight into the nitty-gritty of the subject[...]I am taking a time to develop that knowledge but she has it at the tip of her fingers and also all the contacts as she knows everybody because obviously (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 4).

Well it is her influence I think that has got me involved more and more with the advisory team at [the County] Professional Development Centre. She has those contacts and now I am getting those contacts from her (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 5).

Margaret's growth as a subject specialist she wanted to be able to share with other staff. When Judith retired during the study, Margaret realised that she had been a significant resource for her learning 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader', and she explained she would also miss her support in advocating the humanities subjects at a senior leadership level:

Margaret explained how she will miss Judith as curriculum leader for advice and tying things together for Margaret. Judith has RE and english specialisms and will miss Judith fighting for her on these issues' (notes of fifth interview, Jun 07, 7: 18[32])

Passions for enriching the curriculum

Margaret saw all experiences, whether in or outside school, as opportunities to learn as exemplified in one discussion about her learning:

I just enjoy it you know it's meeting other people, going out of the classroom, or bringing other people into the classroom, is I think a valuable resource for everyone rather than looking at it in books (seventh interview, Apr 08, 9:21).

She believed passionately that pupils should be provided with opportunities to learn beyond the boundaries of the school in space and time. Margaret organised visits and visitors regularly and campaigned for themed days to recreate the past or geographically distant places in school. When mapping her learning opportunities she explained:

---

[32] On the fifth interview the only space to interview was in the staff room where it was not possible to use an audio recorder. These notes are an agreed record of our discussion that day.

I have lots of links with making history real, and again I've shown that a lot through my photographs. I really like taking them out, dressing them up. I love dress-up days and I think that's something that I've brought to the school really[...]It's just making sure that everybody in every year group does sort of trips, or has people in and also days, I like focus days[...]Year 5 do Tudor days, Rainforest days. Year 4 do Greek days, and Africa days, so it's history and geography. Year 6 have done a 'Dash through the Decades' day, because we did Britain since 1948[...] The kids just love it, we've got a lot of support, we've got very supportive parents...It's sort of become something that we do now, so an older brother or sister might already have a costume (seventh interview, Apr 08, 9: 12).

Margaret proposed and had to argue for such events with the headteacher, not always finding it easy to secure his support. Her mode of imagination generated such strong 'images' she was prepared to try to change school practice (relating to the modes of alignment and engagement) as she explained:

The Head was very reluctant to bring it into Year 6 because of the SATS, and it's the first time they've done it in Year 6 but when he saw the Victorian Day, they did cooking, measuring and real-life maths, and then they did real-life english. Because we encompassed those things he was quite happy, and he was surprised I think how well it all went (seventh interview, Apr 08, 9: 12).

Margaret is frustrated by the lack of money for resources. For example she would like to buy play clothes but the headteacher is not keen. She also finds that there is a lack of support for some ideas for example when she suggested 'the Mantle of the Expert' in which you collapse the timetable for a day and role-play using hats and wigs etc. She hopes this might be different in the new school for example more use of drama with younger pupils (notes of fifth interview, Jun 07, 7: 22).

It seemed that the headteacher did not hold the same vision for teaching as Margaret and, because he led the practice in the school, her modes of imagination and alignment were in tension. Margaret had known the headteacher for a long time,

169

however, and his disagreements did not reduce her enthusiasm for her ideas or her own practice, so confident was she in their value to the children.

As well as activities to extend the curriculum and what she called 'making history [or geography] real', Margaret also grasped the potential for information communication technologies (ICT) to expand the experiences of pupils. She became an advocate of the use of interactive whiteboards (IWBs) in school as she explained when discussing her learning episodes:

> You would find that on our Development Plan I think. We don't want it to be just something that you write on instead of a board and that you do interact with it[...]I'm encouraging it through the humanities by interactive programmes so they are just not getting this is what Egypt looks like, there is an interactive version so that children can come up and cut and paste. It is no good anyone showing you this, you have got to try it out for yourself (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 39).

Using the whiteboards interactively was initially a whole school initiative but, as she explained below, Margaret was soon to become an advocate of the pedagogical potential of such technology once she realised they provided opportunities to bring the 'outside' into classroom learning experiences:

> This is the interactive whiteboard, which I am still learning how to use to its best potential. It is important in the primary strategy to use this and be more interactive with it. I use it every day. I went on one mini-course to learn how to use it but most of my learning is through trial and error. I have bought lots of resources for it and am often to be found playing with it before school, lunchtime or after school. If I really get stuck at what I think it should be able to do then I go to Ron the ICT coordinator (sixth interview, Jul 07, 8: 10).

Her use of 'we' expressed how she felt she was developing her practice as part of a coordinated enterprise but it was clear from her accounts that she began to act as a

champion for this pedagogical tool, actively encouraging others to develop their use of the boards:

> When Margaret gets new resources she reports that she introduces them at a staff meeting saying what is new and how to use it and puts them in the shared documents folder. She also shows people how to use things on an individual basis. There are some rooms without IWBs and Margaret lets out her room on two afternoons to those who haven't got one. She has used most of the school's e-credits as she feels that she is the only one interested in using them and the credits would have expired unused if she hadn't (notes of fifth interview, Jun 07, 7: 13).

The way Margaret modelled the use of ICT for teaching could be viewed as a form of informal leadership. Margaret viewed it as part of what she could offer to become valued by her peers. (This study did not inquire how others viewed her in this capacity).

In the newly restructured school Margaret retained her humanities coordination role (with a new age range of 3-11 year olds). Her headteacher also offered her responsibility for 'gifted and talented' pupils and a newly created educational visits coordination role. She appreciated that these posts were a response to her enthusiasm for developing enriched curricular experiences for pupils in the school.

A leader, a teacher or a learner?

Margaret talked about herself not as an individual teacher but as part of a 'unit' with the children she was teaching:

> The children that's the centre really for me...My class or my set they're with me there, because all of what we do together, I mean between 8:45-3:30 we're a complete unit[...]we're together, its not just me in isolation...it's a mutual thing we're there together (first interview, Jan 06, 1:17)

171

She also saw herself as part of the school. Over the course of the study (as illustrated below) Margaret found she became more clearly articulate how she thought about her learning:

> You see I don't see myself as a leader, I don't think (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 34)

> I am both teacher and leader at the same time. Not one or the other. In fact I am a teacher first (sixth interview, Jul 07, 8: 21)

> I couldn't really describe myself[...]I don't feel either a teacher or a leader really. I think I'm still learning. I'll let you know when I've grown up (seventh interview, Apr 08, 9: 53)

She explained that the reason she found it difficult to talk about herself learning 'as a teacher' or 'as a leader' was that she had come to see herself 'as a learner', learning alongside her pupils and her peers. She came to see herself as equal in status to all those within her classrooms and, beyond, in the school.

Margaret did voice frustrations at not being awarded progression in status but appreciated the headteacher's recognition of her interests and remained loyal to him and her colleagues in the school. This strong sense of belonging to the school was retained through the school merger process.

Margaret was aware that, if she really did want career advancement in terms of promotion, she should look elsewhere. She perceived that the freedom to risk-take and extend the curriculum she so appreciated might not be so possible in other schools. She limited her own possibilities for career progression as a result. She did also express fears that she was in a difficult situation career-wise due to her age:

> There's no doubt I want to take another step before I'm too much older, because at the moment I'm not any step, you know these steps as humanities leader

they're not necessarily promotional steps, and that's the next step I'm looking for. I mean I'm 54 next birthday, and I think after awhile they look at you, and with all the best will in the world I'm not being ageist they think 'Is it worth investing in this person?' don't they?[...]I mean if it can't be done here, then obviously it would have to be done somewhere else[...]I prefer to wait here, but not for too long (seventh interview, Apr 08, 9: 45).

To encourage Margaret to stay, she explained that the headteacher had been encouraging her to consider, after the school merger, taking the NPQH[33] qualification.

TLRs are grouping leadership skills together so you just wouldn't be a Year Leader you would be a Year Leader and this that and the other and that is where I want to go. The Head knows that and has said I can do the NPQH next year[...]That was at my last Performance Management about two months ago. He said not this year though because obviously the school is merging but, if I am still here the next year, he'll put me through on that even though I said I didn't want to come out of the classroom - I told him all those things - and he still said 'I think it would be good for you' (fourth interview, Jul 06, 5: 35).

Margaret was not sure whether to take up this offer as she did not aspire to any leadership role that would take her out of the classroom.

Summarising Margaret's identity development

The following summary of Margaret's identity development leads to a visual representation of these (Figure 5.2).

Even though Margaret had previous work experience 'as a manager' trained in the retail sector, when Margaret joined the study she explained that she felt under-confident as a school leader. This can be explained by the way she came into teaching. Margaret had taken significant time out of any career to raise her family and her identity 'as a mother' was strong. It determined the route she took back into work

---

[33] See the glossary for a brief explanation of this qualification.

and deciding to work 'as a teaching assistant' in her daughters' schools. She only considered training as a teacher after encouragement from those she worked with. Margaret had needed to take a second first degree before being able to train as a teacher and none of her broad social science, education first degrees or PGCE qualification prepared her with any particular subject specialist expertise. She constantly felt that the need to develop subject specialist knowledge. She became recognised for developing particular interests in humanities subjects and was given subject coordination responsibility for them. This focused Margaret's attention on becoming more knowledgeable about these subjects and ways to teach them, making sure that she shared this developing subject specialism with her colleagues. Margaret's view of leadership could be interpreted as a form of teacher-leadership but she never referred to the influence of any particular theories of leadership either from courses or from school. Neither did she refer back to her earlier retail management experience, even when asked directly about.

Margaret was principally motivated 'as a teacher' to develop effective pedagogical tools to help children learn. Her vision for teaching was in part derived from her training, in part from her experience 'as a TA' and in part from learning from her colleagues. She developed particular passions in her teaching; to develop group work, team teaching, links to the 'real' world and the use of IWBs and advocated these practices to her colleagues. She did not develop a strong separate identity 'as a leader'. Instead, over time, her view of teaching and leading was reconciled as one of everyone in her school learning as equals; with teachers having a role to facilitate pupil learning and leaders to facilitate teacher learning.

In this way Margaret was increasingly able to marry her values and practice (through the modes of imagination and engagement). She was content that she could do this

within her current, known and valued school (relating to the mode of alignment). Her colleagues in school she strongly identified with and she wanted to 'belong' to this school. She did this by seeing herself 'as a learner' equal with all those in school; pupils, colleagues, visitors and this view seemed to become ever encompassing as she was asked to talk about her learning over the period of the study.

Working in different teaching teams enriched the relationships she built with colleagues over the years (mode of engagement). She feared that, by moving schools, she would risk losing the staff she valued as colleagues as well as placing at risk her current freedom to develop herself in line with her aspirations. The very equality Margaret aspired to so passionately was therefore setting itself against any impetus to gaining personal progression. This she worried about every now and again.

Figure 5.2 A representation of the development of Margaret's identities
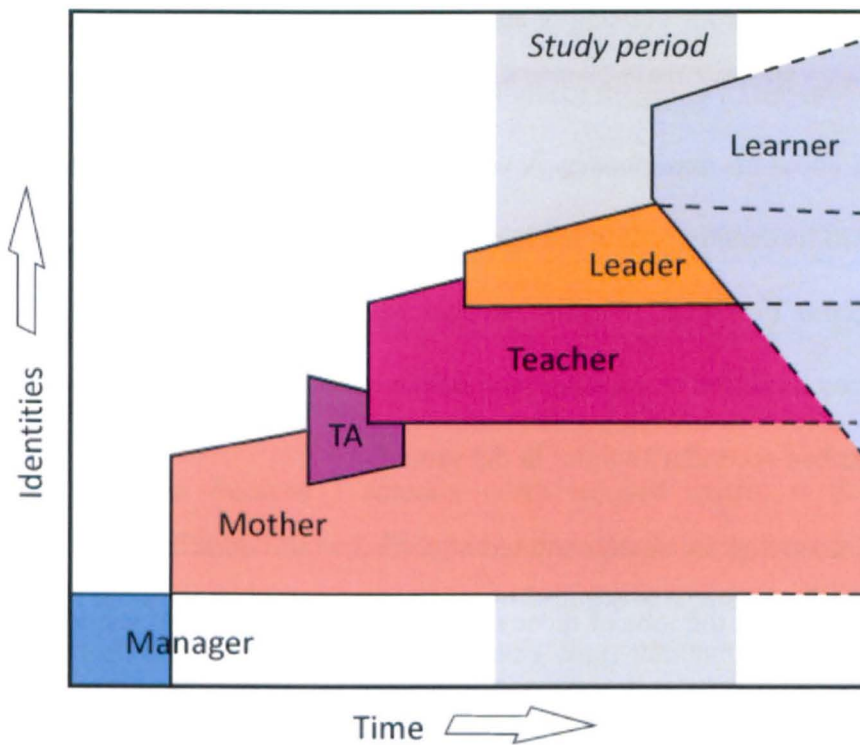
5.3 Phillip: Balancing expectations and aspirations

Phillip's formal education began in his local East London primary school. He moved on to the state-run secondary school into which the primary school fed, which was in a state of transition from being a single sex girls high school for ages 14-18 to a co-educational 11-16 secondary school. Phillip entered as the first year in which boys had been included. He then went on to the local East London sixth form college to take his A levels. Phillip went straight on for his undergraduate degree in history to a university in Yorkshire and stayed there to complete a PGCE for secondary school history teaching. Phillip went straight into teaching after this qualification but moved to Cambridgeshire for his first teaching post.

After approaching Phillip's school to recruit possible leaders, Phillip was recommended by his headteacher. She explained that Phillip 'has only recently taken up what is a new post for our school and is therefore on a steep learning curve' (email discussion, March07), going on to say he was therefore likely to benefit from talking through and about his experiences. A year prior to joining the study he had taken on a newly created leadership post at his large, rural 11-16 community college in the South East of England. Previously, Phillip had been head of history for six years at the same school, having qualified as a teacher and held a history teacher's position for three years at an urban secondary school in the same LA.

Phillip explained how he always wanted a job that would contribute to society in some way, mirroring the jobs of those in his immediate family. At school he aspired to equip himself with skills that would prove useful to others, ideally to those in less developed countries. In the sixth form he initially took A levels he believed might prepare him to be an engineer, but in fact went on to study history at university and afterwards trained as a teacher. Although employed as a history teacher and school

leader for ten years since graduating, Phillip still harbours the aspiration to work voluntarily overseas. Phillip has negotiated a role and developed skills as a mentor for training teachers in school. He hopes that, in this way, he will be equipped with skills useful to overseas countries to draw upon in the future.

Meanwhile Phillip has enjoyed both teaching and leading in English schools. Over time he has come to realise that he is more interested in learners and learning than being driven by a particular passion or expertise in the subject of history, although he has indeed developed both of these as a history teacher and head of subject. He began to apply for assistant headteacher positions to allow him to be involved in whole school pedagogical initiatives and was offered a newly created post of 'learning director Initially this was with responsibility for teaching and learning for the three year groups, ages 11-14 (Key Stage 3), but was later extended to cover all five year groups in the school. Because this was a new role, Phillip found he had scope to explore how it might best be developed, hence the headteacher offering him to this study.

Subject identification?

In preparing to train as an engineer, Phillip studied maths, further maths, physics and history A levels. He explained that:

> I did the maths because I actually quite enjoyed maths, it fits in with engineering and I found if easy. I wanted to do history simply because I enjoyed it. I don't think I was thinking that it would lead me to a career[...]Everyone was saying, 'well OK, if it gets too much doing four, you can drop the history' - which seems funny now (second interview, May07, 2:26).

This tension between his interests in the subjects of history and maths continued even after having completed his history degree. When Phillip applied for university he had

decided to train as a primary teacher and it was only through working with older children in care during the university holidays that he decided he would like to work with secondary age children. Even after graduating he explained he was torn between training as a maths or history teacher:

> I went into teaching because I liked working with children. I wanted to work with children and it helped me make the decision to go into teaching history, which I enjoyed. I did actually think at the time about doing a maths conversion (second interview, May07, 2:46).

Phillip's interest in and understanding of history grew steadily over time along with his sense of himself 'as a historian'. At university, he reflected that he had found the study of history difficult conceptually and cited particularly valued support from a director of studies in ways still helping him as a teacher:

> My first term at university I had a really nice tutor and I got the feeling she really liked me. She certainly put in an awful lot of effort into working with me in one-to-one tutorials. Clearly there was a massive gap between the quality of what was said in seminars, and the quality of the essays I was producing[...]I guess that helped me as a historian in terms of my understanding[...] She got me to see there is a craft to structuring essays, and that is something I do a lot of work on now with all my students (second interview, May07, 2: 34).

Even as a history teacher and head of department, Phillip found that he relied on continuous reflection and discussion with colleagues both in and out of school to help him consolidate his understanding of the nature of and pedagogical possibilities for studying history. In particular he reflected that his understanding and practice 'as a teacher' had benefited from university training for is role as a mentor for history trainees:

> The woman that runs the history course at the university is...fabulous, in any context. She's one of the best teacher trainers that I've ever met. I've learnt so

much about history and about teaching. In terms of my professional development I would say she is head and shoulders above anyone else. I think there were a number of things that I didn't understand when I did the PGCE, and then over a period of a time working with the PGCE team I have developed an understanding. She has done this[...]by asking good questions, and it has displayed real flaws, holes and gaps in my understanding of my thinking as well as contradictions in what I was trying to say (second interview, May 07: 2: 10).

Phillip concluded that, since handing on the head of history role to a colleague, he had become acutely aware of alternative motivations for teaching (and leading). Whereas his colleague was first and foremost a historian, Phillip explained that, for himself 'as a teacher', subject specialism was only a 'vehicle' for teaching children:

> The current head of history here now is a really good, close friend and I would say we're quite different in that sense. I think he wouldn't teach anything other than history, and he's in it because he's got a passion for history and then a love of people in a sense. I suppose I've got a passion for young people and history would seem to be a convenient vehicle[...]I've got there through a lot of hard work (second interview, May07, 2:46).

An unexpected outcome from learning to mentor new teachers was the chance to learn about himself as a teacher. Phillip also incorporated an interest in mentoring into his view of himself 'as a leader'.

Teaching and leading as relational

Phillip appreciated the way that mentor training in his school-university partnership gave him opportunities to interact with others beyond school and reflect on practice together. He reflected that:

> [...]you're never trained to be a mentor. Once you start, although there are university training days, what you're really starting to do is think of other advice that people gave you that helped[...] It occurs to you and you remember

it more readily so it becomes part of the examples you use with trainees. Not because anyone has said you should think through your own training and what things helped you. I think just because I was racking my brains for advice and ways of moving other people forward (second interview, May07, 2:53).

The value of this training Phillip realised was located in how he listened, observed, engaged in activities and reflected. This helped Phillip realise how his experiences were a resource he could use to support others. His mode of imagination was affected by this training. He began to reflect on his own experiences of education and tried to make explicit for himself what he learnt from the people he had been taught by, observed and worked with. Phillip talked about how he had become aware that he continued to learn in this way both 'as a leader', when visiting schools, and 'as a teacher', when working cross-curricularly:

> The day in a neighbouring secondary school gave me an interesting insight into another history department. My work with trainee teachers both in history and observing in other subjects is still a very powerful way of reflecting and developing my own practice (email interaction, Apr08, 4: 2).

> It's been interesting to look at how they work in maths, and what they understand of peer assessment, and actually that's been an interesting one between the three of us. Trying to get to the nuts and bolts of almost what peer assessment isn't, that's the way to we are trying to sort it out (final interview, June 08, 5:7).

Inter-personal interactions were central to the development of Phillip's identities both 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader'. As a leader he realised that he had developed a consultative style in working as a head of subject and, through this, developed good relationships with colleagues, both within the department and with other heads of subject. Phillip also drove his former colleague and now head of subject to school and

appreciated the chance to informally reflect on practice with him in the car. He put this opportunity into context by explaining:

> I think I'm good at learning from other people, I don't think I'm a great 'original ideas' thinker. I'm quite good at taking other people's ideas, and seeing how they would work for me, and how I could apply those. I don't think there is a great originality in my lessons for example, but I think they're good because I've seen other people's good ideas, and then used them and made those work, so I've quite enjoyed this year and a lot of the meetings in my new role (first interview, Apr07, 1:50).

Phillip continued to learn from listening, observation and consultation in his newly created role of learning director. On taking over this role he explained he first needed to scope the remit for the job. While it was made clear by the headteacher what he was expected to drive forward he was not advised how to go about these tasks.

The first task Phillip worked on was the line management of a team of year managers. This was a new structure for the school and required new ways of working (hence relating to both modes of alignment and engagement). He needed to act without clear 'images' of how to do so. The year managers were also new posts and had been filled with colleagues who were not teachers (instead having experience in social care, the police and health services). He concluded that initially he 'micro-managed' (first interview, Apr07, 1:23) their work. However reflections on the roles of leaders as part of the LftM course created new 'images' of how to work with them through helping him appreciate the differences between the class teachers he had previously been responsible for and these colleagues' roles, themselves as 'managers'. He reflected:

> [...]that was one of the things that I found in the second or third session of the LftM course where we were looking at peer mentoring[...]It just hit me actually the difference between managing the year managers, and managing people in my department is that they are managers in their own right, and so although [the

learning director] is a middle management post its not middle management in the same sense as my last job was (first interview, Apr07, 1:23).

From this clearer understanding of the relationship between the roles (relating to the mode of alignment), Phillip changing the way he worked with the year managers (the mode of engagement) and hence his identity as a leader. One constraint was that Phillip was aware that he did not have the experience of a pastoral head of year which might have been considered the best preparation for 'management' of year groups. He was further constrained in taking advice from the current heads of year because both remaining heads of year had applied for the role Phillip now held. He felt he could not now consult them on how to best go about the job (affecting his mode of engagement and limiting his mode of imagination). As a result of LftM, mentor training and observations, in particular of the headteacher, Phillip decided that he needed to listen more to the year managers to understand their strengths and needs and to listen to the opinions of those who used them. In the final year of the study Phillip explained how he had developed a shared understanding of the potential of the year managers' (also new) roles:

> One learning opportunity I have identified was 'developing a year manager picture of excellence' which has helped me think through what the role fully entailed and clarify what other people thought (email interaction, July08, 6:12).

Phillip had similarly few 'images' in relation to the other aspects of his new role and he explained that he began tasks by adopting his preferred consultative approach. He realised that some of his success, for example in reformulating the PSHE curriculum, was reliant on being able to invite volunteers and hence work with those he had already developed good relationships with (an engagement issue):

I think a lot of it was, rightly or wrongly, basically all my mates opted in[...]I think that actually there were a lot of people who thought, 'oh we'll do that with [Phil], because we like [him], and we know everything will be alright'. The spin off from that then being that they were then much more willing to then put in that extra bit (final interview, Jun08, 5: 89-90).

However, he also learnt, that he needed to be, and could be, more assertive than in the past. When leading whole school changes he reported that he had found he needed to work with colleagues beyond those who he felt were already on his side:

I suppose [reflecting on this process] it has validated some of the things I've thought already, which is about the importance of getting staff on board, and that was something that I've always felt was important, but I don't think I've had to actually do in a whole school way before[...] I think the big thing for me was me being a bit more assertive than I would normally be[...]I'm not saying I'm not consultative now, but I knew there were one or two people that opposed that model in the room. In the past I think I would have worried about that, and I would have looked at trying to tailor the model, or even you know have second thoughts about it but I took the decision quite early on, that I'd decided this is the right general model (final interview, June08, 5: 27/32).

To achieve such assertiveness Phillip explained that he needed to feel that what he was trying to do was firstly, something that he believed in (relating to his mode of imagination) and secondly, contributed to the agreed needs and direction of the school (his mode of alignment). Both of these contributed to his developing view of himself 'as a leader'.

Sights set on becoming a senior leader

His initial job description was broad and, in response to the LftM course, he reflected that it felt like a new layer of 'middle' management:

The job doesn't specify what you do within that. It's almost another layer of middle management that didn't exist before so how does this one sit in terms of things like meeting with the senior leadership team? (first interview, Apr07, 1:5).

How his role fitted with the senior leadership team became critical to Phillip's understanding of how to think about and enact it, as well as how to view himself - affecting his identity 'as a leader'. To find out about how his role might be enacted Phillip talked with each member of the senior leadership team. This led him to feel that his work (mode of engagement) was becoming frustrating and inefficient:

I want to go to some of the senior leadership meetings, because what I was finding was I was having conversations with people and they were obviously having a very clear agenda of what they saw as the way forward, and yet I was having to try and piece together what that was. I can understand why someone has got to make decisions, and its fine if they make the decisions, but to be party to some of the discussions and processes, rather than hearing the bits and pieces, is much better[...]It's just working out about where my role fits in (first interview, Apr07, 1:34).

Through constant reflection on his experiences Phillip also talked of tensions between what he aspired to and expectations of him. For example, the more Phillip became aware of what he valued pedagogically, the less he believed in labelling pupil ability (mode of imagination). Yet he was asked to work with a labelled group of children and lead the development of 'gifted and talented' provision in the school (mode of alignment) as he explained:

Career-wise there are elements of my job that I don't believe in, such as I am coordinator of the 'gifted and talented' programme. I am not sure I am even convinced whether there should even be a register identifying such children. I prefer to think of catering for them all in terms of differentiation more generally and consider time used and training of staff to meet all the children's needs

184

better. I find this conflict a big demotivator[...]I am having to impose things I don't believe in and yet it could have been nearly all my job description as the government and headteacher's agenda are telling us that we need to be doing something on this (fourth interview, Dec07, 7:25).

After a year in post, the school broadened Phillip's remit, rather than appoint a parallel director for Key Stage 4[34] as originally planned. Phillip's frustration at his lack of access to the thinking of the senior leadership led Phillip to renegotiate his role. He discussed this with the headteacher, requesting some rationalisation, and taking a model of how he could see the new role as making sense to him. In this he explained how he had managed to make sense of the 'gifted and talented' responsibilities:

> The way I see it, and this is what I'm proposing to the headteacher is looking at one model that ties in the whole intervention, mentoring, gifted and talented (fourth interview, Dec07, 7: 31).

As a result of this negotiation Phillip was provided with a new job description. Receiving this new articulation of what was expected of him caused him to reassess how he felt about his role. He concluded that now his remit seemed more like a 'senior' than a 'middle' leadership role. To identify 'as a senior leader', and to be able to match modes of engagement with imagination, gave him a stronger sense of belonging He concluded that:

> [...]the current job description is shorter than last year's but all the jobs could sit on a senior leadership team (SLT) job description rather than a middle tier role, which is what I felt before. They are all whole-school roles. However I still haven't managed to get extra time to do them like an assistant headteacher would get or the extra pay. I feel they are getting good value from me and this makes me feel less guilty than before (fourth interview, Dec07, 7:13).

---

[34] Refer to Table 1.1 for an overview of English Key Stages.

Phillip perceived that a lack of access to the senior leadership team, and access to the school discourses, had been restricting his sense of belonging (through affecting his mode of alignment). Now, on the one hand Phillip felt that he was being awarded something approximating promotion while, on the other hand, he did not feel fully recognised. He began to express a frustration that his developing identity 'as a senior leader' was not matched by a formal post and requested attending senior leadership team meetings, which would help his modes of engagement and imagination to be brought together. The headteacher responded by creating an extended senior leadership team to which Phillip, together with the head of maths and head of science, were invited. Phillip reflected on the value of this to him:

> What's been good there is that people are talking about stuff and you can then say, 'actually I can see that that would work for me' whereas I think they were having discussions previously and forgetting about me. They were planning and working out stuff and working who would lead on things and I found I was completely outside the loop. Now I can say 'well actually that fits with what I'm doing' and either then they can say, 'why don't you work on it with such and such?' or 'OK quite, you lead on this' (third interview, July07 3: 27)

Phillip continued to look to the senior leadership team to develop his identity about himself 'as a senior leader', seeking a stronger sense of belonging (through his mode of engagement). He reflected that:

> [...]at the moment, I would say that the most powerful learning incidents are my reflections on conversations I have with colleagues, especially those on the SLT. I am sounding out ideas, listening to what they're saying, watching how they plan, present and roll out initiatives etc. (email interaction, April 08, 4: 8).

It seemed important to Phillip that he felt a sense of progression in terms of his status in the profession:

Last year I saw the next step as being senior leadership, but actually with this role I'm essentially really enjoying it, and I don't think I'm anywhere near getting my head round it yet, so I'm quite happy doing it. I feel quite comfortable that my career's progressing and it gives me options. I think given two, four, five years time even if I was applying for senior leadership jobs then it wouldn't feel like I'd been doing nothing (first interview, Apr07, 1:12).

He expressed his aspirations as a desire to lead changes in pedagogy in the school, something he could both drive through with whole-school initiatives whilst also applying them in his classroom teaching. Phillip became interested in what could be called an instructional view of leadership. He had not come across this theoretically but had personally found synergies between the two roles such that his identities 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader' had become reconciled. This related to Phillip's underlying motivation to help children generally, rather than advocating a particular subject or through developing school systems: his identities were underpinned by a social concern.

An enduring but hidden 'dream'

On the face of it, Phillip's 'emergence' as a leader fitted well with English

expectations of leaders as progressing through leadership roles into senior leadership.

Phillip explained how he felt he had been allowed the freedom to match his values

and his practice in his school setting and had been proactive in dealing with

frustrations and tensions. His enthusiasm for and confidence in what he was doing and

how it was useful to the school was evident by the end of the study. Significantly he

now also felt able to articulate his rationale for leadership to others, and he began to

apply for assistant headteacher posts.

What Phillip had not managed to do, however, was reconcile his identities as a teacher

and leader with his desire to 'become' a voluntary worker. The impact of this 'dream'

has already been indicated from his sixth form subject choices, through to his decision

to train as a teacher. He asserted that:

> I still have this idea to this day of working in Africa, it has just changed. I
> realised I didn't want to build bridges because I didn't like Physics and although
> it could be said that there is not much call for history teachers in the Third
> World I was still thinking about primary teaching rather than secondary - even
> up to the point when I actually applied for teacher training (second interview,
> May07, 2:31).

Phillip explained that this ultimate goal (or background dream) had also influenced

his decision to become a head of subject six years earlier:

> So that was one of the things that motivated me to go for the head of history job
> here. My thoughts were that if I became head of department then I will be able
> to become a mentor, and then I would get that experience, and then if I did do
> Voluntary Service Overseas I could get involved more in teaching training. So
> that was why I was keen to do it. I just assumed that pretty much if you were
> head of department you would be a mentor. That's not the case[...] but I was
> really pleased that one of the things I most wanted and appealed to me about the
> idea of coming here was to be involved with the teacher training (second
> interview, May07, 2: 56).

It was unlikely that Phillip had ever articulated in school this rationale for his interest

in teacher mentoring, despite it being concrete enough to be able to share as part of

this study. This desire raised its head again when Phillip's second learning director

job description was presented to him. He experienced a strong reaction to the first

draft, strong enough to cause him to challenge it with the headteacher:

> The headteacher said [mentoring] is not even part of that job description. She
> said 'Are you sure you want that?' My head said get rid of it, and my heart says
> keep it, and I decided then that this was why I was really hacked off when I'd
> got this new job description. The head was very, very good. She said, 'I
> honestly thought that you would prefer what I'd put down here[...]' and then

she said, 'but if you want to keep it it's absolutely fine, if you don't that's absolutely fine, it won't affect your pay', and I stupidly said that I wanted to keep it (third interview, July07, 3:42).

Even though Phillip had asked for a rationalisation of his job description this hidden aspiration was enduring and strongly held. It seemed he did not explain his reasons to the headteacher but Phillip was prepared to take on a greater workload than necessary to remain true to this particular aspiration. Phillip believed that this left open the possibility that he was still skilled enough to volunteer abroad, as a teacher trainer. What would trigger Phillip to realise his dream was unfortunately left unexplored. He did travel to Kenya with his wife on holiday the summer he left the study and this may well have related to him reflecting on how, when or whether to realise this dream.

Summarising Phillip's identity development

Again, this summary of Phillip's developing identities leads to a visual representation of their development as Figure 5.3.

Underpinning Philip's identities was a social concern, which he attributed to his family, and developed whilst a child. This was strongly held, although not often articulated. Although Phillip developed a desire to volunteer overseas, his interest in history as a subject led him to train as a history teacher and to consider himself, at least in part, 'as a historian'. After summer holiday work with children whilst at university he believed that he would enjoy being able to work for the benefit of children and could 'imagine' himself 'as a teacher'. Phillip reported that his identity 'as a historian' developed with his growing understanding of the subject while developing 'as a teacher' (and later 'as a leader'). This was a result of learning about his subject when in post as well as his further training as a mentor (relating to his

mode of imagination). However it was his interest in pedagogical development that most explained his identity 'as a teacher'. In learning more about teaching and learning he developed as a teacher.

This led him to develop an aspiration to become a leader, both to be able to lead pedagogical developments and to develop a teacher mentoring role. These practices (relating to the mode of engagement) he perceived would see him better placed to achieving his ongoing aspirations to work overseas (relating to his mode of imagination) as well as helping him match his modes of engagement and imagination in the shorter term. 'As a leader' he aspired to lead pedagogical developments beyond his subject department. The whole-school nature of his work as a learning director led him to aspire to become 'a senior leader', drawing on 'images' of working with senior leaders and watching them practice. This is in line with an apprenticeship model of professional learning. Negotiating to become part of an extended version of the senior leadership team strengthened his opportunities to engage 'as a senior leader'. Phillip was appointed an assistant headteacher at his school soon after the end of this study. He may well still go on to volunteer for work overseas.

Figure 5.3 A representation of the development of Phillip's identities
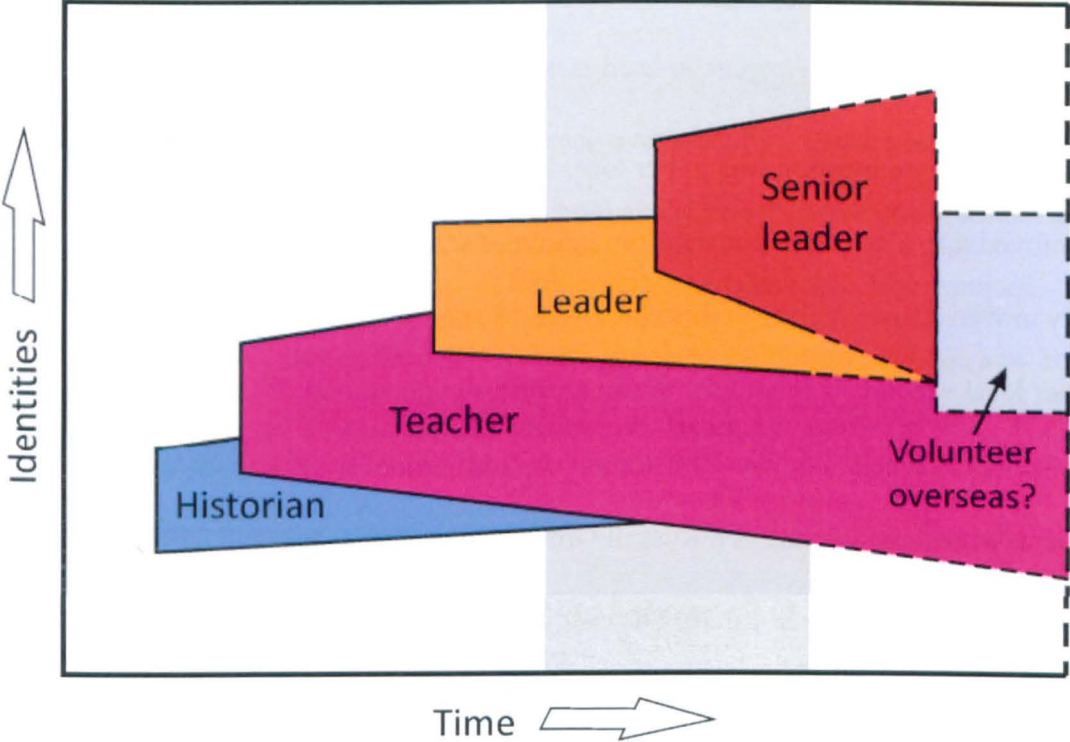
5.4 Aimee: Developing a vision but with 'real life' getting in the way

Aimee's primary education was in her local London state-run primary school. She then moved into a selective but state-run grammar school in Berkshire when her family moved house. Although this was an 11-18 school Aimee transferred into another local secondary school for the sixth form so that she could take theatre studies as one of her A levels. Aimee went straight on from school to take an undergraduate degree in english and drama at a Russell Group university in the Midlands. She moved back to Berkshire to find work for two years but, during the second year, decided to apply for a PGCE (and Fast-Track funding[35]) at another Russell Group university in Cambridgeshire. Her first teaching post was in the same County.

When she joined the study Aimee was head of drama in a large urban secondary school in neighboroughing Hertfordshire in the South of England. At that time the only other drama teacher regularly and, often suddenly, took sick leave. Dealing with these absences was Aimee's principle concern when she joined the study.

Aimee explained how she trained as a teacher four years previously, after not managing to find secure employment as a performer or in the media. She trained as an english and drama teacher to allow her to continue to engage with the performing arts. Aimee decided, with a friend, to train as a Fast-Track teacher. This status afforded her additional support through her first four years of teaching (in addition to her PGCE year). As well as providing opportunities to reflect on teaching and leading, this status made it clear to her employers that she aspired to take on leadership responsibility.

---

[35] The Fast-track leadership development programme has been outlined in section 2.5.

Aimee was supported in this, her second school, by a deputy headteacher (Geoffrey) who mentored her both in her original role as head of subject and through to a subsequent promotion to head of the expressive arts faculty[36]. Aimee learnt about leadership from both her experiences in school and courses studied out of school and developed a vision of what she saw as both possible and desirable. She reported feeling frustrated at how difficult it was to realise these aspirations and this saw her reviewing the pace at which she perceived she was making progress.

Performance as a career?

Aimee enjoyed her academic studies at school and spent most of her spare time singing, dancing and acting. This caused her the dilemma of whether to develop a graduate career or try to make a living from performance and media work. Aimee explained:

> I've always had this kind of sensible hat going on 'oh it's very difficult to get into that kind of thing' which is what led me onto A levels and then getting a degree and then the other hat would be something passionate, so I'd like to be performing or doing radio or something like that (second interview, May07, 2:22).

Up until 17 years of age, Aimee planned to go to a performing arts college rather than university. She explained that she changed her mind as a result both of realising that she was succeeding academically at school and her mother falling seriously ill, which led to her missing a significant number of dance lessons. She applied for university, where she studied english and drama. On graduating she still saw herself 'as a performer' and started applying for TV and radio work. Although she found a couple

---

[36] In this school the expressive arts faculty was made up on the departments of music, drama, art and responsible for dance as part of the physical education department.

of short-term jobs, Aimee became quickly frustrated and decided that this sort of work did not offer security or any sense of progression. She realised that she could not 'imagine' it forming a career. Aimee explained that she had developed strong beliefs in needing to 'pay her way' (attributed to her father) and to 'do the best she could' (attributed to her mother). This led her to want a job in which she could make progress; offering opportunities for her mode of engagement to match her mode of imagination. At this time, when Aimee was helping her piano teacher teach, the teacher's husband suggested she should consider school teaching.

Aimee reflected that teaching offered her a chance to use her knowledge and experience of drama as well as her degree qualifications in a career with inbuilt security and the potential for progression.

Becoming an educational professional

Through talking with a friend, committed to training as an educational psychologist, about the possibility of teaching as a potential career Aimee began to develop an identity 'as a teacher'. They decided to apply for teacher training together. Aimee's friend told her about the national Fast-Track programme, which could support them into accelerated promotion through the first four years of teaching. This offered Aimee the likelihood that her aspirations for progression (related to the mode of imagination) could be realised and she began to consider herself both 'as a teacher' and as 'an aspiring leader' simultaneously. She also needed to change her identity 'as a performer' to one who encourages performance in others.

Aimee trained as a Fast-Track teacher and began teaching. She planned, as a general aspiration, to do the 'best job' possible, hoping that, if others saw her to be doing a good job, she would be offered further challenges. She planned to use the extra

opportunities of the Fast-Track programme to help her develop 'as a leader'. It was evident from her own accounts that Aimee demonstrated considerable energy in becoming an 'educational professional' and this was confirmed by Geoffrey in her second school:

> Aimee is so professional. I've never known someone spoken about so often and in such a complimentary fashion, whether it's been from the senior management team or her colleagues who pass me in the corridor, whether it's office staff no matter who it is, they say firstly, what a breath of fresh air and secondly what a hardworking professional (senior leader interview, Jan08, 5:7).

In her first school, Aimee remained for three years as a 'core' teacher, teaching both English and drama. She took responsibility for 'gifted and talented' pupils in her Department. She then applied to a second school as Head of drama. Initially she set herself the goals of increasing both achievement and participation in drama.

Aimee's teaching and leading remained rooted in her passion for high quality performance and appreciation of the performing arts when first, as head of drama and, later, as head of expressive arts. Aimee worried about the status of these subjects in school, which revealed how she was thinking about the school as a whole (an alignment issue). Throughout the study she wanted to talk about what she was doing to try to raise achievement in the academic study of drama and change pupils' perceptions of the expressive art subjects (relating to matching her mode of engagement with her mode of imagination). She directed her energies to developing coursework support and scaffolding for planned progression through the curriculum. She also expected similar improvements in exam preparation from others in her Department and, later, Faculty, Aimee's accounts of her learning showing the connection she made between her teaching and leadership roles:

I must have said this a million times but I really feel, and I don't mean to be cruel to the other teachers, and maybe they think differently, that our faculty as a whole falls down on this. Because of the nature of our subject, and because of the perception of our subjects, I don't think students are prepared for what they take on at GCSE no matter how much we tell them that there is written work, there's analysis, there's this, that and the other. I think we need to embed it more securely in Key Stage 3, and that would be something that maybe would come out of our next Key Stage 3 moderation (fifth interview, Mar08, 6:8).

Aimee saw her personal vision as connected with school expectations of her 'as a leader' – to raise pupil attainment in the subject areas she was responsible for and to increase the visibility of the success of her department/faculty. This shows that she was trying to work in ways that connected her practice, her vision and the school's expectations (thus linking all three modes of belonging).

Developing as a leader

Aimee explained that she had become aware that leaders needed to develop a vision from her study on the NCSL's Leadership Pathways[37] programme. This allowed her to articulate what she was aspiring to. She also tried to respond to all requests made of her by senior leaders to ensure she was meeting the needs of the school as best she could. It was important to her to be seen to meet deadlines, not grumble and to show support of her colleagues by showing empathy. This is exemplified with respect to a deputy headteacher involved in organising timetables for new pupils:

I always do it [reply even just to check nothing need be done] just in case and she has said, 'I'm never fed up with it Aimee because you're the only one who responds so efficiently', and I thought 'good' because that's why I'm doing it so that your job is as easy as it can be (third interview, Jun07, 3:34).

---

[37] See footnote 2 for further information on this programme.

Aimee explained that her instinct was to take on new initiatives enthusiastically, such as linking formative assessment with marking through the use of a 'green stamp'. She reported how she took these stamps on as a teacher and as a leader:

> The focus on assessment has been really good actually for my teaching I think, and it's partly because of my new role. Because I'm in my new role I felt the need to really lead by example, which means that I'm so proud of my Year 10 books they're beautiful, they're so well marked[...]We've got a green stamp[...]Now some teachers I'm sure would have put it in their drawer and forgotten about it, but...it's certainly worked for me. I'm muggings who's actually gone, 'oh a stamp, brilliant'. It has been helpful as a manager and as a teacher (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:33).

At other times she found it more difficult to lead by example, for instance with the consistent and regular use of homework, something Aimee reported that she found she did not fully believe in:

> One thing that is in the pipeline is the homework policy, which we touched on today but only briefly because I kind of put my hand up and admitted that I don't set homework[...]I've had this discussion with Geoffrey before that actually in the previous school I found homework for homework's sake is not beneficial, but he said that he really thinks, whole-school wise we need to think about it[...]So I raised it in our meeting today because it was on the agenda and I knew that I hadn't fulfilled what it said and Geoffrey said 'Are you embarrassed about that?' I must have gone bright red, but 'yes' at some point I anticipate that coming up as a whole-school thing, and know we really must think about it as a Faculty (third interview, Jun07, 3:47).

Geoffrey encouraged her to review what she believed in and these discussions (relating to the mode of alignment) helped her to review her beliefs (affecting her mode of imagination) such that she agreed to change her practice (the mode of engagement) and enact such policies. Complying in this way was affected by her

appreciation that to progress as a leader she would need to be judged as successful and that, for this, she would need to be seen to do what was expected of her. She did not necessarily change her views (the 'images' and beliefs she held for example about the value of homework), but her view of leadership required her to lead by example so that others might be motivated to follow her practice. This exemplifies how she tried to reconcile both teacher and leader identities.

As promised by the programme, being a Fast-Track teacher brought Aimee extra support from beyond the school through conferences, a professional tutor and contact with similarly positioned colleagues in other schools. In her second school she was allocated Geoffrey, the incumbent head of expressive arts, as her line manager. He took on the role of mentor and explained to her that she was explicitly being prepared to take over the head of faculty the subsequent year. This offered her the 'carrot' of progression while not the promise of a whole-school role. She was supported in the tasks required of her to satisfy Fast-Track programme expectations and sponsored through first, LftM and, later, Leadership Pathways NCSL courses.

For her Fast-Track course Aimee needed to undertake a whole-school project. She chose to develop ideas from her Fast-Track training about exploring pupil voice rather than anything related to her subject specialism. This opportunity offered her the chance to match her practice (the mode of engagement) with her developing vision for leadership (related to the mode of imagination), whilst also learning about leadership in her context (an alignment issue). She tried to match her interests with the school's aim of better understanding and supporting those least engaged with school (also relating to the mode of alignment). This project allowed Aimee to develop her identity 'as an aspiring senior leader' by operating in school in a broader way than a Head of Subject's role would normally afford.

Aimee was not told or overtly shown how to be a successful leader in her school. She was working out for herself what she valued and how she wanted to practice, with the support of discussions with her mentor and Fast-Track professional tutor. Aimee explained how the Fast-Track course was also a significant resource for her, particularly through the access it gave to ideas and theories about leadership:

> [These courses] expose you to the kind of thinking about leadership, management, all those ideas, it really gives you that opportunity to hear things about that and talk about that kind of thing that I perhaps mightn't have had otherwise (first interview, Mar07, 1:38).

> So the material [on Leadership Pathways] I'm reading is all about theories. Some of it's very obvious and just reminds you and you think 'actually I should go back and have another look at this', but all things like distributed leadership, which you think up until now has been about delegation, you find there's loads more to it than that, so I'm learning a lot from that, and being encouraged to reflect on my own practice with it, and talk to other people about their practice (seventh interview, Jun08, 8:4).

What did not seem to be included were opportunities to consider how prior experiences were influencing her (the mode of imagination). This, she reflected however, she had begun to appreciate from her involvement in this study:

> I was struck by [looking at the knowledge map]...with the amount that my previous experience has fed in and I think that is particularly apt. I was surprised, but actually thinking about it I'm not surprised and that actually makes sense (third interview, Jun07, 3: 53).

Aimee was able to explain how she had been learning about leadership alongside teaching throughout her teaching experience, her sights already set on taking on leadership roles as well as developing her teaching. In particular she referred

repeatedly to the continued influence of her previous head of department, Nola on both her teaching and her leading, for example as follows:

> Alison: So thinking about Nola? You said you were wanting to be like her, have I pulled out the right things in this analysis? [looking at the knowledge map]

> Aimee: Yeah, absolutely and I'm still working on them. I'm very aware of my individual style but I'm also very aware that currently I'm tired, I'm feeling pressured and I'm showing that, and grumbling sometimes and not dealing with the individuals the way that I know I should (third interview, Jun07, 3: 31).

> The head of english she was absolutely brilliant the way she dealt with everyone in the department differently. Like even as a PGCE and an NQT you can read people and I just watched Nola dealing with them as a leader.... I learnt so much and there were quite a few different types of characters in the departments and she was brilliant (second interview, May07, 2: 57).

Aimee reflected how observing others, such as Nola, had helped her 'imagine' how she wanted to engage with others and these 'images', such as reliability, empathy and not grumbling, were the basis on which she would want to be judged by others. She also used these criteria to evaluate her own success 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader'.

Aimee's aspirations were more than a way of proving success but were based on her sense of accountability to others. Aimee felt accountable to all those with whom she interacted; all colleagues, support staff, parents and pupils. As part of her performance management Aimee had asked Geoffrey if he could find out how well she was perceived by other staff. Geoffrey suggested she use a 180° questionnaire (one of the tools suggested by the NCLSCS). She explained that:

> [...]I've filled out my own assessment, a new Head of Year has done it for me as a peer who's at the same kind of age and stage. Geoffrey has done it as my line-manager and then Christine [a member of support staff to the faculty] will do that when she comes back. I'm really hoping she'll do it. It is a real

reflective thing thinking about your strengths and weaknesses and it will be interesting in particular to see what Christine thinks of my strengths and weaknesses and I'm really hoping to be able to learn from what she says to see how I need to change and develop (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:28).

Aimee welcomed such feedback to help her review her progress. She also reflected regularly with her partner (a head of faculty in another large secondary school), her professional tutor, shared experiences with other Fast-Track colleagues at events and compared notes occasionally with a former colleague from her previous drama department. These forms of talk were powerful ways for her to appreciate what she valued (mode of imagination), evaluate her practice (mode of engagement) and her current context (the mode of alignment).

Aimee came to see that, as head of faculty, she needed to work with a wider range of staff, becoming accountable in different ways. She reflected that:

> [...]at first I found it really exciting that I was talking to different levels of people and dealing with different levels of people and their different concerns, and that was great. I found it a real challenge, and that made me think 'well I really am in my new role now, this is very different and this is great' (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:6).

Working as a head of faculty felt closer to working 'as a senior leader' and this helped Aimee developed this identity.

The frustrations of practice as a leader: Reality checks

Aimee did not always find it easy to put into practice her developing vision and aspirations 'as a leader'. She explained that she constantly found herself challenged by difficult circumstances and by her colleagues' behaviours. She explained how her practice 'as a leader' she termed 'being reactionary, rather than proactive' (fifth interview, May08, 6:10) and this frustrated her enormously:

201

Really the vision has gone out the window, because of the practical side of things. I said this to Geoffrey a couple of weeks ago, I feel quite upset that everything I'm doing is reactionary rather than proactive, and in a way I don't have a choice in that because things just keep happening, like staff being off and goodness knows loads of things but they just keep happening and need to be dealt with. Perhaps as I learn I will be better able to predict these (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:1).

Aimee really wanted to match her visions with her practice; her mode of imagination with her mode of engagement. She reported that modelling behaviours as she moved into the head of faculty role, as Geoffrey suggested, was not always straightforward. She explained that sometimes she found her values became contradictory in her practice:

On the role model front I've actually found that really hard. To be empathetic has sometimes meant that I've grumbled too, and I've come away and thought, 'oh now what was the best thing to do?' Should I have said 'Yes I understand, I feel the same, I didn't leave here till whatever o'clock last night'? I've done that and then I've come away and thought, 'oh no, actually I don't think that was the right thing to do, because that sounds like I'm saying, 'oh it's worse for me'. I don't know I'm still struggling with that one (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:36).

Relationships were important to Aimee, as demonstrated by her desire not to let anyone down, not grumble and show empathy. She agreed that changing her formal relationships with colleagues as a result of her career progression was the cause of some of her problems. The move from working alongside heads of art, music and dance, to becoming their line manager as head of faculty, challenged how she interacted with and responded to these colleagues (her mode of engagement). This was confirmed by Geoffrey:

What she said, I'm sure she won't mind me sharing this, is 'it's very hard to move from a peer to someone to working and making a positive relationship

with a colleague to suddenly having to be making changes involving them' (senior leader interview, Jan08, 5:12).

Aimee was becoming aware of different discourses within the school (an alignment issue) with some staff in her faculty either resisting school initiatives, those she was expected to drive through and monitor, or changing their commitment to them. She concluded that their responses were linked to perceptions of her leadership as compared with Geoffrey's and that she needed to develop new relationships with them in order to 'lead' them. Geoffrey's opinion was that Aimee's youth had led her to be naïve that all other colleagues would be similarly well motivated to 'do their best' as she was herself:

> What she has learned this year is healthy cynicism, not everybody is as thorough, professional and dedicated as she is. Some are almost the opposite. Sometimes you've got to be firm, you've got to be clear and sometimes you've got to act in a way that is not your natural way to get the results that you want and even then it might not work. I think that she, literally and metaphorically, is really wide eyed. She did arrive knowing all the professional expectations and pressures but was naive about the relationships (senior leader interview, Jan08, 5:11).

Aimee was experiencing a conflict between her desire to lead collegially and expectations of her to manage and she tried to work out how to resolve such a tension. Several staff she had responsibility for began to take time off due to stress. Aimee was concerned. She decided that this gave her opportunity to show support for them and tried different approaches (related to her mode of engagement). Sometimes she 'managed' and 'administrated', dealing with the pragmatic consequences by arranging cover lessons, picking up the 'strands' of event organisation, explaining to the absent teachers that everything was in hand and not to worry. Other times she found she was able to show leadership, such as adjusting staff workload around periods of high

workload (e.g. exhibitions) and developing the quality of cover teaching. Aimee and her mentor concluded that some of the staff issues relating to staff absence were out of her direct control and, for these, Geoffrey reassured her that she could only reasonably be expected to react. Aimee, however, was determined to try to prevent further absence of staff if possible.

One approach was to tackle staff motivation in the Faculty. Aimee wanted to gain their commitment to strive for her vision of increased visibility and excellence of expressive arts in the school and, by the end of the study, Aimee reported some signs of success:

> The music teacher of his own accord said, 'I think we could do family jams at the school, what do you think?' It's a Saturday morning, he had to give up his Saturday mornings... I genuinely think that this time last year he would have got the bumph through and put it to one side, but this year he was up for it, and I hope that that's partly my influence, partly the feeling that we've got in the faculty now (seventh interview, Jun08, 8:55).

Another approach was to ensure that new staff were inducted into the vision of the faculty from the start. Aimee explained how she was going about this by making direct reference to ideas of distributed leadership from her leadership courses:

> After I'd done my kind of distributed leadership study I thought 'yeah, for goodness sake, why haven't I spoken to [the head of art] about [induction]. Why am I not giving them the credence, the respect to say 'you're heads of department'. [The head of music] particularly is going to have a new member of staff, why I haven't I said, 'why don't you have some input in this?'(seventh interview, Jun08, 8:46).

These efforts were a reflection on how frustrated Aimee was at the pace of the progress she was able to make. She was still worried about how others saw her and would judge her success as a leader and reported that:

> [...]this is the thing I was thinking in my head the other day. It doesn't matter in the sense that if we don't achieve [the Arts Mark[38]] we're only still where we are, but it does matter in the sense that after this year I can see me having done nothing, except a lot of reactionary things. I was thinking what if an outsider who didn't think about the staffing problems, the setting issues looked over and asked 'well how's the expressive arts department moved on this year?' I'm not sure what they would see (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:16).

Aimee was becoming clearer as to how she wanted to be seen 'as a leader', one who was transformative, able to achieve outcomes related to her vision, (mode of imagination) but still found this difficult to achieve, (in matching both modes of engagement and alignment).

Optimism assured through support and inspiration

Aimee found reassurance and inspiration to continue to aspire to develop 'as an aspiring senior leader' from Geoffrey, her professional tutor and, increasingly, other aspiring senior leaders in the school. With these others she discussed expectations of leadership in the school (relating to the mode of alignment). She found that, by doing so, she could locate where advice might be sought to deal with particular issues in future. Through such talk all three modes of belonging could be brought together but, for this talk to be most effective, she realised that she had needed to be more honest:

> Last year I remained much more professional with Geoffrey, whereas I think unfortunately because he has had to help me, advise me I've had to say this is how I feel, this is what I think has happened whereas before I would kind of skirt round the issue and go, 'oh well so-and-so is doing this', not wanting to be unprofessional (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:50).

---

[38] This is a national standard the school can achieve, if they are assessed to meet a national set of criteria about arts teaching and participation.

Aimee found the confidence to be franker and less worried about how she might appear, revealing what she was trying to achieve and why she was frustrated. It was in these discussions that she began to develop her identity 'as a senior leader'.

To discuss her future Aimee referred to those who were not in a position to judge her and found that she had many opportunities for such talk: with a few peer leaders in the school, peer Fast-Track leaders, her partner and her Fast-Track professional tutor. She reported how she appreciated conversations with those she valued the opinions of, for example:

> It is nice to talk to the new assistant heads, and I'm sure next year I'll go to Catherine and say, 'how did you feel, what did you do etc?' Andrew also stopped me in the corridor one day and said, 'are you applying for the secondment', and I said 'no' and he said, 'well I think you ought to think about it', and that led onto a little bit of a conversation from about what was needed. Another leader, Simon, is also on the Leadership Pathways with me and I've had some good chats with him just in the lunch queue at Leadership Pathways that I would never get back here...All of these wee snippets of conversation that I've had with these three philosophising about what makes a senior leader have been great to drink in their ideas about what attributes you need to have (sixth interview, May08, 7:31).

> [My Fast-Track tutor] was incredibly perceptive[...]and I actually really valued him for that because he was completely outside in a sense. I mean obviously he knows me, but he came in, listened to what I said and made a judgment in a kind of brutal, but therefore helpful way. He doesn't need to support me like Geoffrey does. He needs to point out things, and so that was actually really, really useful (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:49).

The longer Aimee practised as a leader the more she appreciated that, to contribute to the work of the school, she needed to understand how she could ensure her vision was realistic (an alignment issue). Aimee did not 'graduate' from the Fast-Track

programme, according to NCSL criteria, as she did not take on an assistant headteacher position or above within their timeframe. Although she reflected that she was disappointed Aimee concluded that personally she was not yet ready to take on such further promotion, still only beginning to develop an identity 'as a senior leader':

> This is my last year on [Fast-Track], although I won't graduate from it because I'm not an assistant Head she says with some bitterness! I genuinely don't think I am ready[...] I guess I've got a lot to learn in this role so I wouldn't have met that particular criteria. Certainly I wouldn't want to be [applying for assistant headteacher roles] as I would be doing a lot of people a disservice because I need to learn an awful lot before I get there I think, so I'm entirely happy with that (fourth interview, Dec07, 4:46-47).

Aimee was not disheartened. She felt increasingly confident to seek out advice and also not necessarily to act on it without ensuring she both considered the implications (relating to the modes of alignment and engagement) and believed the suggestion was worth trying (relating to the modes of imagination and alignment).

Aimee was aware of a possibility for secondment onto the senior leadership team and was hoping to apply for this the following year as a way of preparing to move into an assistant headteacher position. Geoffrey supported this aspiration, saying that she needed a year of 'stability' (senior leader interview, Jan08, 5:21). Now beyond the Fast-Track scheme, Aimee no longer felt the need to rush such progression. She concluded that she wanted to feel more satisfied with herself as a head of faculty before putting herself forward.

Summarising Aimee's identity development

As with the other biographies this summary leads to a visualisation of Aimee's identity development (Figure 5.4).

Aimee had initially developed an identity 'as a performer' when at school, through university and tried to make a career in this sphere of work. However she soon found that performance and media work was difficult to procure and did not offer any clear sense of progression. Realising this saw her concluding that she sought both secure employment and support towards career progression. She chose to train as a teacher but by choosing to train as Fast-Track teacher began to develop identities 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader' simultaneously from her PGCE course on. She continued to find synergies between these identities, even as a head of subject and head of faculty. This can be explained by how she strove to match the modes of imagination, alignment and engagement to develop a sense of belonging to the school (and profession). Courses were particularly important opportunities to gain ideas and inspiration.

Sometimes her developing vision of how to lead, through modelling behaviours she desired, did not result in the development of the relationships and outcomes she expected; 'engagement' did not match 'imagination'. One main tension was between her desire to develop a collegial culture in her faculty set against expectations of her to act managerially. She was fortunate that the previous incumbent head of faculty was also her mentor and able to talk through with her discourses in the school and the way colleagues reacted (alignment issues), as well as the thinking behind the way people acted (imagination issues). He was not the only person she turned to for reflection and discussion with other leaders also became important to her. Together, such discussions helped her develop a confidence and optimism; explained by the way she worked to make sense of all three modes of belonging.

In one sense Aimee was interested in the career progression being promoted by the Fast-Track programme and saw herself as a potential 'senior leader' from soon after

training as a teacher. However the programme was not prescriptive about how to go about developing as a leader or make progression through formal roles. Instead, it offered her 'images' of leadership and a remit to explore practice in line with these 'images' (connecting the modes of imagination and engagement). Aimee began with the premise that she needed to find out whether others perceived her to be successful as a leader. Over time, and as a result of her continual reflections, she came not to rely only on the judgments of others. As Aimee's views of what she wanted to achieve as a leader developed, so did her abilities and capacity to evaluate her practice against these views. These views included views of teaching as well as of leadership and were complicated by tensions she experienced between her values and her experience of practice. The processes of reflecting on her experiences made Aimee less worried that she had not progressed to become a senior leader in terms of formal role within the first four years, yet did not change her aspiration to become one. She began to develop her identity 'as a senior leader' through talk and by building relationships with other senior leaders. Since the end of the study Aimee is now seconded to the extended senior leadership team at her school.

For Aimee the Fast-Track programme had created on the one hand unhelpful pressures to progress in an accelerated way, whilst on the other had seen her benefiting from a range of experiences, views about leadership and spaces to reflect on these.

Figure 5.4 A representation of the development of Aimee's identities
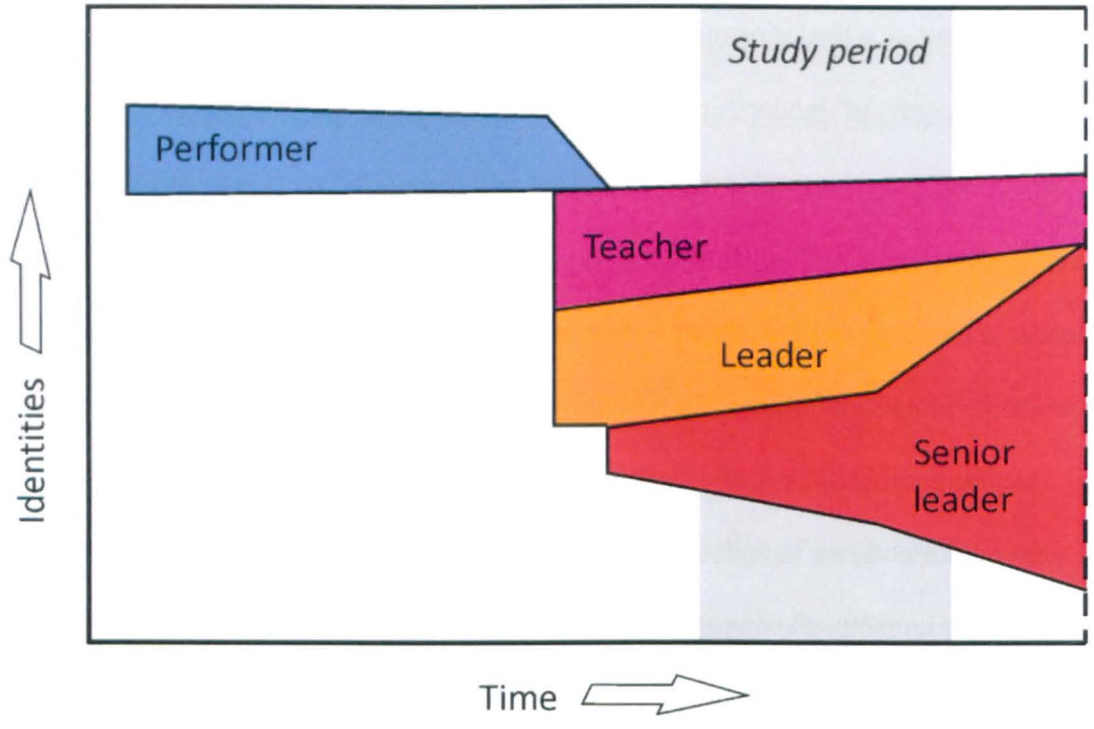
5.5 Jacky: A team player whose team dissipated and became isolated

Jacky began her education in her local state-led suburban primary school and then 11-18 comprehensive secondary school in Cambridgeshire. Although she took A levels she went into work rather than to university. In her fourth year of working she took a further A level at a local further education college as a mature student and then left work to go to university full-time. She studied sports science as an undergraduate degree at a local Cambridgeshire university and then went straight onto a PGCE at a Bedfordshire university. She went straight into teaching at a Cambridgeshire school.

Jacky and Amanda were peers in the same Cambridgeshire junior school. They had both started employment as NQTs on the same day two years prior to the study, having completed PGCEs in different initial teacher training institutions and with different educational backgrounds. Jacky was four years older than Amanda. She also differed by not having gone straight to university after leaving school, instead working in a bank bullion centre before taking her first degree science and training as a teacher. This required her to overcome a lack of confidence academically. Achieving a degree and a PGCE as a mature student were to prove significant for how Jacky empathised with others both with pupils, as their teacher, and with colleagues.

Jacky was a passionate sportswoman. On joining the study she still played for and trained with the local town ladies hockey team she had been in since the sixth form at school. Jacky came to school teaching 'with a whistle around her neck' and, in addition to her class teaching post, was immediately given responsibility for coordinating physical education (PE) in the school. This she did enthusiastically, encouraging both pupils and staff to engage in sport. She encouraged a male colleague

to take on the coaching and development of team sports, such as cricket and rugby, while Jacky focused on increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to participate in sport. In doing so she made links with community and secondary school partners.

At the time of joining the study, Jacky was a teacher of a class of 9-11 year olds working with two other colleagues teaching similar classes as part of a team. A year prior to joining the study Jacky also took on numeracy coordination, a key role for the school as it had been identified as having poor pupil attainment in numeracy. Her success on taking over this role led Jacky's potential as a leader to be noted by the headteacher at that time and she was invited to form part of a new senior leadership team. A TLR position was created for her, accommodating Jacky's PE and numeracy coordination roles as well as responsibility, shared with Amanda, for assessment. Jacky was also to take on, although not formally recognised, mentoring roles for colleagues' training and with those identified as manifesting competence issues.

Jacky's circumstances changed dramatically during the study. This was partly as a result of her and her partner starting a family, which involved Jacky returning to work part-time in between their two children being born. It also related to the remodelling of the school which, during Jacky's first maternity leave, merged with its feeder Infant school to became a primary with new senior leadership. As this biography shows, by the end of the study Jacky resigned from the school and teaching. Jacky explained that the situation she found herself in after the merger became untenable in terms of how she felt valued and supported as both a teacher and leader. She remained hopeful, although unsure, as to whether she would return to school teaching and leading in the future.

Overcoming the view that a graduate profession was unattainable

At school Jacky remembered daydreaming that she might, one day, become a PE teacher, like her own very much admired PE teachers. She was already developing an identity 'as a sportswoman'. However, she recalled how she had felt that to teach in schools was an aspiration beyond her reach academically:

> I'm now being reminded about these things! I wanted to be a secondary PE teacher probably inspired by the sport and from the teachers as well...I think it was always in my head when people asked 'what do you want to be? ...but I remember thinking that I would never be able to do that. I would like to have if it was possible but I didn't think I had it in me...And nobody else in my family had been to university so there wasn't 'this is what is expected, off you go' kind of thing so, no it didn't even cross my mind I don't think. I knew I would do 'A' levels but then I had no idea (second interview, Dec 05, 2: 23).

Jacky did not apply to university and, having failed one of her A levels, left school to work in a bank at the suggestion of her elder brother. She soon became a team leader, responsible eventually for 32 people, and stayed for four years. Although she developed an identity 'as a manager' she could not see this developing because she perceived banking did not offer a satisfying career.

As part of the bank's commitment to Jacky's professional development, financial support was available to study and she chose to improve her A level grades to be in a position to go to university. An A level in psychology, which Jacky studied in the evenings, was considered suitably beneficial to the bank to be supported and also led her to be sufficiently qualified to study sports science as a degree.

Having met her future partner when they were both cleaning at the local hospital (which Jacky did in addition to her work at the bank to top up her wages), she was persuaded to consider teaching:

I met my partner when he was finishing his degree and deciding what he wanted to do and he decided to go back and do his PGCE...He started teaching and just said, you know, because he knew it had always been festering in me, he said 'spend some time in a school and you will absolutely love it' and it just went from there really (second interview, Dec 05, 2: 32).

First she needed to study for a degree and Jacky became a full-time mature student at the local university. Her identity 'as a teacher' began to develop when she realised she could combine her enthusiasm and expertise in sports with primary school teaching and she went straight on to complete a PGCE in primary teaching.

A whistle round her neck, wanting to become a team player

When Jacky (and Amanda) arrived at their interviews for this school they were unaware that there were two classroom teaching positions on offer and that the headteacher was particularly interested in finding a candidate specialist in PE. Jacky recalled how:

[...]I'd been looking for jobs and I'd looked around a few schools and my Dad found this one in the paper and mentioned it and[...]so I phoned up when I was at college and spoke to the secretary and they said 'come round now'. I was really conscious that I'd got on sports gear and that I'd be coming round to look at the school so I phoned back and said 'look is it OK I'm coming in my sports gear?' and they said 'No, no that's fine' (fourth interview, Mar 06, 4: 11).

The headteacher was currently holding PE coordination responsibility, despite not being particularly enthusiastic or skilled. Coming to look around the school in her PE kit indicated that Jacky was equipped and motivated to take on this role:

So I came as PE coordinator[...]There was no-one here[...]That was it - with a whistle round my neck[...]Well, Paula (the head) was PE coordinator if you can imagine that - so I was PE coordinator. If I had any problems I could go and see her[...]She knew my interest in sport and that I wanted to get clubs up and

running and things. So it came about that 'would you like to?' and I said 'yes, I might as well give it a go' (fourth interview, Mar 06, 4: 18).

Jacky began to develop a team of enthusiasts around her, including encouraging colleagues to join her in the gym. She enlisted a male teacher to help her coordinate team sports and the associated parental liaison as she explained:

> Initially it was just me, I was just doing it on my own. Then I had some parent helpers which were fantastic...We had them for football and rugby. It then became for the whole school and there were so many children so I would take some and they would take some (first interview, Dec 05, 1: 23).

As Jacky took on further responsibilities the other teacher was awarded the new role of sports coordinator 'under' her PE coordination role. This was a crucial relationship for her to develop as this teacher was soon to be identified as demonstrating issues of competency. Through having supported him, it became possible for this teacher to accept Jacky as a mentor with respect to his classroom teaching.

For Jacky being a member of a team - whether as a hockey player, as part of a PE teaching team, as a class teaching team or, later, as part of a senior leadership team - was central to how she saw herself developing. She referred to 'teams' repeatedly in her accounts of how she saw herself working and learning. Her view of team membership (related to her mode of imagination) affected how she practiced in school (her mode of engagement). Jacky spoke, even more than Amanda, about enjoying the social nature of working in this school. In particular she highlighted the importance of team planning meetings:

> If a member of staff was having problems with something or we were a little bit worried about something it might be a time [during team planning] when we can coach as a group in a more relaxed way and sort of solve the problems within

the team if we could see something. That is something I have taken on and I now feel much more involved with that (first interview, Dec 05, 1: 33).

She also valued times before and after school when the teaching team teachers met informally to share ideas and concerns. Jacky saw herself able to play an active part in this teaching team as they worked to meet the needs of the school. The modes of alignment, imagination and engagement combined to give her a sense of identity as a team-working professional. Jacky referred to the mutual support developed through working in this way, in particular as she strove to develop numeracy teaching, learning and achievement in the school (related to the mode of alignment):

> I think within the school it is quite easy to change as there is no one really saying no we have got to stick to this method so if you want to see benefits, you are given the freedom to try things out but it may come hurtling back down on you...but I think because of the team you know that you are going to get back up from the rest of the staff, you know that it is going to be positive (fifth interview, Jun 06, 6: 13).

Jacky had the freedom to instigate changes and, as with Amanda, was aware of the potentially double-edged nature of this freedom in terms of being held responsible for any lack of success. Jacky felt that at least the staff would be supportive of their efforts, even if the headteacher became critical. Working as part of, and on behalf of, a team were ways of working Jacky felt comfortable with and were part of her identity 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader'.

Turning under-confidence into a strength

Jacky's lack of confidence in her academic ability originated from when she was at school and remained an undercurrent for her. Despite Jacky's strong allegiance to notions of teams, she reported that her lack of confidence caused her to be shy when initially working in a group:

216

I was never naughty and I was quite shy in class. People who know me now say they are quite surprised by that but it takes me quite a while to get confident and I do think I lack in confidence...particularly in a group and it is not until I really get to know people that I would feel better (second interview, Dec 05, 2: 17).

She cited feeling most uncomfortable when meeting other numeracy leaders in cluster meetings with local schools. Jacky explained how doing things on behalf of others, ensuring she did not let others down and acting in ways that might make the team more effective (all aspects of the mode of imagination related to modes of engagement), gave her a confidence she might not otherwise have. Her view of herself 'as a leader' was therefore to help groups she was involved with develop into effective teams, transferring her experiences of the benefits and practices of teamwork she found from playing hockey into her work context.

Mathematics was one of the subjects at school Jacky felt least confident in yet she reflected how she had turned this aspect of her biography into a strength, both by agreeing to take on the challenge of numeracy coordination and in her classroom teaching:

> Maybe always feeling nervous about maths might be why I thought I might go for the numeracy coordinator and maybe this feeling of trying to overcome this (second interview, Dec 05, 2: 8).

> I can still remember [my maths teacher] just shouting and me thinking 'I don't know the answer. Please don't pick me!'... I feel it is one of my skills that I feel I can really link in with those children who haven't got a clue and lack in confidence at the back of the classroom and are unsure...Just seeing them, watching them and seeing their body language and building up their confidence[...]I felt I had done that really well... I think that links back to how I felt. It's funny to think I hated maths (second interview, Dec 05, 2: 7).

Jacky was aware that she drew on 'images' of herself when showing empathy with pupils, other teachers and aspiring teachers; connecting her modes of imagination and engagement. She exemplified this as follows:

> Sometimes if one of the trainee teachers comes to me with a problem then I might refer her to some [book or resource] I know and have a little think about something else I can offer them as well (third interview, Jan 06, 3: 17).

> There are lots of TAs here who haven't got into [the local university] because they have got a GNVQ[39] which they won't accept. I have said that, although that is really tough, I have got into teaching without all the right qualifications at the right time and you have just got to be determined, prove that you can do it and look around (third interview, Jan 06, 3: 10/11).

Jacky encouraged pupils and colleagues to strive for further achievement, whilst remaining aware that, to do this herself, she needed both to be proactive and the support of others. Because she felt she was offered such support Jacky developed a strong sense of belonging to the school.

To overcome her lack of confidence Jacky worked hard at ensuring she was up-to-date and knowledgeable about current aspects of the curriculum. She reported spending weekends reading and in bookshops, compiling a collection of resources. In these ways she explained she could be proactive in developing her subject knowledge expertise (relating to her mode of imagination):

> I think it is because of my lack of confidence that I have always had, having a lot of books...just so that I have a book on different subjects. So I definitely know what I am doing (fifth interview, Jun 06, 6: 1).

---

[39] This is an alternative qualification to the more traditional GCSE and A levels, brought in to accredit vocational subjects. There are a number of levels which can be achieved from key stage 3 on and are they are often taken in further education colleges and by mature students.

In terms of supporting her numeracy coordination role Jacky referred to support from the LA maths advisor and leading maths teacher to search for 'images' and inspiration as to how to practice 'as a numeracy leader' (relating to the mode of imagination) When asked specifically about this she explained that:

> I think my learning to be a leader would come mostly from these maths advisors…In learning about the actual role and possibilities (fifth interview, Jun 06, 6: 3).

> The leading maths teacher has helped with the leadership as well. She let me know when I should be doing things. She would give me suggestions for me to go away and then for me to make up my own mind about as a leader or coordinator as to what would suit our school best (fifth interview, Jun 06, 6: 4).

Jacky valued these professional relationships beyond the school, welcoming their suggestions and also attended an extended numeracy specialist course. As a result Jacky decided what to change in school and, after self-evaluating an intervention, often returned to the advisors for further advice. Matching ideas, practice and outcomes in her context allowed her to consider her identity as a leader through reviewing the match of all three modes of belonging. Related to this were her reflections on how she might be thought about by others:

> I think [the maths advisor] knows that I am not just the maths coordinator and I do really want to try and improve things and make things better and I am trying things so that, if she is giving me some advice, I am following things up and feeding back to her, 'Well this did or didn't work and where can I go now?' Maybe she does that to everyone but I do feel that we do get on quite well (third interview, Jan 06, 3: 13).

Although Jacky retained her numeracy coordination role after the merging of the schools she was no longer allowed access to these advisors, losing a resource for her mode of imagination. The new headteacher restricted the advisors to dealing only

with her, as headteacher. This affected Jacky's view of her identity 'as a leader' and was one of the reasons she began to feel devalued and excluded. Without direct access to external advice Jacky explained that she felt limited to 'managing' tasks rather than 'leading' change.

Change in the school: As leadership became management in the school

Jacky took maternity leave at a time when the school was preparing to merge. The incumbent senior leadership became increasingly absent, including Jacky as she went on maternity leave. Jacky had the assurance from the then headteacher that, on her return, she would be able to retain her TLR position and responsibilities to work part-time for one term until the start of the following academic year. By taking this leave at this particular time Jacky missed out on the LftM programme but was promised that she would be able to undertake this in the autumn.

There was high staff turnover during the two terms of the academic year in question (autumn 2006 and spring 2007) and, when Jacky returned, she found that the teams she had been part of were becoming 'fragmented' (sixth interview, Jun 07, 8: 32). The headteacher, deputy headteacher, Amanda (as her peer) and a number of other key staff were to leave by the Autumn. When Jacky returned she found responsibility for assessment had been taken over entirely by Amanda and that she was job-sharing the Numeracy coordination role. The other teacher (Cheryl), instead of Jacky, attended a number of external courses, further reducing Jacky's opportunities for inspiration (an imagination issue).

For the term, in a part-time capacity, it was negotiated that Jacky mentored particular staff and began liaison with the Infant school. She never referred to any activities

related to the liaison role. Jacky retained PE coordination, but no longer considered this an important part of her identity development. The loss of her earlier responsibilities changed Jacky's identity of herself 'as a leader', which related to reduced opportunities for 'engagement' and 'alignment'. For this one term Jacky was also not allocated a class and was asked to develop resources for supporting a child identified as on the autistic spectrum. This allowed her to develop her skills 'as a teacher' but the loss of being part of a teaching team again reduced her 'engagement' and 'alignment'. Her identity 'as a teacher' was affected such that both identities were under threat.

A new headteacher was appointed to the newly merged school and Jacky explained that she found the promises made for the new academic year were not all kept:

> The [new] headteacher asked Jacky if she had been on the LftM programme and she said she had missed out because of her maternity leave[...]Jacky said she asked whether she could now go on the LftM but was told that it had been offered to the two people who applied but didn't get TLRs and that money was very tight (notes as part of the seventh interview, Dec 07, 9:20[40]).

Although Jacky retained her TLR position, because the money had indeed been 'ring-fenced' (seventh interview, Dec 07, 9:1), she began to feel that this status was in name only. Jacky decided to stay part-time rather than return full-time as originally planned. She reported that this was partly due to the insecurity she felt about the school, set against family pressures. In her absence other members of the leadership team had applied and reapplied for the new senior leadership jobs and new pay and conditions

---

[40] It was impossible to audio record this interview as Jacky had been told at the last minute that she could not leave her classroom over lunchtime as children had been sent there because of bad weather. The notes of this interview were agreed with Jacky.

had been negotiated but Jacky had been excluded from this process. She also found that the senior leadership meetings were set on one of her non-teaching days.

Jacky's accounts were of a new regime in school in which she referred to a senior 'management' rather than a 'leadership' team. As a consequence Jacky explained that she now felt she was expected only to 'manage' certain tasks given to her, which amounted to far less than she had done before. Jacky reflected:

> There was a time when I was involved in every decision and was making decisions but now I am told the results of decisions and what I need to do in terms of actions as a result. There is more paperwork about this whereas before it was more verbal because we were all seeing each other all the time. What I have learnt from this is that I am going back a step and that I need to learn some acceptance and listen to other people and accept their views[...]Because I am so passionate about this school it upsets me that I have no real say and I need to come to terms with how to use my TLR whilst accepting the limitations (seventh interview, Dec 07, 9: 4).

No longer was she expected to suggest ideas of what to try in school, evaluate initiatives or analyse pupil performance data and develop targets. Instead she talked about producing proformas for the new senior leadership to carry out book reviews and being restricted to rolling out unproblematically new national strategies for numeracy. The new discourse of leadership (an alignment issue) clashed with her own 'images' of leadership (mode of imagination) and she could not engage in ways which brought together the modes; her sense of belonging 'as a leader' was compromised. By the end of one year in the new school, she reflected on how she viewed herself:

> I still see myself as a good teacher. I don't think I'm doing any leading within the school; possibly a little bit of coordination but I don't even think that's part of my job now (ninth interview, Jun 08, 11: 45).

I think earlier on we still had quite a lot of freedom to put things into place. We were on leadership programmes, we were having new ideas and things to set up, but I'm not being offered anything at the moment, just to teach (ninth interview, Jun 08, 11:7).

The loss of those she valued in school, from the caretaker, TAs, colleagues through to senior leaders, led Jacky to realise that the history of her value to the school had been lost as well as the opportunities for mutual support.

Vulnerability and resignation from her post

In addition to losing any sponsorship for and agency to act as a leader (limiting her identity development as a leader), Jacky also reported a loss of support 'as a teacher', (similarly limiting her identity development as a teacher). She started to talk about feeling vulnerable in the classroom and how this related to relationships in the new school (relating to both modes of alignment and engagement 'as a teacher'):

> I had heard about incidents from my job share with a child and that has made me think about who I would go to if I had a classroom problem now. Where is my support network now? What is the proper procedure? (seventh interview, Dec 07, 9: 18).

> Do you remember last time I spoke to you I was quite concerned about a child, I felt quite vulnerable[...]so I went to see the headteacher after a staff meeting, and was sort of told to just sort of get on with it (ninth interview, Jun 08, 11: 14).

This particular issue was only resolved when Jacky raised the child's behaviour at an open staff meeting. With relief she found that the lower school staff were fully aware of the challenging behaviour of this child. Although the headteacher went on to respond in a way that Jacky was happy with, the steps she had needed to take to make

her concerns public, left her feeling unsupported by the headteacher. As a result Jacky's identity as a competent and supported teacher was compromised.

Jacky was aware that changes in how she viewed herself were not only related to changes in the school, in particular the leadership of the new headteacher (alignment issues), but also related to her decisions in trying to achieve an acceptable work-life balance. Continuing to work part-time affected her participation. Both had affected her sense of belonging 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader'. On becoming pregnant a second time during the final term of the study Jacky reflected on her options. She reported how she had considered supply teaching or acting as a TA, rather than a teacher, in future:

> There are times when I have thought, 'well I'll just go back and be a TA'. That's going back to the balance of everything, and it has opened up my eyes and this might be happening to lots of teachers in schools, I don't know (ninth interview, Jun 08, 11: 40).

This was not in terms of developing new identities but a hypothetical response to her current circumstances. Jacky concluded that, although she enjoyed teaching and leading, under the current conditions she found herself frustrated by the limitations visited on her in terms of her learning. Her appreciation of her new context (an alignment issue) and the limited freedom she had to develop her practice (an engagement issue) matched neither her views of teaching or leadership (imagination issues) and hence did not allow her to develop these identities. She talked about 'not learning':

> You need to be involved in pushing lots of other things forward, and that's what I think has completely stopped, and that's where my sort of bug bear is I suppose[...]Instead I am left, you know, focusing on how I'm going to manage my life, and my work (eighth interview, May 08, 10: 11).

Last night I had some time to reflect, I was reflecting on that I feel I haven't been learning recently, and even this morning after I'd been to school, it's awful but I just don't feel that I've been learning anything (ninth interview, Jun 08, 11:3).

In trying to marry a family and a professional life in these circumstances Jacky was left by the end of the study (and coincidentally her time in school) asking who she had become and whether she was 'becoming' anything other than a mother. No longer was she a member of the ladies hockey team, nor able to go to training or the gym after work. She felt that she was a school leader in name only and a classroom teacher in a way that was also unsupported. She felt that the skills and relationships she had built up and relied upon were no longer valued and she was not sure what the solution was to these realisations:

People are saying teachers should get responsibility before having children but then the people in schools who have done it this way, like me, are saying, 'it's such a waste of time', so I don't know what the solution is (eighth interview, May 08, 10: 5).

Despite her resignation, however, Jacky still expressed a latent teacher and leader identity. She still felt potentially a good teacher and leader, if she could find a different school culture to work within, in which she could find a more positive match between the three modes of belonging. She had experienced this in the past and so felt this was possible in schools. In particular Jacky's accounts referred to the 'image' of herself as a valued team player as retained:

I still want to go out having not let anybody down, because it is still a team, and I still get paid to do my job (ninth interview, Jun 08, 11: 34).

I think because when we work as a team, the team would work well if I was in it[...] and I saw I could do it for that spell when Lucy, the Deputy, was not there (ninth interview, Jun 08, 11: 43).

It is not clear whether, or on what basis, Jacky would return to teaching in the future.

Summarising Jacky's identity development

Again, this summary concludes with a visual representation of Jacky's identity development (Figure 5.5).

Jacky's identity 'as a sportswoman', developed early in her life, was important to her later development both 'as a school teacher' and 'as a leader'. Jacky made sense of these identities through her beliefs about the value of working in a team (and therefore the mode of imagination). Playing hockey as part of a team offered her experience both in how effective teams work and the role individuals can play in this. She came to believe that she was good at working in this way, such that her mode of engagement matched her mode of imagination. This was however only in her school before its, and her, circumstances changed.

Related to Jacky's sense of belonging, as a good team member, was an undercurrent of under-confidence. This was derived from her time at school when she could not 'imagine' aspiring to a graduate profession like teaching. Having left school she needed to re-imagine herself as a potential graduate in order to be prepared to upgrade her qualifications. She spent some time developing 'as a manager' training for this role and taking on team leader responsibilities. Jacky only began to reject this and develop an alternative identity 'as a teacher' only after encouragement by her partner. She was never to refer to her identity 'as a manager' again, even when as a school leader.

Jacky explained that, although she now considered herself competent 'as a teacher' she liked to work in teams, with people who had come to know her well, to allow her to act confidently. In time she believed that the way she had come into teaching, and

her awareness of how barriers can be overcome, helped her both 'as a teacher' (in encouraging similarly shy and under-confident pupils) and 'as a leader' (in encouraging others to aspire to become teachers). In these ways her view of herself (the mode of imagination) could match her practice (the mode of engagement). She built strong relationships with her teaching team, support staff and a team of staff and parents who she recruited as part of her PE coordination role.

Jacky began teaching as a PE coordinator, building teams of adults to increase the opportunities for children to participate. She then took on numeracy coordination as a personal challenge. Jacky's potential 'as a leader' was noted by her then headteacher and she was invited to be part of a new senior leadership team and given whole-school responsibilities building on her Numeracy role. Jacky developed her view of acting as a team member into a view of leadership. It could be said that Jacky was enacting a shared form of leadership, a version of distributed leadership perhaps, but no-one had talked to Jacky about such models of leadership, nor encouraged her to work in this particular way. It was a personal rather than organisational understanding of her role. She saw that as team member she could become responsible for the performance of the whole team, and hence for the pupils they taught. This saw her taking advice to source new ideas for teaching and learning in school and sharing these with colleagues, as well as finding ways to coach and mentor colleagues whom she identified needed to develop their practice. Hence her mode of engagement could match her mode of imagination.

Until invited, she had not imagined herself 'as a senior leader'. She had little time in which to develop this identity because, when her personal and school circumstances changed at the same time, all identities as sportswoman, teacher, leader and potential

senior leader were challenged. Her accounts did not reveal that Jacky developed an identity 'as a senior leader'.

Two major changes affected Jacky. First, starting a family and developing the identity 'as a mother' and second, the change in leadership and restructuring of her school. In the new school culture Jacky experienced a lack of support from the new headteacher to work as she had been doing and new discourses within which she was expected to work (alignment issues). High staff turnover caused by the merger also saw the teams she had been working in being disbanded (further alignment issues). She felt her ability to act in ways in which she believed were curtailed, such that modes of imagination and engagement could not be matched. This was partly explained by the new conditions in the school and partly a change in her work patterns by choosing to work part-time. In these new circumstances Jacky felt she was developing none of her identities and chose to leave the profession, so focusing on her identity 'as a mother'.

Figure 5.5 A representation of the development of Jacky's identities

228
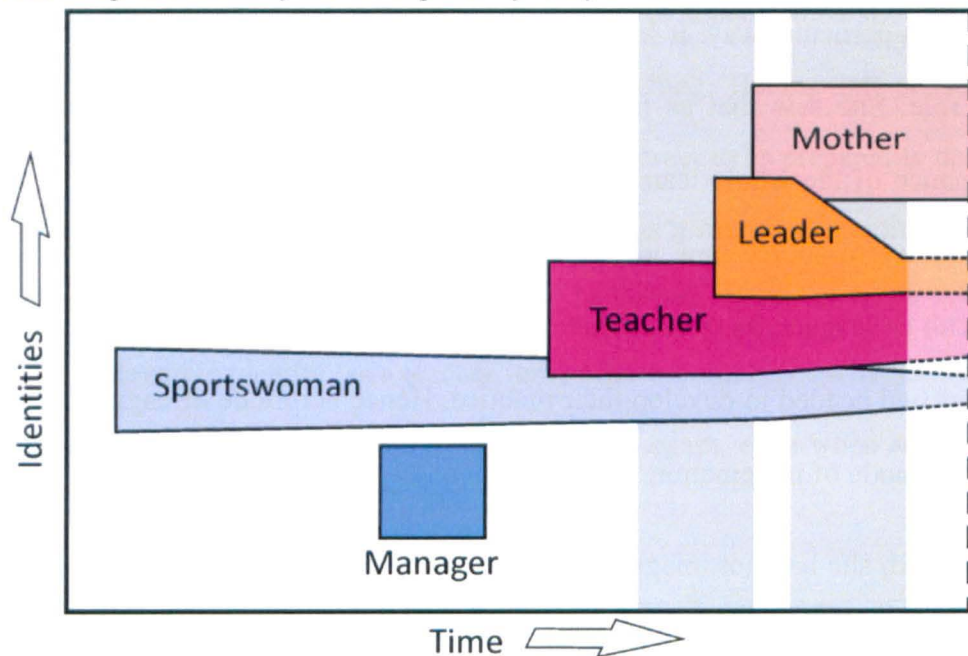
Chapter 6 The 'emergence' of 'emergent' school leaders explored

The case studies in the last chapter present what I have termed 'learning biographies' of five emergent leaders. These biographies were created from a series of discussions held with each leader about their learning and are now discussed according to the three main research questions.

RQ1. Who do emergent leaders want to become?

RQ2. How do emergent leaders talk about their learning?

RQ3. What view of emergence do emergent leaders talking about their learning offer?

Section 6.1 addresses RQ1 exploring the insights such biographies provide as to who leaders wanted to 'become'. This focuses on which identities emergent leaders have developed and how they have changed over time, focusing on their designated identity (Sfard and Prusak, 2005) by the end of the study.

First, I summarise the type of leader each emergent leader wanted to become (RQ1a) and discuss the differences in their beliefs about leadership (RQ1b). Second, these differences are explained through a consideration of each emergent leader's identity development when viewed as social participation (RQ1c). Although I conclude that they are unique accounts, I chose to look for similarities as well as differences in these designated identities, to examine the personal and organisational factors which help explain their uniqueness. I highlight the different opportunities for support of identity development. Third, focusing on the dynamic nature of emergent leaders' identity development, I explore whether it is possible to chart trajectories of this participation (RQ1d).

Section 6.2 addresses RQ2 focusing on the role of talk in the emergent leaders' identity development. How emergent leaders talk about their learning is considered in relation to Wenger's three modes of belonging (Wenger, 1998), picking up on ideas of support for identity development introduced in section 6.1.

As explained in chapter 4, talk does not just refer to the way data was collected mainly through interviews, but pays attention to the central role of talk in identity development (of which talk in the interviews was one part). The role of talk in relation to Wenger's modes of belonging is examined (RQ2a) to identify differences in the emergent leaders' accounts of learning (RQ2b) and to explain these differences across the cases (RQ2c). The effect of talk with me as part of the study is acknowledged through the reports of emergent leaders of the effect of their involvement (RQ2d).

RQ3 is addressed at the end of each section by reflecting first on emergence in the light of examining the development of designated identities of these emergent leaders (as section 6.1.4 of section 6.1) and second how emergence relates to the role of talk in the processes of their identity development (as section 6.2.5 of section 6.2).

6.1 Who do emergent leaders want to become?

The case study approach generating biographical accounts has allowed Goodson's (1992) notion of the participants in this study as 'singers' to be 'brought to life'. From the data that they shared during the study it has been possible to understand their experiences as emergent leaders, not in terms of *what* they did as leaders (which has indeed also been revealed) but rather framed by *who* they want to become. This helps to fill a gap in published work about the meaning making that lies behind the actions and behaviours of school leaders.

Section 6.1.1 discusses views of leadership developed by each emergent leader and hence their designated identities

Section 6.1.2 explores patterns and differences in the development of these designated identities

Section 6.1.3 discusses the trajectories of participation that explain the development of these identities

Reference is made to how Wenger's modes of belonging are helpful in explaining the leaders' identity development, but a fuller exploration of the contribution of each mode of belonging is found in section 6.2 where the processual aspects of learning are the focus.

6.1.1 The views of leadership developed by five emergent leaders

The learning biographies allowed an appreciation of how emergent leaders came to develop different views of leadership (summarised in Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 An overview of the five emergent leaders' personal views of leadership

Leader	Personal view of leadership
Amanda	To find out what organisations should be doing to perform well, identify problems within the organisation and either draw on prior experience or look beyond the organisation for possible solutions, then to try these ideas out and evaluate.
Margaret	All work guided by what she believes would most benefit children in the school as well as most support colleagues, developing passions and expertise to be shared with others; learning with others in a 'learning community'.
Phillip	To develop clarity of thinking about what constitutes the best pedagogical practice to be developing in school and, armed with these beliefs and understandings, be prepared to lead changes through consultative strategies but with enough assertiveness that achieve goals for the organisation. Mentoring also an important strategy used to develop others.
Aimee	To meet the deadlines and expectations of others, develop a coherent vision for the area of school responsible for and use this to inspire staff, whilst also showing empathy with colleagues and developing both pupils and staff.
Jacky	To take an active role in whichever teams working in school, ensuring that the team develop in a way which leads to school improvement; this includes both developing expertise in order to contribute to teams and mentoring colleagues.

It can be seen, even from this simplification (Table 6.1), that each leader had

developed a very different and personal view leadership. These views were not linked

by the leaders to particular models of leadership nor to particular views of either

leadership or management, as outlined in chapter 3. Leaders rarely talked about their

aspirations theoretically. Instead these were very personal views of leadership. Some

of these views were related to core beliefs and values that guided their participation

from well before they became school leaders, for example Jacky's belief in the value

of working in teams. In most cases, although views could be interpreted as relating to

models of leadership (e.g. Jacky and Margaret's shared views of leadership, Phillip's

views of instructional leadership and Amanda's managerial with also perhaps

elements of contingency and transformational models of leadership) these were very personal rather than organisational understandings of their roles.

The views represented in Table 6.1 are not static views of leadership but relate to the designated identities (Sfard and Prusak, 2005) leaders had developed about their leadership towards the end of the study. These result from and inform each leader's ongoing participation. Two examples illustrate different effects of such participation on personal views of leadership: one of confirmation and one of revision.

Jacky's view of herself as a good team member was confirmed by early experiences in the study when she reported others similarly keen to work with her in teams in ways which matched well how she imagined acting as a leader. In this way all three modes of belonging could be balanced. Rather than changing her views on working in a team in the 'new' school situation she began to re-evaluate whether she was happy to fit in (an alignment issue). She decided her ability to learn (through the three modes of belonging) had become so restricted that she could not see herself becoming the type of leader she wanted under these circumstances, and she resigned. Despite Jacky's view of leadership being challenged as the school merged, as she found herself working in different conditions, she retained a view of herself as a potential school leader who would act as a good team member.

Conversely Phillip's views about what he valued changed over time. He became clearer that his identity as a teacher was founded on one of social concern and a developing interest in pedagogy and not as a subject specialist. He also developed an interest as a leader in mentoring, first as a way of planning for his future and later becoming intrinsically interested in the development of mentoring practices. He regularly reviewed how he might match expectations of him with his aspirations and even managed to combine promoting 'gifted and talented' provision, when he had

233

earlier articulated that he did not believe in the basis for this, into what he referred to as a working model for his remit as Learning Director. For Phillip, his designated identity was constantly being revised in the light of further experiences and was likely to continue so beyond this study.

Underpinning the views being developed are different senses of belonging expressed as with whom emergent leaders believed they were learning and these are summarised in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 A summary of the sense of belonging expressed by the participants

	Inferred sense of belonging	**Commentary on with whom learning**
Margaret	Part of the school as a learning community.	All teachers in school as well as pupils, CAs and others who might also contribute such as trainee teachers and visitors.
Aimee	As a Fast-Track leader with other aspiring/emergent leaders, which led her to feel part of a community of leaders, first, beyond and, later, in school. Began to desire membership of senior leadership team.	Initially an abstract sense of belonging to the profession as a leader but, after becoming Head of Faculty, felt a more concrete sense of belonging to and ability to identify with other aspiring senior leaders.
Jacky	Part of a team with colleagues in school.	Sense of belonging to the teaching year group team, leadership team and school staff viewed as a team. Overlapping team memberships sees view of all colleagues as peers.
Amanda	Early in the study identified with Jacky and Lucy as leaders trying to improve the school but, increasingly, acting largely alone. Any sense of 'belonging' in relation to the school as an organisation, rather than particular people.	Enjoyed what might be seen as the identity of a trouble-shooter, prepared to be as critical of systems and practices of senior leaders as of teachers. Relationships built as needed to enact solutions.
Phillip	Largely acting alone, 'belonging' to the school as an organisation involved in transformation of teaching and learning. Began to desire membership of the senior leadership team to allow him a stronger sense of belonging.	As an individual building productive relationships through practice and becoming more confident to be assertive when encounters inertia. Later wanting insights into school strategic thinking.

Table 6.2 shows that:

- Aimee, Jacky and Margaret's senses of belonging (shaded sections of the table) involve working as part of collectives.

- Jacky explained her sense of belonging in terms of working as part of teams.

- Margaret and Aimee referred to the idea that they were learning in communities. The way they referred to communities, however, was different to one another and neither in ways that Wenger would recognise as communities of practice.

- Neither Amanda nor Phillip referred to belonging in these ways and appeared to working on behalf of the school as individuals.

- Amanda and Phillip talk about working for the school as an organisation. They see a role for themselves in developing colleagues as needed to enact whole school changes.

I discuss the differences in interpretation of these senses belonging in relation to:

- collectives;

- as individuals,

- tensions between senses of belonging

1. Learning as part of collectives

Margaret introduced the term community in our discussions of her learning to explain how she saw her school as a 'learning community'. Her biography reports that the staff worked in coordinated enterprise and shared their developing knowledge and understanding with one another (relating to the mode of alignment). Her perception of the school as working in this way matched her own view of how she wished to work (relating to the mode of imagination) and therefore she felt able to practice in ways which matched her mode of engagement with the other two modes of belonging. The way she made sense of herself as a teacher and a leader at this school was as a learner and was strongly related to her sense of belonging to this school as a learning community.

As a head of subject Aimee did not show an awareness of belonging to a community within school. In this role she felt quite isolated. As a Fast-Track teacher, however, she was encouraged to see herself as an aspiring leader. Through talking with other

leaders on courses, with her partner and a leader she kept in touch with from her previous school Aimee began to feel that she belonged to an unbounded and disparate community of leaders and so developed her identity as a leader. But in Wenger's sense these leaders were neither working together to agreed goals, nor developing a shared repertoire of practices. They were leaders working independently in different settings, with different aspirations and who used one another in ways which informed their ongoing identity development. As Aimee moved towards and took on a head of faculty role she developed a sense of herself as a senior (rather than an early) leader. It was during this time she reported beginning to feel a sense of a community with leaders working across the school.

When she first took over the head of faculty role Aimee felt insecure and was not sure how best to proceed. It was only, as Aimee observed the practice of other senior leaders in school and sought their opinions as to how best to operate at a whole school level, that she developed an awareness of the potential to belong to this community of senior leaders. Chances to talk and develop practice with other senior leaders were, however, sporadic and not based on developing a shared view of leadership. This was a personal appreciation of the potential membership of these communities, rather than any encouragement to become an apprentice in any way to them. Aimee talked about other leaders acting as potential resources for the future.

Jacky's sense of belonging can be summarised as being part of a team, rather than a community – with teams of overlapping membership in the school. This view seems to relate to her other strong identity as a sportswoman. She talked often about the support, encouragement and value she placed on being a member of teams and how team membership required members to work on behalf of the team. This is how she

began to view herself as a leader in relation to these teams. Becoming a member of senior leadership 'teams' also became important to Aimee and Phillip.

2. Learning as individuals

Phillip and Amanda appear to be working in less collegial ways than the other three leaders, not explicitly expressing loyalty to any collective. This might be explained by their views of leadership of trying to bring about transformation in their schools. Amanda, in particular in her second school, reported herself as actively looking for ways for the school to work more effectively and efficiently and for her to lead this change. For such transformation these leaders sought inspiration, not necessarily expecting to find this from in-school colleagues, to help decide how to make changes. As discussed later in section 6.2 'self talk' was important to these leaders in developing their beliefs about what they were trying to achieve, 'reading their workplace' and experimenting with their practice (to match all three modes of belonging).

For Phillip when he was a earning director his sense of working in isolation was in part an artefact of this being a new role with no precedents or parallel roles. It was also related to the way Phillip felt he could not turn to those in related roles, such as the pastoral leaders, because they had also applied for the position. He felt he needed to be self-sufficient and was offered the LftM and this study as opportunities to help him make sense of the possibilities. As Phillip realised that he needed to work across the school, he began to develop an identity as a senior leader but, to allow him to practice as a senior leader, he decided he needed to be formally invited to become a senior leadership team member. This was a mechanism which was likely to reduce his isolation. Once on this team he may, like Jacky, develop his identity in relation to this

team rather than as an individual – so developing a clearer sense of belonging. (He became a member only towards the end of the study).

Amanda's isolation was also partly caused by her circumstances. As Phillip, her TLR was a position with no precedent. This was compounded by members of the newly formed senior leadership team leaving the school. Amanda's identity as a teacher was reducing over time and so she did not identify strongly with other teachers in either school. In neither of her small primary schools were there many possibilities to identify with other leaders in similar situations to herself. This was particularly so in the second school and her headteacher was concerned about the isolation this might cause her. Amanda did not worry about this. Amanda's solution was that to 'belong' to the school she needed to find ideas to contribute to it. She did this by looking outside the school, which increased her isolation within it.

3. Tensions between senses of belonging

Such a categorisation of senses of belonging is an oversimplification and it was found that not only did senses of belonging change, as discussed above, but tension between senses of belonging were experienced. This is illustrated well in the account of Aimee who, like leaders reported in Wise's (2001) study, reported trying to develop a collegiality in her Faculty whilst finding it difficult to encourage them to work on directives she was expected to drive through. By agreeing to drive through whole school initiatives she was trying to enact her sense of belonging to other leaders in her school. At the same time she wished, for example by showing empathy with them about the impact on their workload, to develop a sense of belonging to those in her Faculty.

In identifying with other school leaders in that school Aimee was tacitly accepting the management tasks she was expected to perform. However, through her involvement in leadership development programmes she had come to understand, associated with views of leadership rather than management, that she should develop a vision and develop her colleagues. She wanted to feel, and encourage other Faculty staff to develop, a sense of belonging to the Faculty. When trying to work with her Faculty in line with her aspirations (mode of imagination) she found she could not always match her practice (mode of engagement) and related this to the pressures on her and the way people reacted to the way she was working (alignment issues).

These difficulties relate to trying to belong both to the leadership of the school and her Faculty and were an aspect of her identity development as a leader she found difficult to resolve. How could she be 'accountable' to both managerial expectations of her by more senior leaders and to what she thought were the expectations of her colleagues in ways which matched what she aspired to?

Like Aimee, Amanda began to describe tensions when acting as a leader. These also related to being 'in the middle'. Amanda felt isolated because she saw herself as caught between the headteacher and the other staff. She also wanted to act in ways which matched her aspirations (the mode of imagination) and found that this often did not match the practices she observed in her school, either by headteacher or staff (relating to her mode of alignment). She explained that the continued emphasis of the headteacher on her as a model teacher was particularly problematic when she wanted to develop herself as a senior leader. She felt positioned by the headteacher 'in the middle', rather than as a senior leader and found, in this way, it was difficult to develop any sense of belonging.

These discussions highlight the flux and the complexity of developing designated identities. They relate to who the leaders identify with and feel a sense of belonging to but are strongly mediated by their personal beliefs and aspirations.

6.1.2 Patterns and differences in the development of designated identities

The main finding of this study is that individuals reveal unique trajectories of participation and hence identity development. For the ease of discussing these differences, however, I chose to look for patterns in these emergent leaders' accounts and use these to explore the differences, focusing here on the designated identities developed.

Accepting that categorisation is qualified, I suggest a distinction between two types of designated identities (summarised in Figure 6.1). In aspiring to become 'leaders' and then 'senior leaders' Amanda, Aimee and Phillip were seemingly on leadership 'careers' in the way the NCLSCS leadership framework might assume. In contrast, Jacky and Margaret's designated identities were not linked to role progression. By identifying with their peers and aspiring to work on behalf of these, promotion and role progression were not explicit aspirations. Their designated identities can be described as 'becoming' 'valued peers/colleagues'.

Figure 6.1 A categorisation of the designated identities of the five emergent leaders in this study

Valued ◄─────── Emergent ──────► Senior leader
peer/colleague   leader

| Margaret
Jacky | | Amanda
Aimee
Philip |
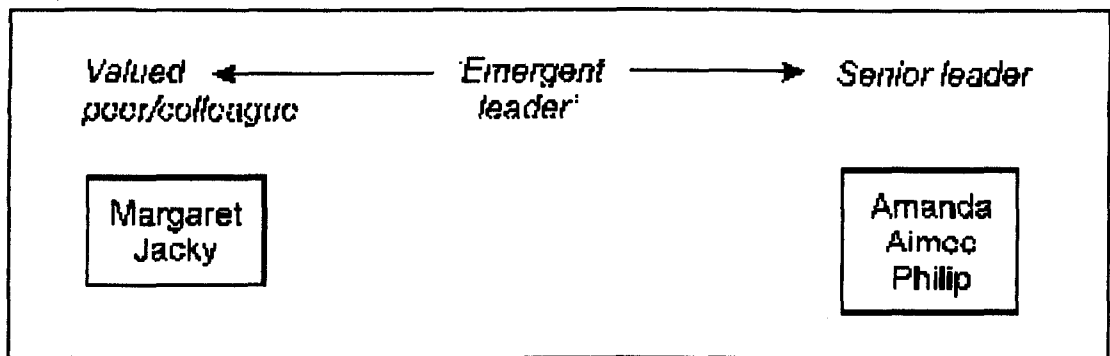
I use this simplification to suggest a pattern in their learning trajectories as a device to explore the differences both within and between categories. I pose some analytic questions first, for those 'becoming' senior leaders and second, 'becoming' valued peers and colleagues. These are discussed in relation to the conceptual framework for the study, to explain the differences. Features from this analysis affecting their development are discussed after both comparisons.

Differences between the development of identities 'as senior leaders'

A comparison of the learning biographies of Phillip, Aimee and Amanda is based on the following questions (see Table 6.3).

1. When did the identity as a senior leader arise?

2. Why did it arise then?

3. Why do they want to become a senior leader?

4. Where are these aspirations developed from?

5. Are there any tensions associated with this aspiration?

Table 6.3 Comparison of explanations for the development of designated identities of 'senior leader' by Phillip, Aimee and Amanda

Questions	Emergent leaders who see themselves as becoming senior leaders		
	Phillip	**Aimee**	**Amanda**
When did this identity arise?	After moving into the Learning Director role nine years after starting teaching	As decided to train as a teacher	After taking on whole school roles, being allowed to act freely and 'see the bigger picture'
Why did it arise then?	In wanting to make whole school changes found difficult to do if not part of senior leadership team (wanted better match between modes of engagement and imagination)	A friend said that it would mean more support during training in developing views of leadership and help in enacting these views in a school context (all three modes of belonging)	Found herself evaluating the school, capable of having ideas about making it more efficient and so wanting to act on these understandings (wanting to match all three modes of belonging)
Why do they want to become a senior leader?	Personal interest and understanding of effective pedagogies for teaching and learning, which want to spread across the school

(an instructional view of leadership) | Views role progression as evidence that are being professional, doing a good job and making progress. Developing view that judged as leader (as transformational and distributed) and as manager. | Sees herself as a trouble-shooter able to identify problems and have ideas to solve them (a managerial view of leadership) |
| Where are these aspirations developed from? | Want to make a difference to improve other people's lives – founded on family values to do a job of social concern | Very keen to be seen to do best by others and that need to work hard to be self-sufficient financially – linked to influence of parents. | Highly motivated, resourceful and energetic - not clear from where these characteristics arise. |
| Are there any tensions associated with this aspiration? | Aware that this job is not the only, nor necessarily, the best way he wants to show concern for others and still aspires to volunteer overseas (alternative context in which to match modes of belonging) | Frustrated at not developing at the pace expected by Fast-Track course but, as increasingly aware of the complexities of becoming a leader, accepted needed more time in current role (focusing on matching modes of belonging). | In first school although aware potentially capable, wanted to develop capabilities and confidence in a more supportive environment not possible in first school (better matching the mode of alignment with the other two modes) |

Some of the differences in the views of leadership developed relate to personal factors, in particular their aspirations as a leader. Table 6.3 indicates aspiring to 'do something of social concern' (Phillip), of 'working hard' (Aimee) and of 'striving for efficiency' (Amanda). In Phillip and Aimee's cases these aspirations can be traced from early in their biographies to the influence of their families and are still a strong influence on their identity development. Amanda explained that her desire for efficiency had only arisen once she started to work as a teacher through, in particular, her work beyond the classroom (relating to the mode of engagement).

One finding of the study is how persistent these underlying aspirations are. The leaders continued to draw on them (associated with their mode of imagination) in relation to their developing views of their school as a place to work (their mode of alignment) during the study. Leaders related these aspirations to their perceptions of the goals of the school. The data reveals schools as perceived differently by each leader emphasising different perceptions of their core purpose: as a place for teaching and learning (Phillip); as a place for achievement (Aimee) and; as organisations that operate efficiently and effectively (Amanda). These are personal views of these schools, derived by these individuals as a result of their social participation and judgments made.

Differences between the development of identities as 'valued peers'

In this over-simplified categorisation I suggest Margaret and Jacky did not develop designated identities as senior leaders. I pose some similar questions about how they came to develop, what I have inferred are, identities as 'valued peers' (summarised in Table 6.4):

1. When did the identity as a valued peer develop?

2. Where are these aspirations developed from?

3. Why did they not develop aspirations to become a senior leader?

4. Are there any tensions associated with this aspiration?

Table 6.4 Comparison of explanations for the development of designated identities as 'valued peer' by Margaret and Jacky

Questions	Emergent leaders who see themselves as becoming valued peers	
	Margaret	**Jacky**
When did the identity as a valued peer develop?	Potentially from the way treated as a TA prior to training as a teacher.	Team-work part of her identity developed from prior identity as a sportswoman
Where are these aspirations developed from?	Under-confident from having to retrain as a teacher which led her to be aware that she could always learn from others (mode of engagement) From prior observations of way teachers work making clear own passions for particular pedagogies (mode of imagination) From colleagues in current school who she perceive all help one another (mode of alignment) All three modes of belonging complement one another	Under-confident from having to retrain led to empathy with others who aspire to be teachers and do not find it straightforward (mode of engagement) Found colleagues in school before it merged happy to work in teams (mode of alignment) Only when school culture and her circumstances changed was she unable to match all three modes of belonging
Why did they not develop aspirations to become a senior leader	Teacher and leader identities 'reconciled' as one of a view of self as a learner, like her colleagues. Status is not relevant to this identity. (Views like that of teacher leadership). As long as all three modes complement one another, she feels valued, and aware has the freedom to continue to learn.	Teacher, leader and sportswoman identities reconciled through view of being a team member. (Views like a form of distributed leadership). Applying for further promotion doesn't fit easily with being a team member. Usually relies on being invited to join a new team. In the new circumstances (related to changes in alignment) no longer felt part of any teams.
Are there any tensions associated with this aspiration?	Would like the recognition of higher status as reaches latter years of teaching but not if it means compromising teaching role. On the one hand feels passed over for promotion but on the other, happy to belong to this school and loyal to current headteacher.	Changes to personal circumstances caused a shift in work-life balance and identity as parent re-balanced against identity as teacher and leader. However, frustrated that had to leave because, if school had not merged, felt would have continued to develop as a leader.

It can be seen from Table 6.4 (and sections 5.3 and 5.5) that there were strong similarities in the biographies of Margaret and Jacky. These included factors such as that both had:

- been managers in previous employment,

- been encouraged by others to consider teaching,

- needed to upgrade their qualifications in order to train as teachers,

- been in schools that merged

- started families

As a result of these experiences they both:

- needed to deal with the balancing of identities as a parent and as a professional (teacher/leader).

- suffered from an undercurrent of under-confidence of, in particular, subject knowledge (related to the mode of imagination)

- addressed this under-confidence by ensuring they were up-to-date, particularly regarding subject knowledge (through the mode of engagement to affect their mode of imagination)

- developed similar views of leadership to develop expertise to benefit peers (again related to their mode of engagement, but also an alignment issue)

- drew on previous experiences where they valued the support of others, as a hockey player (Jacky) and a TA (Margaret), in developing their views of teaching and leading.

As with the other leaders their views of teaching and leading, however, related to different views of their schools as a place to work. While Margaret (more like Phillip) saw her school as focused on learning, Jacky viewed her school before the merger as focused on improving pupil achievement (more like Aimee's perceptions of her school). Margaret's developing identity of herself as a learner matched how she perceived the school to operate (the mode of alignment). This was also true for Jacky in the school before it merged where she found her colleagues happy to work in teams in ways which matched how she valued working. In such circumstances these leaders could make sense of their three modes of belonging and develop strong senses of belonging in relation to the schools (at least until circumstances changed for Jacky).

The identities they developed as leaders, however, does not easily match the expectations associated with the NCLSCS's framework as they did not see themselves as aspiring to apply for further responsibility in school. This is slightly more difficult to conclude for Jacky. She was invited and did take on a senior leader role but her biography did not imply that she had developed an identity 'as a senior leader'. It is difficult to say how she would have developed her view of leadership with more prolonged participation under the original circumstances. She did keep her role as senior leader even after the school merged but her circumstances changed so much that she did not perceive herself as even holding this senior leadership role, let alone developing an identity in relation to it.

Although there are strong similarities in the accounts of Jacky and Margaret their biographies had very different outcomes. Jacky left the profession and Margaret was happy to remain.

I think it is significant that these two leaders are the only ones to be parents. Their 'stories' offer two different accounts of the complex sense-making that is associated

with balancing family and professional life. Their accounts give an insight into the 'work of reconciliation' between identities as professionals and parents. It was not possible to be clear whether there was a gender issue to the experiences of parenthood and its impact on professional identity development, but this aspect of professional learning would be worthy of further research.

Table 6.5 summarises factors which help explain these differences in outcome - a combination of personal (in particular the timing of starting a family and becoming a parent) and school (in particular the differences in headteacher, senior leadership team and staff turnover) factors in their biographies.

Table 6.5 Differences between Margaret and Jacky's participation

Key differences		Emergent leaders who see themselves as becoming valued peers	
		Margaret	Jacky
Personal factors	Family influences	Second to train as a teacher; also daughters went on to teach ('images' of teaching and support available – role of talk important)	First to train as a teacher; partner also a teacher (only through partner could 'imagine' self as a teacher and gain support from)
	Other identities	Identity as parent strong	Identity as sportswoman strong
	Age	Older, family grown up	Younger, starting family
	Impact of identity as parent	Had taken a clean career break (decision not to reconcile parent and professional identities but, once daughters also teachers, happy to merge these identities)	Initially wanted to continue to teach and have family until this proved difficult (tried and did not succeed in reconciling parent and professional identities)
School factors	Headteacher	Longstanding, good personal relationship and present in school (strengthened sense of belonging to school and loyalty to headteacher)	First headteacher increasingly distant then absent (lack of headteacher to be supported by – instead identified with teams) Second headteacher distant and authoritative (reduced sense of belonging to school)
	Change in headteacher	None	Significant
	Senior leadership team	Stable	Unstable – developing then fragmenting, then rebuilt (limited mode of engagement)
	Staff turnover	Low – highly valued relationships (strengthened modes of alignment and engagement)	High – highly valued relationship lost (limited mode of engagement)

Table 6.5 highlights that the school situation these women found themselves in was important. In Jacky's case, the change of headteacher coinciding with the change in her personal circumstances made her trajectories of participation very complex. No

simple cause and effect can be concluded to explain why Jacky came to leave teaching. However the significance of a stable v. unstable senior leadership and rich and stable within-school relationships v. high staff turnover are important features distinguishing these accounts.

Additional features of the five learning biographies, which help to explain some of the differences between the identities developed, related to differences in opportunities for support for identity development. These include differential access: firstly, to courses, secondly, to someone in a mentoring role and thirdly, interactions with other leaders. These features relate to some of the contextual factors explored in chapter 2 exemplified across these cases:

- national succession planning (Aimee and the Fast-track programme),

- school succession planning (Jacky, Amanda and Aimee)

- school restructuring (the mergers of Jacky/Amanda's junior to become a primary school and Margaret's middle to become a primary school and the creation of new roles as TLRS for Jacky and Amanda and Learning Director for Phillip)

- accelerated career progression (only a feature for Amanda)[41]

1. Access to courses

As a result of the selection criteria for the study all five leaders should have completed the LftM programme. This was not the case for Jacky, who missed out by a combination of taking maternity leave and the decision of her subsequent headteacher.

---

[41] If progression to a senior leadership role is considered (see Appendix N), Amanda (and Jacky) took 2 years with Amanda becoming a headteacher within 6 years, Aimee took 7 years to a temporary position, Phillip took 10 years and Margaret did not achieve this status.

Not being supported to go on the LftM programme affected how she felt about herself as an emergent leader, reducing her sense of herself as a leader.

The influence of LftM on the leaders' identity development differed.

- Phillip used the course to explore the possible remit of his role. One aspect of the programme helped him see the potential to connect his role and his developing interest in mentoring and ideas from the programme about peer mentoring (his mode of imagination as a leader) he tried to incorporate into his practice (his mode of engagement as a leader).

- Neither Amanda nor Aimee referred specifically to LftM as being useful.

- Margaret felt that much of the LftM course had not been relevant to her because she did not have responsibility for staff. The main thing she had learnt was to be more proactive about what she felt passionate about (affecting her modes of imagination and engagement as a teacher and as a leader).

All the leaders referred to the influence of other courses on their identity development. These ranged from subject specific courses, in the case of Jacky and Margaret, through role specific ones such as mentor training for Phillip and other leadership development courses, in the case of Jacky, Amanda and Aimee.

- Margaret and Jacky (at least before the school merger) went on short courses relating to their subject coordination roles, often requested by the leaders themselves. These allowed them to feel informed and gain ideas to share with their colleagues (affecting their mode of imagination).

- When Jacky returned to school after her maternity leave and found that the leader 'shadowing' her was now going on these types of courses instead of her, she felt less able to lead in the way she had done before. This was

compounded by the new headteacher acting as the sole link with the LA subject advisors, rather than via Jacky. These changes also negatively affected how she saw herself as a numeracy leader and reduced her opportunities to consider alternative ways (her mode of imagination) to go about this leadership. These changes also affected her view of her school as a place to work (the mode of alignment) and limited her ability to see herself as a subject specialist leader.

- Phillip explained that his appreciation of the potential and methods of mentoring (relating to his mode of imagination) were also traceable to mentor training at the university Faculty of Education. He tried to match his practice as a leader with these ideas in his work as a learning director, as well as with training teachers (matching modes of imagination and engagement). This allowed him to 'imagine' how to work with year managers when there was a lack of advice of how to work with them from the school.

Jacky, Amanda and Aimee also went on other leadership courses; Jacky and Amanda, as part of the whole senior leadership teams at their schools. The two LA leadership support programmes, which Amanda, in both schools, and Jacky, before the merger, experienced, related less to school leadership succession planning than a mechanism for the LA to enact responsibilities for driving school improvement. (I don't have data about this as I wasn't able to interview Paula for this study but it would have been interesting to ask about how she had come to the decision to create a new senior leadership team and whether this was related to LA advice or not). Individuals drew different things from these courses, depending on what they valued.

- Jacky and Amanda reported that these courses offered them insights into the potential scope of a senior leadership team in terms of expectations. This

affected their mode of imagination but also relating to the mode of alignment as they evaluated and re-imagined their schools.

- Jacky wanted to use the course to develop a stronger sense of shared vision, practices and hence belonging to a leadership team. The team as a whole did not manage to attend either the course or meet regularly, making it difficult for Jacky to match modes of imagination, alignment and engagement.

- Because of her interest in efficiency Amanda used these programmes to find out about systems and strategies (relating to her mode of imagination). She talked about learning about action planning, performance management and data tracking and went on, not only to change her own practice in these ways, but also in the school more generally (working to match all three modes of belonging). It is not clear, because the content and nature of the courses were not studied, to what extent the managerial approach Amanda took to school leadership was advocated on these courses or just that she was picking out ideas that matched her already-held view of how schools should operate. It is clear she did not rely on these courses but also looked beyond education to see how other organisations were 'managed' for ideas (mode of imagination).

Aimee, because of her national Fast-Track status, was affected by the Fast-Track programme's design to support individual leadership progression. This status also affected the school's support of her in their own succession planning. Her line manager and mentor Geoffrey explained to Aimee that she was being prepared to take over the Head of Expressive Arts Faculty and, later, possibly more senior roles. As a result of both external and internal support she had the most access to leadership-related courses. Aimee talked about gaining ideas about particular theories and

models of leadership (mode of imagination), which she then tried to build into her practice (mode of engagement).

2. Mentor support

As with Aimee, Amanda was also able to benefit from school-level succession planning through her second school's headteacher (Simon)'s commitment to helping her develop as a senior leader. She felt she had needed to leave her first school to find a school in which she could gain such support. The role of mentors relates to notions of apprenticeship as one way of more novice leaders learning from more senior leaders (Lave and Wenger, 1991). A difference between schools relates to whether emergent leaders are offered, or choose, such mentors.

- Aimee and Amanda both had the support of a mentor through their line managers. They reported talking with these mentors about their practice and their developing aspirations. Both Geoffrey and Simon were happy to use involvement in this study as part of this dialogue. (I did not collect data about the details of what they talked about, and this would have been interesting. For example, whether they talked about models or theories of leadership or views of leadership at all. What was discussed would have depended on the senior leader's own views of leadership which would relate to their own trajectories of participation. This was therefore beyond the scope of this study). I return to the importance of talk in section 6.2.

- Jacky and Margaret both referred to less formal mentoring from a senior leader they respected. This was built on personal relationships with them (mode of engagement), rather than formal line management roles. In Margaret's case this was with Judith who was an RE specialist well connected

in the LA and an advocate of the humanity subjects on Margaret's behalf in school. In Jacky's case the significant relationship was with the Deputy headteacher Lucy, who was part of Jacky's teaching team as well as on the senior leadership team.

- Both Margaret and Jacky used these mentors to talk about ideas (mode of imagination) and gain advice (related to the modes of engagement and/or alignment). Unfortunately both mentors left their schools during the study and neither Margaret nor Jacky spoke of anyone else who replaced this highly valued, albeit very informal, mentoring role. This situation proved more significant for Jacky who felt by this time she had no-one she valued in school to turn to, compared with the more stable staff situation at Margaret's school.

3. Use of other leaders

In contrast, no mentoring relationship was evident for Phillip. He did not refer to talk with his headteacher or line manager as mentors, even though he evidently respected their practice. He reported more often observing other leaders, in particular senior leaders, to help think about what he valued and how he wanted to practice (mode of imagination). Observation, another aspect of apprenticeship (Lave and Wenger, 1991), required him to reflect and evaluate what he saw. Aimee also explained how she had been drawing on observing the practice of leaders in school, in her first school, but since becoming head of faculty in her second school was now proactive about talking to senior leaders and aspiring senior leaders around school. She explained that she had come to realise the value of hearing how other leaders talked about their practice as leaders and what they thought about leadership in the school (talk which might relate to any of the modes of belonging).

Access to the senior leadership team was reported as significant to all three of these emergent leaders' developing identities as a senior leader (Figure 6.1). Meetings with this team, whether formally or informally, provided access to the strategic thinking taking place in school. From this emergent leaders were able to think about how their current roles fitted in with the overall working of the school and hence their own sense of belonging. This was not only in terms of how it appeared they were expected to fit in with this thinking (mode of alignment), but also in the light of leaders' own ideas of what they wanted to develop and things they were less keen to work (mode of imagination). These interactions helped Phillip, Amanda and Aimee develop identities 'as senior leaders' themselves, keen to belong to this team. They believed the status of being on the team and the system of team meetings would allow their ideas to be heard and for them to become part of the development of further strategic thinking and action in the school. While Amanda was promoted onto this team early on in her career (demonstrating the accelerated leadership progression noted in chapter 2) both Phillip and Aimee, who worked in much bigger secondary schools, took longer (see footnote 41) to negotiate their membership.

Margaret also reported a productive relationship with her headteacher but less one of mentoring and more of one in which Margaret took requests to him related to her images for teaching. It appeared that he regularly reviewed her sense of fulfilment in school. The nature of these exchanges over the years developed Margaret's senses of loyalty and trust in him (and hence her sense of belonging through the modes of alignment and engagement to the school).

Going on external courses was valued by these emergent leaders, not only for the content of the course (discussed above) but, also, the chance to meet other leaders. Leaders talked about the chance to hear different perspectives about leadership and

the work of schools from other attendees (contributing to their 'images' of possibilities). It was probably important that this was away from the school to allow individuals not to feel judged about the opinions they expressed of their own situations (relating to alignment issues). Aimee also contacted leaders from her previous school to have similar discussions.

Jacky and Margaret did not report learning from other leaders in these ways, other than those particular individuals referred to above. They did not talk about how the practice of others or talk with them influenced them 'as leaders' and more often talked about learning from other teachers 'as teachers'. This can be explained by the way they viewed themselves as peers, rather than specifically, leaders. When they did go on courses, unlike the earlier three leaders, Jacky and Margaret seemed to be interested in the content (subject and pedagogical), rather than networking. Even when Judith left and Margaret said she would miss the contacts Judith had, this was because of their subject expertise, rather than her views of leadership. This focus on content related to Jacky and Margaret's views of leadership as one of developing expertise to share with their colleagues.

If support is conceptualised as opportunities to work towards matching all three modes of belonging access to courses, to mentors and interactions with other leaders were represented differently in the biographies of all five emergent leaders

6.1.3 Trajectories of participation and multiple identity development

I have explored the patterns and differences in individual emergent leaders' identity development (section 6.1.2) to explain the different views these five leaders developed (section 6.1.1). I now focus on the identities developed in these accounts as

another way to reflect on whether and how Wenger's notion of trajectories of participation can be used to chart the identity development of emergent leaders (RQ1d).

The multi-faceted nature of identity development evident in the accounts of emergent leaders is accommodated in Wenger's work when he talks about individuals as having multi-membership of a number of communities of practice. Even without discrete communities of practice, leaders do identify with others albeit in less bounded and more complex ways than predicted by Wenger's notions of 'membership'. They do so with different groups of people at different times and as a result of holding different identities.

As Wenger's work predicted, emergent leaders report holding more than one identity simultaneously. These can be developing separately, such as Amanda as a musician and a school leader. Some of these identities might be developing i.e. strengthening and becoming more important as others decline, such as Amanda's developing identity as a school leader whilst her identity as a musician declined. Sometimes individuals manage to find synergies between multiple identities and find that they can make sense of them together, such as Margaret in her roles as teacher and as leader. Where this is taking place the biographies imply, as Wenger predicts, that this 'work of reconciliation' (Wenger, 1998, p160) is effortful.

I decided that, to try to chart trajectories of participation, identities being developed by each individual needed to be identified and their development tracked over time. Previous, as well as current or 'actual', identities would be relevant to trying to understand the designated identities which were the focus of RQ1. It also required a consideration of whether and how emergent leaders had been able to make sense of or

'reconcile' their multiple identities as well as 'close the gap' between their actual and designated identities.

Common to all participants were the development of identities relating to their roles 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader'. I accept that this finding has been influenced by the way I asked leaders about their learning and went about my analysis (chapter 4). I directed my questions of their learning 'as teachers' and 'as leaders' (Figures 4.6 and 4.7) because of my appreciation that both identities would be developed in response to the dual roles they held as teachers and leaders. This allowed me to explore how they came to develop identities in relation to their roles.

Trajectories of participation as teachers

All five leaders came into teaching for different reasons. I firstly, consider the development of their 'teacher' identities.

- Aimee, Amanda, Phillip and Jacky came with identities as subject specialists: as a performer, a musician, a historian and a sportswoman respectively. All of these identities reduced over time and were made sense of differently in relation to their teacher identities.

- Aimee and Amanda were clear that, by deciding to become teachers, they had chosen to stop performing as a dancer/actor or a musician respectively, but wanted to encourage others to do so. Amanda's engagement as a musician however continued out of school by taking on private pupils in addition to her work as a music coordinator in school. Aimee was able to find posts as a drama teacher in both schools.

- Amanda's experiences of working in school, and her work as a coordinator of a number of subject areas, led her to quickly develop her identity as a leader.

Her sense of herself as a musician reduced over time and this she kept separate.

- Although Phillip had developed some sense of himself as a historian this was not his main motivation for becoming a teacher, which was rather to be in a job that made a difference to others (something of social concern). Although he learnt more about history as a teacher he did not increasingly 'become' a historian. Instead he realised that it was the processes of teaching and learning that he was more interested in. He was therefore keen to leave his role as Head of history and take on a pedagogically focused role, combining identities as a teacher and a leader.

- Although Jacky never considered a job in sport she too hoped to share this, her main interest, with children in school. Unlike Aimee and Amanda, Jacky continued to participate in sport herself, both with her colleagues in school and in her local hockey club and so this identity remained important to her, at least until she started a family. She talked about wanting to model being active to the children and staff in her school and hence made sense of this with her teacher identity.

- Both Margaret and Jacky had needed to develop new identities for themselves as teachers, having already worked prior to teaching. They referred to, but no longer held, identities as managers (in business and banking respectively). The decision to retrain had been a significant one for both individuals as they had first needed to upgrade their qualifications and both needed encouragement from others to do so. Through their teacher training they began the process of 'imagining' themselves as teachers. Margaret and Jacky both developed as

teachers through their enjoyment of teaching as one of many teachers in a school (both modes of alignment and engagement were strong).

- Margaret never developed a subject specialist identity, despite going on to become humanities coordinator. In part this can be explained by her lack of subject specialism during her training and subsequent under-confidence. In part it related to her view that she became this coordinator to meet school needs. She was interested in these subjects and had ideas of how she advocated teaching them (mode of imagination, related mostly to her view of herself as a teacher) and put great effort into becoming more specialist in these subjects (mode of engagement). This was not so as to be seen as a specialist but rather as a way of sharing this expertise with her colleagues (related to the mode of alignment and her view of being a leader), also so for Jacky.

Trajectories of participation as leaders

I secondly, review the development of identities 'as leaders' as separate, and prior to, in some cases identities 'as senior leaders'.

- Amanda and Phillip only developed identities as leaders after working in school as teachers. For Amanda this began in relation to taking multiple subject coordination roles but was accelerated by changing circumstances in the school. For Phillip viewing himself as a leader related first, to furthering his latent desire to work overseas and later, to his developing interests in pedagogy. To further this identity required him to be active in applying for posts of leadership.

- Amanda's motivations to see herself as a senior leader developed from opportunities to practice at a whole school level. Developing this identity in

her first school (through trying to make sense of all three modes) demanded her to be self-sufficient and these circumstances did not lead her to develop a strong enough sense of belonging to this school to stay. The instability caused as this school began to merge contributed to this feeling. Instead, she chose to develop her identity as, by then, a senior leader by gaining more support in a second school.

- For Phillip his decision to see himself as a leader was complicated by his hidden desire to volunteer overseas, for which he needed skills other than as a history teacher. He explained that he applied for a head of subject role mainly to begin to work as a mentor for trainee teachers to develop such transferable skills, rather than as a historian. Mentoring became a core part of his view of leadership (mode of imagination).

- Phillip began to see himself as a senior leader only after he became clearer about what he was most interested in as a teacher. The more he became clear in what he believed as a teacher, the more he wanted to develop these ideas with others – first with trainees and later with the whole school. He found he needed to apply for formal roles that would offer him the chance to match his developing aspirations with opportunities for practice.

- Aimee chose to train both as a teacher and a leader simultaneously, therefore developing identities as both from the beginning of her training. She was able to 'imagine' herself as a senior leader (mode of imagination) early into her work as a teacher, despite not attaining what the NCLSCS would call senior roles until after the study. Her aspiration to see herself as a 'senior leader' was supported by the NCLSCS Fast-Track programme. Whole-school programme tasks could be viewed as offering her opportunities to help match her modes of

imagination and engagement (helping her to resolve all three modes of belonging).

- In contrast, Margaret and Jacky, although able to talk about their learning as a leader, continued to identify mostly with other teachers, regardless of whether these others were leaders, or not. Neither Margaret nor Jacky applied for the formal leadership positions they went on to hold and it has been explained how this related both to a legacy of under-confidence and the view of leadership they had developed which saw them as working on behalf of their colleagues and, hence, for the children. They were both evidently capable of leadership and were selected for positions of responsibility in their schools by their respective headteachers. Even in these roles they did not change how they viewed themselves in respect to others significantly, although changed their practice (mode of engagement) to take responsibility for beyond classroom tasks.

The relationship between trajectories as teachers and as leaders

Whether leaders continued to see themselves as teachers, as well as a school leaders, depended on whether they reported synergy between these identities or not. Phillip, Jacky and Margaret reconciled their views of teaching and leading with Margaret developing the most synergy between both identities. The more she taught the more she learnt, the more she acted as a leader, the more she learnt and, by the end of the study, she began to refer to herself as a learner in all contexts. Even when she spoke of what could be inferred to be leadership of ICT use in her school, she did so as a teacher keen to encourage others. She had no need for a formal leadership role to act in ways others might say were 'as a leader'. This picks up on points made in sections

2.2 and 3.1.2 about their being both implicit and spontaneous dimensions to leadership, as well as the formal and planned.

In contrast, Aimee and Amanda considered their identities as teachers and leaders as separate. Although Aimee was developing her practice as a teacher and tried to put into practice what she was advocating to others in her faculty into her work as a teacher, she saw her roles as quite different. She was happy to work hard on both roles which saw her working very long hours to fulfil both. Amanda, however, started to resent the time she was expected to demonstrate that she was an excellent and model teacher, preferring to spend her time and energies on her work as a leader.

The development of other identities in the accounts of emergent leaders

In addition to identities as teachers and leaders other identities represented by emergent leaders were:

- as a manager, as a parent, as a TA, as a 'learner' (Margaret)

- as a historian (Phillip)

- as a performer (Aimee)

- as a musician and music teacher (Amanda)

- as a manager, as a sportswoman and, more recently, as a parent (Jacky)

As outlined above, these identities changed over time.

Representing trajectories of participation

The five case studies in chapter 5 revealed that it was possible to identify multiple identities for each leader and track the trajectories of participation associated with each. At the end of each learning biography I tried to represent these trajectories for

the five participant leaders literally by 'charting' them visually – Figures 5.1 to 5.5 – and these I now reflect upon in relation to addressing research question 1d–. For reference the five diagrams are brought together as Figure 6.2.

The intention of these Figures was to try to represent the multiple and dynamic nature of identity development for individuals. I qualify that, in creating these representations, they have become overly simplistic and stylised showing a tendency to 'label' and making identities and their development tend to appear 'unproblematic'. I have already explained because of the way I framed questions of the leaders how it is difficult not to refer to identities in ways that imply they relate to a particular role. It is important to note that firstly, individuals were developing very different understandings of any role and secondly, these identities may precede a formal role, for example Aimee's identity as a leader, or not relate to particular formal roles held, for example Jacky not considering herself as a senior leader.

Figure 6.2 is offered as a device for comparing the leaders' accounts of who they wanted to become and hence contribute to addressing RQ1. It needs some explanation to aid its interpretation.

1. It is a topological representation with no scale on either axis of degree of 'identity development' or 'time'.

2. The period of the study is indicated. For Jacky this in two blocks to show the approximate position of her maternity leave in the study. All lines to the right of this are by necessity tentative extrapolations.

3. Each identity is represented by an open-ended polygon, if it was an identity still developing by the end of the study, or a closed polygon, if it was no longer held by the leader.

4. Identities are listed top to bottom roughly as they appeared biographically, except for Jacky where I wanted to show synergies between sportswoman and teacher identities.

5. If identities appeared to have been reconciled in any way, they are shown as overlapping. This is particularly tentatively represented.

6. It is attempted to represent whether identities were becoming more or less important by angling the sides of a polygon, although the angles are not significant.

Figure 6.2 A representation of trajectories of participation for five emergent school leaders
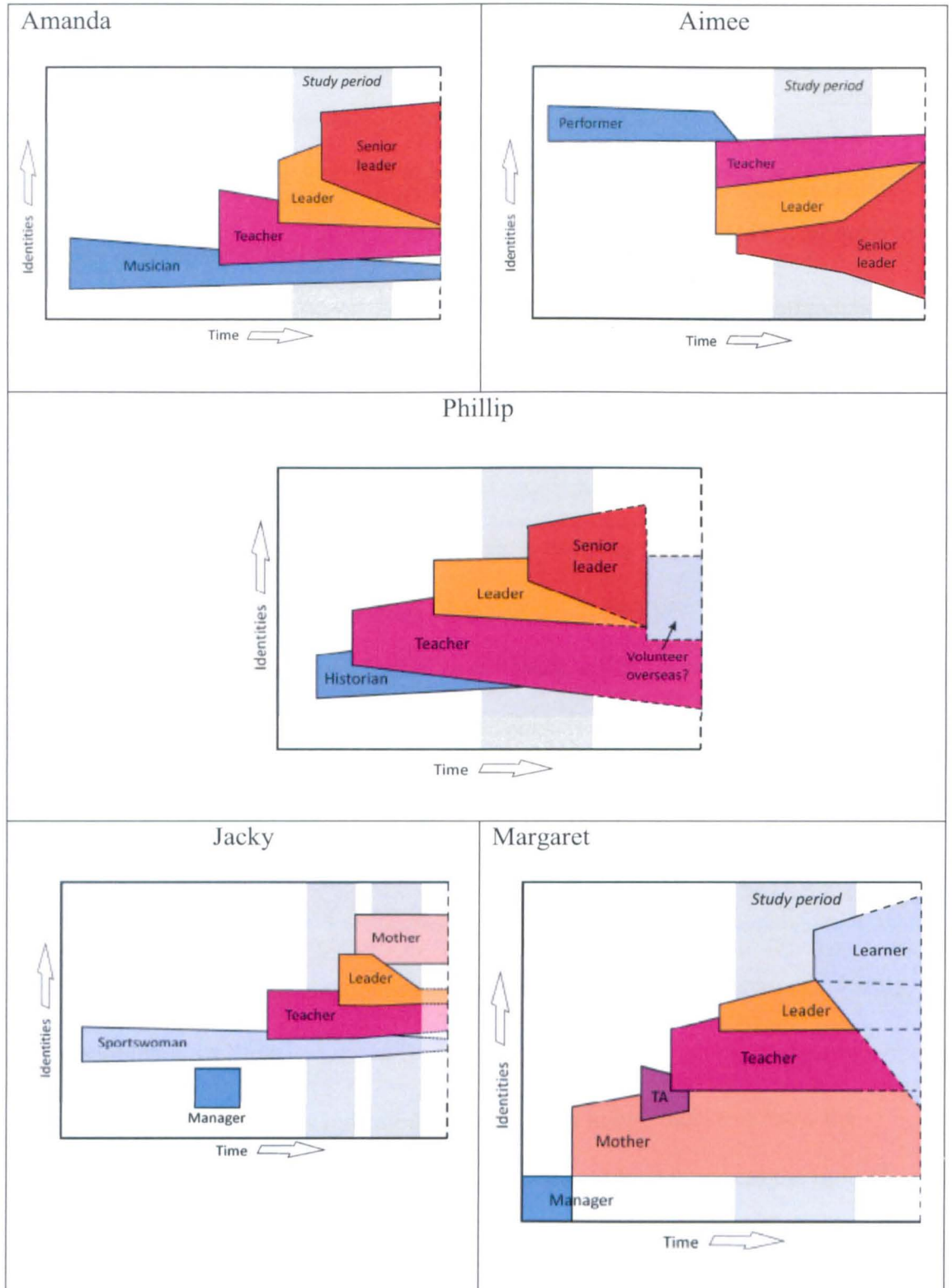
I attempt to represent in Figure 6.2 that:

- Some identities are no longer held by participants.

- New identities were revealed during the study.

- Identities can increase or decrease in importance.

- Possible predictions for each participant leader as an extrapolation of what they had reported during the study. The leaders most difficult to predict future identities for were Phillip and Jacky. For Phillip I suggest that, although content to progress as a school leader into senior leadership, at any point in the future he might express his latent desire to benefit others with greater need than in the UK and identify as a volunteer overseas.

- Margaret introduced the identity 'as a learner', and I have considered how this seemed to relate to her other identities.

The most difficult to represent was the overlap between identities, for example how Aimee's identity as a performer related to her identities 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader'. These unique trajectories of participation, however, go some way to summarising the identity development which contributed to very different views of leadership (Table 6.1) being developed as leaders.

6.1.4 Emergence and the development of designated identities

Personal history and workplace context need to be considered together. In trying to articulate this complexity to address RQ1 I have needed to draw on devices to respond to the three sub-questions. Firstly, I summarised each emergent leader's view of leadership (RQ1a). This is one way of thinking about how emergent leaders have reconciled their identities but 'hides' the complex effects of history and the multi-

faceted nature of identity development. In particular how leaders develop senses of belonging is important to consider. Secondly, I looked for patterns in their designated identities and tried to explain the differences with reference to Wenger's conceptual framework (RQ1b). These categorisations were again crude and needed to pay attention to both personal and contextual features of the biographies. Thirdly, I quite literally 'charted' each emergent leaders' trajectories of participation (RQ1c) as another way of representing who leaders want to become. This again was over-simplistic.

One of the reasons why the five accounts of identity development are so different is because they relate to individuals with different personal histories. Multiple identities are developed which are held in parallel or are, to some extent, reconciled. This involves all three modes of belonging which, as has been indicated relate differently to one another for individuals at different times. Personal histories are therefore important to consider.

A second reason why these accounts of identity development are so different is because they relate to individuals working in different schools with different social and cultural histories. How the schools were structured and restructured, the roles created and the selection processes used affected opportunities for leaders to develop as leaders. These affect individuals differently through the modes of engagement (the way leadership roles are manifest in a school) as well as alignment (through the systems and culture in which the leadership roles are set). Individuals respond to these circumstances when developing their identities (in relation to the mode of imagination). When thinking about the emergent leaders' learning as professionals I did not restrict this to considering the school as a bounded place of work. 'Workplace' can be used to cover a broader definition of the learning environment of teachers as

professionals (Evans *et al*, 2006). Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 have already shown how emergent leaders were drawing on participation beyond school, such as from courses, from professional tutors, from contact with those in other schools etc., in ways which contribute to the development of their identities. Contexts are therefore important to consider.

To begin to address RQ3 I reflect on how this consideration of 'who emergent leaders want to become' helps think about the notion of 'emergence' and consider this from the perspective of each emergent leader.

- For Phillip 'emergence' was associated with becoming a member of a senior leadership team, rather than working in isolation. By joining a team he could develop his identity in relation to his new peers. This he saw as a two-way process in which he could be heard as well as listen.

- Amanda's 'emergence' would not be complete until she was in a headteacher's role as she had already developed the identity 'as headteacher' whilst at her second school. Her inability to fully act in this way and, because of their different views of leadership, explains Amanda's frustrations with working with her headteacher Simon.

- In one sense Aimee wanted to emerge into being seen as a senior leader by others in the school, joining a wider community of senior leaders. In another she wanted to emerge as being seen as a good leader of her Faculty, by those within her Faculty. The way she conceptualised what being a senior leader meant to her was a more hierarchical view of leadership than Jacky and Margaret's views of leadership, which were rather as distributed across peers (hence Aimee's designated identity was grouped as more like Amanda and

Phillip than Jacky and Margaret in Figure 6.2). This was despite Aimee's interest in models of distributed leadership which she felt, as a senior leader, she needed to facilitate rather than model.

- I think Margaret would explain any 'emergence' as a leader to be in parallel with all other colleagues also developing their expertise in and advocating aspects of teaching and learning. This would contribute to her school emerging as an organisation, which is learning more about teaching and learning, and therefore becoming more successful in helping pupils learn.

- Jacky's identity development is complicated by the changes in her biography and any sense of her 'emergence' is limited by the fact that she left teaching. However, her sense of belonging to teams appeared to be an enduring metaphor for her, despite these teams being dismantled as staff left and she felt excluded from new teams in the newly merged school. At the end of the study Jacky appears to continue to aspire to (or 'emerge') into a good team member even when she lost any sense of belonging to her particular school.

By focusing on explaining who emergent leaders want to become I have emphasised the designated identities inferred from the learning biographies and have indicated how Wenger's framework of modes of belonging can be used to explain such identity development. I now focus on these three modes of: 'imagination', 'alignment' and 'engagement' and the central role of talk in thinking about these modes, changing the emphasis of this discussion chapter to the processes and mechanisms of identity development.

6.2 How do emergent leaders talk about their learning?

RQ2 was designed to focus on how leaders talked about their learning. Having considered the 'singers' in section 6.1, using Goodson's analogy, I now conclude that there is also an importance in focusing on their 'songs'. This question focused on understanding *how* they were moving from 'actual' towards the 'designated' identities discussed in the previous section, hence their learning. A focus on the 'songs' of emergent leaders allows them to be heard. Giving voice to these leaders was one of the intentions of this study (chapters 1 and 4). Talk was also central to conceptualising their learning.

This section is structured by considering:

- The way talk and modes of belonging are conceptualised (section 6.2.1) to explain how I approached addressing RQ2.

- The role of talk in the mode of imagination - how 'images' and aspirations are developed which inform an emergent leaders identity development (section 6.2.2)

- The role of talk in the mode of alignment – how emergent leaders make sense of themselves in relation to their workplace including perceptions of what is expected of them (section 6.2.3)

- The role of talk in the mode of engagement – how leaders talk about their practice and whether aspirations and expectations can be matched (section 6.2.4)

This allows a fuller understanding of how these leaders experience 'emergence' (reflected upon at the end of the section).

6.2.1 How reported learning was conceptualised: the central role of talk

One of the main problems of applying Wenger's model of the modes of belonging to understanding identity development (outlined in section 3.3.2) was the lack of clarity he offered for what the lines meant in the model. I explained (in section 3.3.3) how conceptualising talk as central to identity development offered a solution to this problem. I have explained how my use of the terms 'accounts' and 'reporting' in this thesis, to refer to the products and processes of inquiry into the learning of emergent leaders, have been more than a methodological application of them. I accept that I have involved emergent leaders in talk about their learning in interview settings. It was important to me that I did because I wanted to find out what leaders thought about their participation, rather than merely observe it (as detailed in section 4.6). It was through these opportunities, as well as engaging with Sfard and Prusak's work, that I began to realise talk was fundamental to my conceptualisation of identity development. I represent this central role in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3 A reinterpretation of a socio-cultural framework for understanding identity development
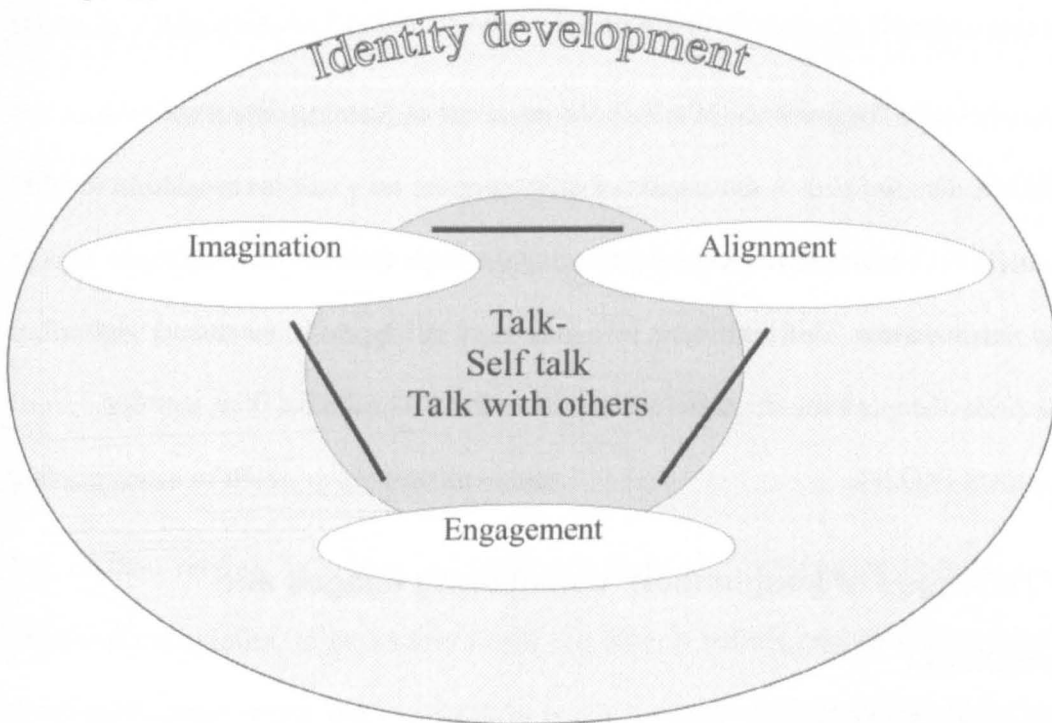
There are two dimensions to 'identity talk'. It involves what I have termed 'self talk', a reflective talk that emergent leaders involve themselves in as a way of making sense of their modes of belonging. It also involves talk with others; with peers, with senior leaders, with partners and friends – as well as with researchers – which again offer opportunities to make sense of the relationship between these three modes and hence identity development. I believe that it is this talk which has a role to play in the 'work' of reconciling multiple identities and gaining coherence across the three modes of belonging for an individual. This relates to why access to courses, mentors and opportunities to talk with other leaders form features of these leaders' learning biographies (discussed in section 6.1.2).

Without 'self talk', aspirations will not have been articulated and made conscious. Without 'self talk', perceptions of what it is possible to be in an organisation will not have been debated. Without talk with others, expectations of a particular role in an

organisation will be difficult to decipher. Without talk with others, possibilities of the beliefs that underpin practices will not be able to be shared and considered.

This section looks for evidence of talk in the accounts of learning discussed with emergent leaders (RQ2a). A discussion of differences in how talk is revealed in their accounts (RQ2b) is structured around exploring the three modes of belonging in identity development. This highlights *who* they were talking with, *when* and *where* with the aim of explaining the differences in how this talk affected their identity development (RQ2c).

6.2.2 The mode of imagination: considering images and possibilities

Wenger defines the mode of imagination as:

> [...]creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space by extrapolating from our own experience (Wenger, 1998, p173).

One key way emergent leaders were 'creating images' was by drawing on others as role models. This involved liking something they observed in the practice of others and deciding that this was something they too would strive towards in their own practice. For example: Aimee cited attributes of leadership shown by Nola, her former head of subject, such as not grumbling and showing empathy; Margaret cited the way that her own former teacher, Sister T, used music and encouraged every child to feel safe to respond to questions. It could also be something they did not like, with emergent leaders concluding they wanted to be 'more like X' and 'not at all like Y'. For example: Jacky cited that she always tried to avoid the way her former Maths teacher pinpointed children in his classes; Margaret cited being clear that she did not want to use rote learning like teachers had used in her convent education. This

276

required individuals to select individuals and then select attributes of their practice (Gibson, 2003).

Potentially the main mechanism for making sense of these 'images' was through 'self talk'. This has a role to play in making conscious such decisions. 'Self talk' is a chance to reflect on the beliefs behind these practices, which then help shape an individual's own beliefs and understandings of practice. Role models from across 'time' and 'space' were observed to be influencing emergent leaders and 'self talk', in making sense of these, evident to an extent.

Rather than relying on a personal judgment about the beliefs that underpinned the observed behaviours, to be clearer about the other's beliefs, would require talk with those individuals. Such talk would help reach a shared understanding of the beliefs and ideas behind observable practices. There was little mention of this kind of talk with those cited as role models. Instead, and as identified in section 6.1.2, leaders engaged in talk more generally about practice with those who could be considered mentors in school and, in some cases, with other leaders. Although I did not study this talk directly, emergent leaders reported that very little of this talk related to exploring the 'images' they held.

A further way of engaging in talk related to the mode of imagination was as a result of attending courses. This was partly as a result of being exposed to theories and ideas as a formal part of the courses and partly the opportunities to discuss these ideas with other teachers and leaders on the courses. In these ways alternative perspectives were offered about beliefs, which might underpin teaching and leading. Talk with others allowed individuals to express their reactions to such perspectives, to share experiences and to outline their own beliefs in such talk. Again I am reliant on what leaders reported as of value from such talk.

For these experiences to inform identity development, and be considered learning, 'self talk' is then needed to 'see connections' (Wenger, 1998, p173), to evaluate these alternative possibilities and inform the development of aspirations.

A key component of the exploratory phase of this study was asking leaders to talk about people and experiences that had influenced them. They were guided to reflect on influences from as far back as they could remember through to the last couple of weeks in school. This they could do, although mostly they explained that thinking in this way was something they were doing for the first time. This implies a lack of 'self talk' in making conscious these influences. If becoming more aware of these images is likely to further affect identity development this highlights why being involved in the study was likely to be of value.

The role models emergent leaders reported in their trajectories of participation were from an individual's:

1. family,

2. own education,

3. any prior work experience,

4. teacher training,

5. school colleagues once employed,

6. influences from beyond school,

7. attendance of courses.

1. The influence of family

Family influences in this study, referred to in the case studies, were well represented.

- Parents were referred to either supporting, or not supporting, particular identity development. For example Amanda and Jacky explained that their families supported their identities as a musician and sportswoman respectively. Jacky's parents, however, did not support her early aspiration to become a teacher which she attributed to them not being graduates themselves.

- The interests of parents sometimes helped influence how they thought about themselves. For example Amanda cited her father's interests as a geologist and Spanish speaker affecting her childhood experiences to explain why she felt capable of volunteering for these subject coordination roles in her first school. Phillip explained that all his family were involved in jobs of social concern and that was probably why he developed a similar aspiration to do something useful.

- Partners could also influence the images emergent leaders held. For example Jacky's partner inspired her to 'imagine' becoming a teacher. Aimee referred often to talking with her partner, also a school leader, about school leadership. Although Amanda's partner was not a teacher she said that she valued that he brought a perspective from outside education when she wanted an alternative opinion on how an organisation might work more efficiently. Margaret's decision to take a career break was a conscious decision taken with her partner.

- Other members of the family involved in teaching were also cited as strong influences, for example Margaret's two daughters and son-in-law, Eric, all local middle school teachers. Margaret liked to see her personal and professional life as integrated and talked with these relations regularly about

what they valued and shared ideas. She concluded that she was very happy to be working in a school year team led by her son-in-law, Eric.

It is no doubt significant that these family members are trusted and respected as well as that they know the emergent leader well, thus affecting the value emergent leaders place on their opinions.

2. 'Wow!' What a lovely teacher[42]: images from participants' education

All teachers will have had some experience of being taught themselves. The leaders recalled and referred to influences from their experiences with various degrees of clarity, depending on the amount of reflective talk they had involved themselves in. Phillip in particular was surprised to be asked about this and found it difficult, early in the study, to refer to any influences. When opportunities to engage in identity talk were provided, he did recall deep-seated and long-lasting influences ('created images') (Wenger, 1998, p173)

All participant leaders referred to teachers who provided 'images' of how they were trying to practice. These include 'images' of: how to organise a classroom; teaching strategies to use; how to view a subject; what to promote and; what is important when developing relationships. As a result of at least some 'self talk', these 'images' affected how emergent leaders wanted to practice and be viewed themselves. It is interesting that these images were so long-lasting when they often dated from a time when they had not yet considered teaching as a future career. A study of Irish trainee teachers reported that what is perceived as 'good' in teaching gets 'sedimented' early

---

[42] Taken from Jacky's second interview, Dec 05, 2: 5.

on as a result of the emotional relationship children have with their teachers (Sugrue, 1997, p220).

None of these images related to images of leadership. This is presumably explained because the original experiences were as a pupil in relationships with teachers, rather than thinking of adults in the school as leaders at that time.

3. Influences from prior employment

All five emergent leaders had been involved in some paid or voluntary work prior to training as a teacher. They were asked to consider how this affected their identity development.

- Amanda and Phillip had done some voluntary work with children (in a private school and with disadvantaged children respectively) prior to going to university and these experiences helped them decide which age group of children they would consider if training as a teacher. These experiences confirmed Phillip's desire to teach at secondary age and helped Amanda decide she wanted to work with younger children, unable to 'imagine' herself being a good enough teacher, on her own terms, with secondary age children.

- Aimee used her time after graduation to try to begin a career as a performer. She referred to several experiences that she thought were still pertinent to how she viewed herself, having given her insights into how to communicate and relate to others. Although she said these were influencing her very unconsciously (i.e. with little 'self talk' involved) she believed they helped explain how she related to others in her current practice.

- Both Margaret and Jacky had previous leadership experience outside education (as a retail store manager and bullion bank team manager

respectively) but, even when directly asked, could not see any connection between these experiences and how they now saw themselves as a leader.

- More influential on Margaret was her time as a TA. She talked about working with class teachers and reflecting on the role of these assistants (evidence of 'self talk') as affecting how she built relationships with and used such assistants in her current practice. Margaret was articulate about how she saw a reciprocal relationship with them and this was part of her school as a 'learning community'.

Any connections made from these earlier experiences were tentative and partial. There was little evidence of either 'self talk' or talk with others as to how such experiences contributed to current views of teaching and leadership.

4. Influences from teacher training

Further examples of influences were reported by emergent leaders from their formal training as a teacher. All five leaders had trained through a PGCE year. Not all the 'images' derived were positive.

Both Margaret and Aimee recalled activities during their PGCE course which explored the influence of role models on their developing view of themselves as teachers. This indicated some opportunity for identity talk with others, presumably with their tutors but maybe also with their peer trainees. Aimee located these discussions as the origins of her wanting to develop active learning in her classrooms and Margaret on bringing her personality into her classrooms. This kind of activity is considered a neglected aspect of teacher training in the US and Alsup (2006) provides a rationale for and activities to use with trainees to start such explicit 'self talk' about identity development.

The influences emergent leaders cited related mainly to observational experiences of practice, rather than conversations with these teachers. As indicated earlier this ties in with views of apprenticeship (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Some of these observations had affected who they wanted (or did not want) to become as a leader, as well as a teacher, often as a result of emotional experiences. It appeared that, although these images were accessible, their impact on current practice up until the time of the study was largely unconscious. The talk we were involved in as part of the study appeared to help emergent leaders make 'connections' (Wenger, 1998, p173) across time and continue to inform and confirm the 'images' they held. The importance of this talk is not recognised in the apprenticeship model.

5. Influences of school colleagues

Once the leaders were employed as teachers, they began to have opportunities to observe and talk with colleagues.

Phillip, Amanda and Aimee made little reference to any 'images' affecting them as a teacher deriving from their colleagues in school. This is likely to relate to these leaders' reducing identities as a teacher during the period of the study. It is also likely to relate to the 'busyness' of schools, the high teaching workloads of teachers and school cultures, which do not allow for regular peer observations. Jacky and Margaret talked often about learning from their colleagues 'as a teacher' on a day-to-day basis e.g. in the staffroom, in their classrooms, in corridors and at both ends of the day.

In contrast, although 'images' of leadership were absent from their prior biographies, once employed as teachers, emergent leaders began to gather 'images' of school leadership from working with school leaders. It was not explained to emergent leaders how they might go about their practice as a leader, instead 'images' and 'possibilities'

283

needed to be actively gathered and considered. As discussed in section 6.1.2 emergent leaders proactivity in taking opportunities to talk with others about leadership, whilst also acting as a leader, differed. One aspect of such talk was in clarifying and challenging their 'images' of leadership. It was only when there was a formal mentor relationship set up, such as with Aimee and Amanda in her second school, that these opportunities of support were built into their work as a leader.

Some of these 'images' of leadership were gained prior to a leader being in a formal role, for example Aimee and her references to Nola in her first school when Aimee was a classroom teacher. This sees Aimee as an 'aspiring' leader developing a 'readiness' (Gronn, 1999; Gronn and Lacey, 2004) by evaluating herself against another leader. It has been explained how Aimee's ability to see herself as an 'aspiring' leader related to her Fast-Track status. No such references to 'images' prior to being in a leadership role were noted for the other four leaders.

6. Influences from beyond the school

Not all leaders recognised a dimension to their learning from beyond school.

- Phillip reflected that this study had affected his view of learning opportunities. He explained that, by talking about his learning with me, he had come to realise that to lead in the way he would like he needed to look externally rather than relying on introspection on current practice in school. Phillip had become aware that, although he had freedom to develop his role, he had done so in a limited way by looking mainly to practice in his school.

- Looking beyond school was most evident in Amanda's accounts. She, like Phillip, became self-aware that being outward-looking was important in searching for ideas to enact transformation in school. She regularly cited

talking to her partner, an actuary, and his friends about different ways for organisations to be managed.

- Jacky also found that talking with advisors and lead teachers from other schools was helpful, not only in gaining ideas for changes in school, but also discussing their value and effectiveness. In the newly merged school she missed these connections and it reduced her ability to think about (and practice) as a leader.

If schools become insular and inertial in terms of their views of leadership this may go some way to explaining Lumby and English (2009)'s accusations of UK schools as places of 'ritualised' leadership performance. As with Amanda and Phillip, to overcome this leaders can open the 'windows' of reflection outwards (Antonacopoulou and Bento, 2004), even beyond their own school. Opportunities to talk with others about these alternative perspectives offers individual leaders a way to develop their mode of imagination and connect the ideas generated with the other modes of belonging.

7. Images from courses

As discussed in section 6.1.2 the leaders experienced a range of courses that could be considered individual leadership development programmes. These were:

- The eight month Leading from the Middle (LftM) programme with the support of coaching in school (Margaret, Aimee, Amanda and Phillip)

- The year-long Leadership Pathways programme (Aimee)

- The four-year Fast-Track programme (Aimee)

These courses, run by the NCLSCS, all involved online and face-to-face sessions, as well as, in the case of the Fast-Track programme, drawing on professional tutors and other events. Opportunities for talk with others were built into these programmes.

In addition some leaders were involved in whole school leadership programmes.

- A LA Primary Leadership Programme (Amanda and Jacky)

- An Intensified Support Programme (in Amanda's second school).

In both cases LA school improvement partners and advisors worked one-to-one with these emergent leaders to help them support school improvement. Again this sees opportunities for talk as built into these programmes.

Subject specific courses were also mentioned by Jacky and Margaret and mentor training, linked specifically to trainees in history, by Phillip.

What meaning these leaders made from the courses varied as discussed earlier, sometimes relating to the substantive activities and sometimes to the opportunity to meet other leaders out of school. It has been discussed how Margaret came away from LftM with a greater self-awareness, Aimee with an understanding and appreciation of particular theories and ideas, Amanda and Jacky with practical ideas on how to manage a school and Phillip with ideas on how to develop relational skills as a leader. Both Phillip and Amanda concluded that they learnt as much from other participants on these courses, through talk, as the substantive material, whereas Aimee valued the conceptual thinking and Jacky and Margaret focused on the substantive content.

The mode of imagination supports the development of principled action

The accounts of the emergent leaders show how it is difficult to participate without some view of what you are trying to achieve. Developing aspirations and beliefs

depends on role models, being aware of alternative possibilities and theories and ideas. Leaders appear to go about this by identifying with aspects of the practice or ideas from talk with others, mediated by their aspirations and beliefs.

There were few opportunities for identity talk offered to them. Instead emergent leaders drew upon the 'images' they could locate in their own histories of participation (through 'self talk'). Some leaders looked beyond school for ideas (involving identity talk with others followed by further 'self talk'). Although emergent leaders could talk about how influences had affected their beliefs about practice, these connections were generally not coherently formed. 'Self talk' was not being systematically used.

The five emergent leaders in this study revealed unique appreciations of what they were trying to enact in their practice. This represents the mode of belonging through imagination as driving what I now term 'principled action'. These principles became characterised as the very different views of leadership summarised earlier in Table 6.1.

6.2.3 The mode of alignment: individuals working in schools

Wenger defines the mode of alignment as:

> [...]coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit in with broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises (Wenger, 1998, p174).

How much agency any individual had to act on their principles cannot be considered without understanding 'the interplay between a leaders' own sense of agency and the social structure in which that agency is embedded' (Gronn and Ribbins, 1996, p465). I therefore considered the emergent leaders' accounts in terms of how they perceived schools as workplaces.

Firstly, I consider schools in terms of the 'freedom' or 'control' emergent leaders perceived. I highlight the contrasting effects of alignment through 'coordinated enterprise' and through 'compliance'.

Secondly, I make reference to the systems in schools, as they affected the identity development of emergent leaders. This highlights one under-represented system in their accounts - performance management – which I propose is a missed opportunity for identity talk in schools.

1. Individuals' perceptions of freedom or control

One of the themes relating to the mode of alignment was the extent to which emergent leaders perceived that they felt free or controlled in developing as a teacher and leader. This relates to the workplaces being experienced as different types of 'learning environment' (Evans *et al*, 2006). Two aspects of Wenger's model of belonging were helpful in locating these contrasting experiences: that of working together in 'coordinated enterprise' against experiences of 'compliance' (for examples refer to examples of coded data for Phillip - Appendix M).

The participants all spoke of learning related to working in a coordinated and co-operative way with their colleagues. There was a contrast between those leaders who reported the school working collaboratively and those who strove to work collaboratively in schools when this was not explicitly expected of them.

- Margaret, Jacky and Aimee reported how they perceived 'coordinated enterprise' already in evidence in their schools and that this suited the way they wanted to work. They were usually keen to incorporate whole school initiatives into their work, such as developing interactive whiteboards use, developing literacy, identifying talents, pupil tracking (Margaret), improving

numeracy (Jacky) and marking and monitoring tasks (Aimee). Although the school 'culture' was therefore acting as one of control, these leaders were happy as a result of 'self talk' to meet these expectations of them.

- Amanda and Phillip also reported working with colleagues collaboratively, but in ways that they felt they were taking the initiative for. This was a way of working which they had developed a belief in as individuals and, as a result of 'self talk', wanted to develop in their school. As an alignment issue they strove to connect their modes of imagination and engagement, in ways which would increase their sense of belonging and reduce the isolation (see section 6.1.1).

- It is possible for individuals to perceive the same school differently for example Amanda and Jacky working in the same first school. While Jacky found that she could work with colleagues happily in teams in ways that her mode of alignment matched her modes of imagination and engagement, Amanda worked less collegially in this school trying to change ways of working, rather than fitting in with current teams like Jacky. This was because of her growing interest in addressing whole school organisational efficiency. Amanda reported that she did not appreciate how collaborative the previous school had in fact been until she changed school. Only then did she try and analyse what this culture had been like and try to 'contrive'[43] this collaboration in her second school (section 5.1).

---

[43] This term is not used in the way Andy Hargreaves applies to school cultures of contrived collegiality (Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*. New York: Teachers College Press).

- 'Compliance' related to emergent leaders realising that what was explicitly expected of them was something they did not necessarily believe in but that they needed to show in their practice (mode of engagement). This is evidence of the mode of alignment interacting with identities being developed as leaders make decisions in terms of who they *do* and *do not* want to become (the mode of imagination). This relates to the choices they have, that is their agency, as well as the notions of challenge or confirmation these choices afford (see also section 6.1.1). The reaction was usually that, in these situations, emergent leaders resisted these expectations or practiced reluctantly for example Amanda and coaching another teacher in her second school, Phillip and 'gifted and talented' interventions, Jacky and displaying work - so these realisations affected their mode of engagement. Again, 'self talk' was important in appreciating whether synergies or challenges between modes of alignment and imagination were recognised and how to resolve these.

- Conversely in the case of Margaret, even when her desire to promote role-play and dressing up was tempered by the headteacher, Margaret did not give up her belief in it. Her belief was so strong that Margaret continued to promote these pedagogies in school.

- In contrast to such constraints emergent leaders also reported a freedom to practice and develop their roles as individuals. This relates to the lack of clarity of expectations of them indicated in the previous section, rather than being explicitly 'given' this freedom. The expectations of how leaders should practice were largely left implicit, even if tasks to accomplish were articulated. Phillip showed how he was aware of this in taking on his new position when he reported that 'trail blazing means you get to write your own scripts (first

interview, Apr07, 1:26). Whilst the tasks were often made clear, how to go about these tasks was not. Any talk with others was reported as limited to practice, not allowing emergent leaders opportunities to connect all three modes of belonging.

- Jacky and Amanda, as they took on TLR positions, and Phillip, in his role as learning director, were on the one hand frustrated by the lack of guidance given but, on the other, appreciated the freedom this gave to develop individual beliefs about how to develop and to try out ideas. In the cases of Jacky and Amanda the lack of guidance was unsettling if agendas of accountability were also implicit and a lack of support finally caused Amanda to move school.

What was evident in these accounts was the lack of identity talk with others surrounding how to practice in a school. As well as affecting the lack of images discussed in section 6.2.2, this affects leaders' understandings of (or 'reading' of) their schools as workplaces. They speak of a tension between the freedom this lack of talk gives, and a lack of clarity of expectations. As the leaders sought to understand expectations of them they spoke of sometimes feeling happy to comply and sometimes experiencing dilemmas they needed to resolve. These decisions were limited to 'self talk'. It may be that such issues did feature as part of valued discussions with others outlined earlier (such as family members or other leaders) but this talk was not referred to, nor probed directly.

2. School systems and individual identity development

There are two dimensions to schools systems I highlight in the accounts of emergent leaders that relate to identity development through the mode of alignment. The first

dimension is whether the leaders are expected to work with existing systems or able to set up systems of their own. This therefore relates to the above discussion of freedom and control. It also relates to contexts of leadership as opposed to management and, with this, issues of change or inertia. The second dimension is the impact of meetings, both of whole staff and leadership team meetings on identity development. The role of talk in these meetings and when they take place appear to have a significant part to play in feelings of belonging (or exclusion). I note one particular system and the meetings associated with it that appear to be an underused opportunity for identity talk i.e. performance management.

Whilst some leaders tried to work 'with' systems (Aimee and Margaret), others needed to set them up (Phillip) or wanted to change them (Jacky and Amanda):

- Aimee tried to work with school systems as this matched her view of herself as a professional. It has been discussed in section 6.1.1 how this was problematic for her as she experienced divided loyalties. Not being in control of the systems left Aimee feeling reactive rather than proactive.

- Margaret too tried to ensure she integrated school systems and initiatives into her practice and this contributed to how she felt part of the school as a learning community.

- In Phillip's new role he found he needed to set up new systems. It was important to him that this be done in a collaborative way (to match his mode of imagination). It was part of his freedom to do so that began to see Phillip develop an identity as a senior leader.

- Jacky and Amanda also saw that their roles in school required them to set up systems. They did so to help overcome what they perceived as the inertia to change among other staff.

- The change Jacky experienced later of having to manage systems set up by her new headteacher and the loss of freedom to have responsibility for and lead these systems herself was frustrating for her and fundamentally affected her ability to see herself as a leader.

Meetings in schools are a feature of the work of all teachers and leaders. Emergent leaders talked about the impact of these on their learning differently:

- For some, staff meetings could be places to be inspired or inspire others as part of a community (Margaret). In other settings, staff meetings were dull and admin-based (school 1 Amanda and Jacky), places of inertia (Aimee's Faculty). They were not mentioned by Phillip.

- Senior leader meetings were also reported to be ineffectual and increasingly absent by Amanda and Jacky in their first school. Developing agendas for all meetings became a priority for Amanda as she went on to take on full senior leader roles, so taking control of systems of meetings.

- Belonging to the senior leadership team, or an extended version of, it was important to those leaders who wished to work towards their aspiration to be a senior leader. Not being able to attend meetings when working part-time contributed to Jacky's deterioration of her identity as a senior leader.

Such meetings have the potential to contribute to a leader's understanding of their school as a workplace (relating to the mode of alignment) but are not spaces and times one would expect others to engage leaders in personal identity talk. One opportunity

for identity talk in school I was surprised to find under-represented in the emergent leaders' accounts was performance management. This is an opportunity for senior leaders to have an individual discussion with each teacher and leader in school reviewing their progress and planning for the future. It is usually based around lesson observations and the negotiation of future targets. This could be a place for senior leaders to explore with those they manage what they aspire to and how they are learning.

The potential role for performance management in aligning leaders' aspirations with a school's needs was raised early in the study. Participant leaders were asked to reflect on the role of performance management in revisiting interviews (Appendix G) and senior leaders interviewed were also asked specifically about how performance management was organised and thought about in relation to professional development of staff (Appendix H).

- Performance management was in fact absent from Jacky and Amanda's school when they joined and it was only when they attended the primary Leadership Programme that they realised this should have been in place. Initiating a system of performance management became Amanda's priority in the time she remained in her first school. Due to it running on an annual cycle, she felt inexperienced in how to use this effectively by the time she moved to her second school. Jacky only experienced one performance management discussion, with the new headteacher, and she reported that this was not formative.

- Phillip relied on direct conversations with the headteacher about how to inhabit his new learning director role. Phillip did not mention performance management in his accounts although he did make me aware that this took

place with a deputy head not the headteacher. This was the deputy head he suggested I speak to but this leader did not respond to any of the requests to be part of the study. This perhaps reflected the lack of mentoring this line manager appeared to see in his relationship with Phillip.

- Margaret, however, reported positive experiences about the performance management process in her school, seeing it as an opportunity to talk about her hopes and how they might be met by the school, as well as gain formative feedback on her practice. For Margaret appraisal as a process was another form of learning opportunity. This was the case when these meetings were with her headteacher and no doubt contributed to the loyalty she displayed to him, and the school. In the school merger Margaret lost direct line management by the headteacher and her experience of performance management changed. From these new experiences Margaret became aware that she already missed chances to talk with the headteacher, which she reported as being informal in addition to the formal performance management meetings. They had helped Margaret make sense of her identity development.

- Aimee reported the most positive experiences of performance management, and the closest to opportunities for identity talk. She felt this was a two-way process, a chance for her to be heard. In preparation she was expected to prepare a self-evaluation and suggest personal targets. For Aimee, this performance management meeting complemented the other discussions she had with her line manager and which she reported she had been increasingly open in sharing her personal beliefs and concerns.

These accounts show that, although underused, performance management, given good relationships and intentions of support rather than of judgment, could offer one school

system already in place for meaningful identity talk to be developed with teachers and leaders.

6.2.4 The mode of engagement: talk and practice as an emergent leader

Wenger defines the mode of engagement as:

> [...]active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation in meaning (Wenger, 1998, p173).

I explained in chapter 4 how, of Wenger's three modes of belonging, this was the hardest to apply. This relates to the way Wenger defines the mode of engagement as focused on practice as compared to my own focus on talk about practice. This problem was in fact conceptual rather than methodological. I needed to ask emergent leaders about their 'active involvement' and wanted to explore the role of talk in the 'negotiation of meaning'. How participant leaders interacted, related and practiced socially and culturally (all aspects of Wenger's mode of engagement – Figure 3.4) were revealed but, unlike Wenger, *through talk* and *from their perspective*.

Discussing learning episodes during main phase discussions allowed emergent leaders opportunities to talk, so 'translating stories of (transient) deeds' in ways, which might help them develop more 'stable' stories of their identities (Sfard, 2006, p25). Every time emergent leaders had opportunities to talk about their practice in this way, there was the potential for this transformation.

Four themes can be used to discuss and explain the differences between what leaders did and how they went about their practice:

1. Learning through relationships exemplified by the way the leaders used consultation, shared good practice, were available to colleagues, were sociable, showed empathy and took a lead in developing colleagues.

2. Learning which resulted from surprise and challenge to the way they practiced and which caused them to reflect.

3. Learning which resulted from synergies between their identities, principally between their learning as a teacher and as a leader.

4. Learning that they were able to be proactive about when solving the problems they identified in their practice and trying out possible solutions.

These themes will be exemplified in short accounts which build on each case study in chapter 5 to focus on the role of talk in how each leader learnt 'in practice', with reference to specific learning episodes.

Amanda – learning in practice

Amanda's practice was characterised by becoming frustrated with how particular tasks were completed in school, particularly when she thought time was being used inefficiently. These were examples of experiencing 'surprise' about practice, and conflict between the three modes of belonging. When she identified a problem, she went about looking for solutions. Two examples of learning episodes she discussed, which exemplified the role of talk in this, were connected to things she considered inefficient in school one: a) when she took on the role of handling data in the school and; b) the use of time in staff meetings.

- Amanda usually turned to people outside of the school to consider new perspectives, through locating a course to find out about data handling (a) and

finding out from her partner, advisers and other leaders about practice in other organisations about options for running staff meetings (b). This saw Amanda showing her agency in using talk with others in looking for solutions (to resolve modes of imagination and engagement).

- Amanda then tried out some of these ideas to improve overall efficiency and effectiveness (related to her mode of engagement). To make the changes Amanda wanted she needed to develop good relationships with other staff (also related to her mode of engagement), which she did by trying to get other staff to see that she was trying to help them. This she did with an awareness of school discourses and ways of working (mode of alignment). This involved her in making clear in her talk with them her aspirations and the beliefs behind her actions.

To resolve all three modes of belonging Amanda needed to be clear about her beliefs (imagination), perceptions of the school (alignment) and practices (engagement). Her success in doing so strengthened her identity as a senior leader interested in continuing to develop schools in these ways.

Margaret – learning in practice

Margaret focused on developing her practice in her classroom. Her view of her classroom, however, was not bounded. It has been discussed how she involved a wide range of others in her teaching, leading and, ultimately, her own learning. Two examples of learning episodes she discussed which exemplify the role of talk in Margaret's learning in practice are: a) in team teaching with Kristine and; b) small group work in her classrooms

- Margaret set up the way she organised her work to increase the opportunities to learn with others. She was always looking for 'challenge' to the way she practiced. She therefore planned with Kristine to team teach lessons (a) and with her CAs (b), talking with them and sharing ideas both in the planning and evaluations of these lessons.

- Relationships with others were important for Margaret to develop and she saw these as reciprocal, with the others as peers. This included the children in the examples given and, in her talk with Kristine and the CA, they discussed what the children had said and done in ways that could inform their future practice.

This way of working (mode of engagement) is supplemented by incorporating further opportunities to learn from others beyond the classroom through visits and visitors (to inform and challenge her mode of imagination). Margaret enjoyed working in this way in this school. Although she follows personal ways of developing her practice, as result of the talk with others she engages in, she feels that the school is happy for her and her colleagues to work in this free way (relating to the mode of alignment). She ensures that part of her practice is to share what she has learnt with her colleagues (a further aspect of her mode of engagement). In these ways Margaret's identities as a teacher and leader are 'reconciled'.

Phillip – learning in practice

Phillip considers his job description and prioritises tasks. He reports that the clearer he was on how a task might be carried out, the more able he feels to be proactive in putting a system in place. To decide on his options he explained he usually turned to other people, and was very keen to turn all his tasks into consultative exercises.

Learning episodes in relation to developing PSHE[44] in the school are indicative of the way talk relates to Phillip's learning in practice.

- Phillip explained that running a series of PSHE development workshops saw him relying on the relationships he had already built up in school, but that not all members of staff were as quick to sign up (mode of engagement).

- With observation of other leaders (and the 'self talk' associated with this) he found that he was capable of setting up a system for PSHE that would deal with this differential enthusiasm effectively. He explained that his confidence to do this came with better access to the senior leadership's thinking about how this work fitted in strategically and so he became more assertive with those who were less enthusiastic (modes of alignment and engagement being better related).

- He realised that he was motivated to lead pedagogical change (related to his mode of imagination) and, while not being an expert, was capable of getting colleagues to work together to develop an improved PSHE programme that he believed would improve teaching and learning in the school.

Phillip found synergies between his learning as a teacher and as a leader by thinking about his leadership as concerning pedagogies. In this way he was able to reconcile all three modes of belonging and practice in line with his developing views about teaching and learning. This involved increasing the talk with others in school about pedagogy which, in turn, would offer him information on how others were thinking (relating to his mode of alignment).

---

[44] For a reminder of this abbreviation, please consult the glossary.

Aimee – learning in practice

Aimee was determined to ensure she met all expectations of her by others as a teacher and a leader. She was focused on improving academic achievement in her areas of subject responsibility and therefore found a synergy between her development as a teacher and as a leader. Her practice as a leader included planned activities, such as moderating, monitoring special needs support, timetabling, but also responding to crises. The learning she talked about in relation to a) running staff meetings and b) organising timetabling exemplifies the role of talk in Aimee's learning in practice.

- Aimee explained that she did not have as much time as she would like to be proactive as a leader. This would involve her articulating a clearer vision to her colleagues in staff meetings and better motivating them to work towards this vision in their practice (so matching modes of imagination and engagement). Modelling what she valued by example did not always seem enough to motivate staff. She found she did not fully appreciate their ways of thinking and working (relating to the mode of alignment) and needed more time and more talk with them to develop this understanding. She reported finding Faculty meetings a source of challenge, explained by her modes of belonging not matching well.

- Aimee talked about how she tried to show empathy with both senior leaders and those in her Faculty such as with timetabling, which caused a conflict of interests. She used both 'self talk' and talk with other leaders to try to decide how to reduce these tensions in the future.

Aimee said she was determined to be better prepared for understanding how relationships (engagement) and ways of working (alignment) could match better with her developing vision as a leader (imagination). Talking with staff was a way forward.

Jacky – learning in practice

Once Jacky was given a broad remit she took responsibility for improving her areas of responsibility by trying things and inspiring others. Due to her strong sense of being a team member her accounts are usually framed as 'we' but she confirmed that she did take a lead in teams, at least in her school before the schools merged. The role of talk in Jacky's mode of engagement can be exemplified through her learning to become a numeracy coordinator:

- Jacky had not envisaged being a leader (or senior leader), so held no prior images 'as a leader'. To know how to begin the numeracy coordination role Jacky took ideas from beyond the school, such as advisors or from courses (mode of imagination) using these to decide what she wanted to put in place and how she would go about monitoring the school's progress.

- The outcomes of this were that she analysed data to identify strengths and weaknesses and led the development of an action plan to improve pupil performance in numeracy. She also completed book reviews to review progress (related to the mode of engagement).

- However her main method for improving pupil achievement was through the day-to-day work of teams. She found synergies between this way of working both as a teacher and a leader. She talked about daily meetings with colleagues before school, informal chats and weekly team planning meetings (also

relating to the mode of engagement). This was an accepted way of working in the school as it was then (therefore relating to the mode of alignment).

Once the access to these external sources was cut off (affecting her mode of imagination) and the day-to-day work with her colleagues was more fragmented and less collegial (affecting her modes of engagement and alignment), the opportunities for talk were restricted. This explains how her identities as a teacher and leader were curtailed.

6.2.5 Emergence and the influence of the modes of belonging

Figure 6.4 summarises the themes used to discuss differences between the modes of belonging in the accounts of these five emergent leaders. This is a variant of Wenger's model as it applies across the leaders' accounts. Data did not challenge the universality of his model as it was able to accommodate the identity development of all five cases. This interpretation however offers others interested in learning how it applied to emergent leaders' learning an overview of themes which might be generalisable analytically.

Figure 6.4 Modes of belonging as experienced by five emergent school leaders
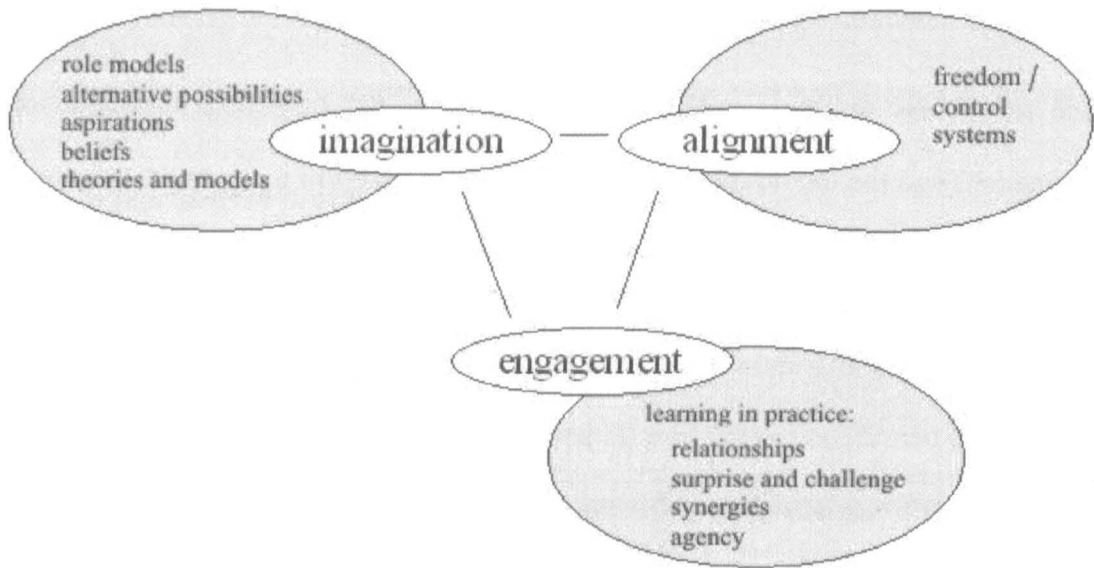
Evidence from this study supports the conclusions from my literature review that there is a lack of clarity of the expectations of leaders in English schools. This related to a lack of identity talk associated with the mode of alignment. While the leaders came to learn which tasks and outcomes they were responsible for, there was little evidence in their accounts of guidance as to how they should (or could) go about these tasks or meet these outcomes. This can be explained by a lack of identity talk in relation to the mode of engagement. It has been seen the leaders practiced in ways in which they tried to match their developing views of what was possible and what they believed in; hence their mode of imagination. There was evidence of limited talk by others in school, even in the performance management process, about these beliefs and aspirations.

Instead we see the emergent leaders being resourceful. 'Self talk' was being used in developing images, in recognising surprises or challenges between what they experience and observe and their views of how things might be done. They were often proactive in talking with others or observing others to look for alternative

possibilities, hence connecting with their mode of imagination. They also worked hard at making sense about what was possible or desirable in that particular workplace, hence connecting with their mode of alignment. Emergent leaders needed to decide how to respond – whether to participate as 'expected', challenge the state of play or choose not to participate.

The limited opportunities for emergent leaders to engage in discussions about their identity development in school means that schools were left unaware of the decisions leaders were making which affect their participation (or non-participation). This is a missed opportunity for schools if they believe they have a responsibility for supporting leadership development, as well as a missed opportunity for them to learn from these resourceful and proactive individuals.

Talk has two roles in relation to emergence. Firstly, it is needed to support identity development and secondly, an opportunity for those in schools to understand the 'emergence' of 'emergent' school leaders.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and implications: Leaders 'reading the workplace' and schools 'growing their own' leaders

This chapter begins by summarising the study's findings in relation to the three research questions. The findings demonstrate that, by talking with emergent leaders about their learning, their identity development can be revealed and that talk is a central feature of this. I examine the implications for schools of the significance of talk, through considering the role they (could) play in supporting leadership development. I reflect on how identity development was conceptualised in the light of the study to aid future researchers and to add to the accumulation of theoretical knowledge in this field of inquiry. Similarly the methodological approach was tied to this conceptualisation and hence I reflect on this, in particular the biographical dimension to my study. I then suggest further avenues of inquiry.

Section 7.1 offers a summary of the findings of the study.

Section 7.2 suggests implications for schools of the findings.

Section 7.3 considers implications for researchers, both conceptual and methodological.

Section 7.4 proposes future avenues for research, building on this study.

7.1 How can we understand the development of emergent leaders?

I have found that the leadership literature oversimplifies leadership development and neither provides clear conceptualisations of how leaders develop nor empirical

evidence of who they wanted to 'become'. The term 'emergent leader' was introduced by the NCLSCS and schools are able to identify such leaders. However, neither the NCLSCS nor the leadership literature, offers clarity as to how we should think about these leaders or what the 'emergence', implied in this term, means for their development.

In response, this study of emergent leaders' development was exploratory, focusing on the identity development of those considered 'emergent' as a way of thinking about who they wanted to 'become'. In this way I could 'listen' to the accounts of emergent leaders, to develop a view of what 'emergence' might mean.

I framed the study around understanding the outcomes and processes of identity development as encapsulated in the three research questions presented at the end of chapter 3. I now present the findings in relation to these questions, as follows:

Section 7.1.1 discusses RQ1 'Who do emergent leaders want to become?' with reference to the way 'who they wanted to become' was conceptualized as their designated identities, towards which leaders were trying to develop. This conceptualization sees identities as related to developing senses of belonging.

Section 7.1.2 discusses RQ2 'How do emergent leaders talk about their learning?' with reference to the view that their learning was the way the gap between actual and designated identities was being closed and the central part of talk in this identity development.

Section 7.1.3 draws together the findings of the prior research questions to address RQ3 'What view of emergence does emergent leaders talking about their learning offer?'

7.1.1 Emergent leaders' designated identities

Drawing on the discussions in section 6.1, this study has found that each of the five emergent leaders studied developed unique designated identities as a result of their unique personal histories and school experiences. By focusing on their development 'as a leader' I was able to reveal they held five different views of leadership (Table 6.1) – addressing RQ1a and b. Their trajectories of participation show that their modes of belonging (in terms of imagination, alignment and engagement) were affected in unique ways and were in constant flux – addressing RQ1d. In these complex and dynamic ways leaders developed views of themselves as leaders in very personal ways and these views affected how they practiced as leaders. These views of leadership related to how the leaders saw themselves as belonging – addressing RQ1c. For each individual their sense of belonging was differentially tangible, dynamic and associated with tensions at times. The study therefore offers a complex relationship between belonging and the development of designated identities. To whom emergent leaders felt a sense of belonging:

- depends on the way individual leaders make sense of their designated identity and hence what they want to achieve.

- can 'pull' leaders in different ways when practicing as a leader, so affecting the way they make sense of their designated identities.

- changes as designated identities develop.

- does not depend on being in particular leadership roles, but being in particular roles does affect senses of belonging.

- does not depend on particular systems and ways of working in schools, but perceptions of particular school systems and ways of working do affect senses of belonging.

It was evident that talk was a central feature in the leaders' identity development and that the way individuals differentially experienced talk affected their modes of belonging in different ways.

7.1.2 The role of talk in the development of emergent leaders

The talk involved in identity development included two dimensions: 'self talk' and talk with others. This talk affected all three modes of belonging and the sense made between the modes. I summarise the roles talk plays in identity development in relation to these modes – addressing RQ2c.

Imagination and talk

- Through identifying with (or rejecting) aspects of the others' practice, leaders clarified what they valued and strove for.

- Acknowledging the histories of an individual's participation, some of this clarification had been done before the study.

- Usually this had resulted from reflective 'self talk'; although sometimes clarity had been gained through talk with others, for example during teacher training.

- Sometimes questioning, as part of the interviews of this study, asked leaders to recall memories or reflect on experiences in ways which made explicit the 'images' for the first time.

Alignment and talk

- Through talk with others in school, emergent leaders could find out more about what was expected of them: how they were expected to comply; what activities they could work together on in coordinated ways; which styles of teaching and of leadership were normalised in the school and; revealing some of the complexity of the workplace.

- This talk helped emergent leaders appreciate the degree of freedom or control they had to act. They could 'hear' about risks or likely consequences of actions.

- This talk could also be with those beyond school by helping contextualise perceptions of school expectations.

- 'Self talk' was needed to make sense of these expectations and make judgments.

Engagement and talk

- Leaders talk with others as part of their day-to-day activity and this provides opportunities to learn about how the way they chose to act is perceived by those they work with.

- Leaders can see non-verbally and hear what people think of them and use this to aid their self-evaluations of how they wish to be seen, through 'self talk'.

- Some of these interactions help develop valued and trusting relationships, within which leaders can engage in more meaningful identity talk.

- This may be with those whom they most identify as peers or those who know their practice and whose opinion is valued, for example, line managers.

310

The roles of talk in identity development are to turn the tacit and implicit into the conscious and explicit as well as to explore meanings. These purposes enable an individual to evaluate expectations against aspirations in an iterative process of 'imagination and talk', 'alignment and talk', and 'engagement and talk'. In these ways individuals are involved in reviewing their core personal beliefs and aspirations, reviewing their workplace as a place of expectations and possibilities and reviewing their practice (respectively). I conclude that it is through this participation *and talk* that these five emergent leaders were developing their identities.

The two dimensions to talk proposed earlier can be subdivided into four forms, evidenced to a greater or lesser extent across, and within, accounts – addressing RQ2b:

1. 'Self talk' – evidenced by all leaders, although not all leaders used as consciously as others in terms of their mode of imagination

2. Talk with a researcher – all leaders reported the value of this, in particular as it informed their 'self talk' (this relates to RQ2d)

3. Talk with chosen others –talk with families and others beyond school were important, particularly to Amanda, Margaret and Aimee. Identity talk with chosen colleagues in school appeared more limited, particularly in relation to identities as a leader.

4. Talk with senior leaders and those who could be considered to take responsibility for their development – this was limited and most strongly evident in the formal and informal mentor relationships of Amanda with Simon, Aimee with Geoffrey, Jacky with Lucy and Margaret with Judith.

There is an evaluative component to talk, which requires individuals not only to clarify what they believe in and are aiming towards but also to make decisions about what to do about this. This is the main role of 'self talk'. If 'self talk' is considered to be the way individuals decide who they want to become, and that they are deciding this in the light of realistic understandings of their current context, this provides leaders with agency. This relates to Senge and colleagues assertion that leaders need to 'know thyself' (Senge *et al*, 2004) introduced in section 3.2.3.

Talk is the mechanism for such agency in a leader's ongoing identity development. This contrasts with a view that identity development happens as a 'natural' consequence of 'emergent leaders' participating in the practices of the workplace. While 'self talk' is central, so too is talk with others.

An artefact of their involvement in the study was that participant leaders engaged in identity talk with me, as a researcher. The leaders reported that this talk changed how they made sense of their experiences, therefore affecting their identity development. This finding helped meet an aspiration for the study (outlined in Chapter 4.3.1): that, in terms of a consequential ethical standpoint, there might be benefits from involving participant leaders in exploring their accounts of learning. Some of the emergent leaders' comments about how the process contributed to their learning have been incorporated into the discussions of previous chapters. I did specifically ask leaders to comment on the value to them of the study during the final interview. These benefits are evidenced in concluding comments from each participant (see Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1 Conclusions reported of the benefits of the data collection process

> The time we have spent on this, I suppose it's made me think more. I think that's part of my lacking in self-confidence I still don't feel of any real value personally and this has helped me to think about these things a bit (Margaret, final interview, Apr 08).
>
> It was timely for me and has helped me reflect. I have felt on leaving each session that it has been a positive process (Phillip, final interview, Jun 08).
>
> Loads [of positive impact], and I need to take your address or something, because I should say 'thank you very much'. I think, even just sitting with you and doing things, and talking about things has made me evaluate more (Aimee, final interview, Jun 08).
>
> I don't think I'd ever thought of my learning full stop if I hadn't talked to you (Amanda, final interview, Apr 08).
>
> It's been really interesting and its made me reflect which I think I've said before. I probably didn't ever sit back and reflect on a daily basis, and on my feelings of how I've been valued, or how other people thought of me (Jacky, final interview, Jun 08).

Participants referred to the 'time[...]to think about things' (Margaret), about it being 'timely' at a time when new roles were taken on (Phillip), the importance of 'talking about things' to help evaluation (Aimee) and 'reflect' (Jacky). Amanda claimed that she would not have even considered her 'learning' or 'talked' about it, without this study.

These comments refer to the benefits of the process of the research both through the talk between researcher and participant and the thinking during and between sessions (hence connecting to 'self talk'). These benefits were at a personal level and in real-time and therefore were regardless of the study's outcomes in relation to its contribution to understanding identity development. This value of biographical research as a process rather than product is advanced by psychotherapists such as Bainbridge and Horsdal (Bainbridge, 2010; Horsdal, 2007). The issue here is how

313

aware the leaders were of the significant role of talk to them. If they indeed recognise its significance, this would inform their agency to engage more often and more deliberately in identity talk.

I discussed in sections 6.1.2. and 6.2.2 how opportunities for talk to support identity development were used differently by different leaders. This depended on their sense of agency, how reflective they were and how proactive they were in talking to others about their beliefs, aspirations and practices. It also depended on their circumstances, the opportunities available to them for such talk.

Some leaders placed great importance on talking with people beyond school, for example members of their family and, in some cases, other leaders in other settings for example on courses. They talked about what they valued and believed in, their practice, their evaluations of their practice, perceptions of their schools and how they might develop their practice in these schools. These helped emergent leaders make conscious their views and debate them with others in ways that allowed identities to develop. Using people in this way required emergent leaders to be proactive in developing their identities, which can be explained as trying to resolve tensions between their three modes of belonging in ways which move them closer to meeting their designated identities.

In schools evidence of such talk was patchier. Margaret reported that, in her school, all colleagues were involved in ongoing discussions related to learning. This was the case for Jacky within teams in her school before the merger. In these situations these two leaders were able to develop identities which were associated with a strong sense of belonging. Aimee increased her talk with other aspiring senior leaders in school as she sought to develop an identity (and sense of belonging) as a senior leader.

There was some limited evidence of emergent leaders developing one-to-one relationships akin to mentoring (Amanda and Aimee formally and Margaret and Jacky informally) in which productive talk could take place. When Margaret and Jacky's 'mentors' left their schools, they were not easily replaced. This related to the personal nature of the relationships and because their value was probably not recognised by others in the school. Talk as part of mentoring is the way that mentors can fully appreciate the identity development of emergent leaders. Emergent leaders need opportunities to make explicit what they believe in, what they are trying to do and their perceptions of how to do this in their particular school in a way that merely observing their behaviour cannot achieve.

The talk I involved the leaders in – in which the explicit focus was on their learning (and hence identity development) and of which participants began to realise the benefits – many leaders felt was being offered for the first time. The situation that only Amanda and Aimee had senior leaders prepared to reflect on their learning with me seemed to reflect the lack of time to talk and therefore support felt by the other three leaders. To talk with a researcher might be helpful to a leader by informing their 'self talk' and hence awareness of the modes of belonging in their identity development. To talk with others in school offers further possibilities. By talking with others, whether in the role of mentors or as peers, mutual awareness and understanding of what leaders are aspiring to can be reached and, with this, the potential for mutual development.

Wenger's work highlights that, as individuals develop identities, so they affect the collectives in which they participate. Personal histories of participation are viewed as interlinked with the histories of participation of collectives. The potential for identity talk to have mutual benefit is something I did not explore in this study and yet it is

clear that talk between emergent leaders and whoever is seen as responsible for their development is an opportunity for such mutual learning. Because I did not examine the talk with others, nor the perspectives of others, I cannot comment on the ways emergent leaders were affecting those around them. This offers grounds for future research and I return to this in section 7.4.

There is more conceptual work to be done on the role of talk in identity development. This study has only begun to make a contribution to this by highlighting its importance in the context of the development of emergent school leaders.

7.1.3 How is 'emergence' experienced by 'emergent' leaders?

The first two research questions approached identity development from different perspectives; first, with a focus on the product or designated identity and second, exploring the process of learning which closes the gap between actual and designated identities.

When the notion of 'emergence' is applied to these discussions and the learning biographies on which the discussions are based (in chapter 5) the main finding is that there is no simple single trajectory of emergence. 'Becoming' as an emergent leader was experienced in different ways by different individuals.

Even those who appeared to show linear progression in roles, by 'emerging' from classroom teaching into eventual senior leadership roles as the NCLSCS leadership development framework would seem to predict (and an educational system suffering a crisis of throughput of senior leaders would hope), were doing so in complex ways. Amanda, Aimee and Phillip did go on to develop identities as senior leaders but they developed different:

- views of what they were trying to achieve as senior leaders

- beliefs and aspirations associated with what they were trying to achieve

- senses of belonging, explained by different relationships between the three modes of belonging

- degrees of reconciliation of this identity with other identities they held, such as 'as a teacher'

'Emergence' into developing identities as senior leaders did not seem to apply to two of the emergent leader's accounts (Jacky and Margaret). They appeared to develop an identity as a teacher and a leader who was 'a valued peer' but, again, showed differences in this view in the ways listed above. In Jacky's case, in the second part of the study, her professional identities (as a teacher and a leader) ceased to develop and she left teaching, although seemingly retaining a latent identity still as a school teacher and leader in a way that was particularly difficult to conceptualise.

These differences can be explained by emergent leaders' unique trajectories of participation and the way their modes of belonging developed and inter-related. This involved a differential use of the four forms of talk discussed above.

This study's conclusion that there is a plurality in understanding and experience of 'emergence' by 'emergent' leaders needs to be set against the more simplistic and linear view of leader 'emergence' these literatures promote.

This challenges the deterministic and linear biological metaphor of 'emergence' which appears to underlie the NCLSCS's framework (NCSL, 2001)(discussed in chapter 1). I hold up an alternative biological metaphor to see if it might be useful to apply to the emergence of leaders: the notion of pluripotency. There are cells in both plants and animals that have the potential to become a wide range of possible future cells. These are pluripotent cells. Plant cells are particularly good examples. You can

317

place a cutting from a plant into a suitable growing medium and, for example, new root cells will develop. Embryonic mammalian cells are also said to be pluripotent and have the potential, under different chemical conditions, to be encouraged to grow into a wide variety of adult cells. I believe the metaphor of pluripotency holds better than emergence in visualising the development of emergent leaders in English schools in which plural outcomes of leaders' identities needs to be accepted. However, even this metaphor is not entirely applicable. Pluripotency implies known future cells or organs in terms of their role and function. Frameworks for leadership development such as Burton and Brundrett (see Figure 3.1) and the NCLSCS's leadership framework imply that a set number of known leadership roles might exist as possibilities for leaders to develop into. This study has shown however that, at least in English schools, leadership roles are regularly being created and renegotiated. There is also flexibility within a school in how these roles are made sense of and practice developed by individuals. This study has also revealed that identity development, although affected by the opportunities afforded by particular roles to affect the modes of belonging, is not bound by them. Identities can develop prior to roles being taken on or despite roles being taken on. Additionally, informal and spontaneous dimensions to the emergence of leadership in schools (see section 2.2) need to be acknowledged. Leaders may be recognised as such without holding a formal role e.g. Margaret's leadership of ICT.

I conclude therefore that emergence is not a helpful concept to apply to the development of leaders. Uniqueness and the resultant plurality of identities that develop are not well represented by this notion. Leadership development is better conceptualised in terms of their identity development.

7.2 The significance of thinking about identity development for schools: Individual and organisational perspectives

I refer to the significance of this study for two potential school audiences:

1. Senior leaders, in particular those who support 'emergent' leaders (section 7.2.1)

2. Emergent leaders and teachers yet to take on a leadership role in school (section 7.2.2)

This leads me to conclude that there should be two 'agendas for talk' in schools, for 'self talk' and 'for talk led by others' (section 7.2.3)

7.2.1 How could schools think about emergent leaders' development?

One audience for the study is leaders in schools responsible for the development of more novice leaders. This assumes that there are senior leaders in schools with such a remit. In this study only two of the leaders talked about having a formal mentor-mentee relationship. It is possible that there are senior leaders who go about his kind of role more informally, as indicated for two further leaders in this study. Certainly emergent leaders reported benefit from such support, in particular the opportunities for identity talk this relationship affords. One of the emergent leaders' learning biographies demonstrates that this support (and the talk associated with it) can be built into performance management as a school system.

If a senior leader wants to support more novice leaders this study offers a more complex picture of leadership development than they might perceive from government, LA and NCLSCS literature and advice. There is little acceptance of the

complexity in the literature about leadership development and leadership careers, which rather accentuates linear progression in relation to roles. Schools are encouraged to identify teachers who might have the potential to develop as such leaders and to support leaders as they move into more senior roles, but without advice on how to support their development.

As with the work of Lumby and English (2009), this study questions whether today's school leaders are aware of the plurality of leadership which in fact exists in schools. Are leaders aware they can develop in unique ways or do they assume they should be following one general career pattern? Geoffrey seemed explicit that he was supporting Aimee through increasingly more senior roles and this was what Aimee was expecting due to her Fast-Track status. This was also the case for Simon with Amanda (in her second school). Becoming a headteacher was something Amanda did want to achieve, drawing on Simon's support. It also seemed that Phillip saw his career as progressing through to more senior roles but it was not possible to appreciate how the school saw his progression. The school seemed unlikely to be aware that Phillip may at any point leave teaching and leading in the UK to volunteer overseas. It would have been particularly interesting to find out what senior leaders in Margaret and Jacky's respective schools thought about their development as leaders, which seemed not closely related to role progression. Were the schools aware that these leaders were developing such personal identities in different ways from those imagined by any models of leadership development? Not only was their development not linear, but it was diverse. The career progression model implicit in the NCLSCS's leadership framework (NCSL, 2001) is not adequate to accommodate these individual expressions of leadership development and leaders such as Jacky and Margaret offer

accounts more akin to teacher leadership, personally practiced and hence spontaneous rather than planned.

Each leader's development needs to be thought about as different to one another and, as argued in section 7.1.3, not necessarily as 'emergence'. What schools need to think about is how these alternative types of identity development can be viewed and raises the question as to whether identities, such as those developed by Margaret and Jacky, are as valued as those who can be concluded to aspire to senior leadership?

One way to answer this question is to reflect on how the differences can be explained through unique trajectories of participation. Even two leaders, such as Jacky and Amanda, who worked in the same school did not come to make the same meaning about their experiences and developed as leaders differently. This was partly explained by their different personal histories and how this led them to interpret the school and their role in it differently. It was also a result of school circumstances. What exacerbates the possibilities for differences in views of leadership being developed is the lack of explicitness surrounding the expectations (and indeed possibilities) of *how* to enact leadership in English schools.

This finding implies that schools have an opportunity to think about how they view leadership. Schools could either explain what they believe effective leadership to be to emergent leaders, including how this is being developed in the practice of the school, or enter into discussions with emergent leaders about the possible models and forms of leadership they might develop. This depends whether a school advocates (or wants to advocate) a particular approach to leadership or whether it accepts (or wants to celebrate) a diversity of approaches. Being explicit about this would give individuals the chance to decide whether they can see a way to develop a sense of

belonging in these circumstances. This being explicit and sharing meaning therefore involves identity talk.

Emergent leaders' personal aspirations and the way these affect their views of leadership and their decision making remains 'hidden'. Even Phillip, who appeared to aspire to progress according to normative expectations of career progression holds hidden desires that might see him leaving UK teaching at any time.

The challenge to schools therefore is 'Are they prepared to get to know their emergent leaders?' This would require senior leaders to take an explicit role in involving emergent leaders in identity talk. This requires schools to first consider how they will value these personal aspirations and perceptions of working in the school against the school's agendas and needs. If there is scope for negotiation, such that individual's identity development can affect the collectives they belong to, then dialogue needs to be facilitated. This would require the talk to be recognised by both parties as potentially mutually beneficial.

7.2.2 Insights for aspirant leaders: 'Scripts' in the workplace?

The finding that emergent school leaders lack in support about how they might practice as a leader sees them as being resourceful in developing their own views of leadership. The way these five emergent leaders have gone about this offers valuable insights to others in schools; either those in similar situations or those teachers yet to take on a leadership role. By reading and 'hearing the voices' of these leaders' experiences of developing identities, others could reflect on their own biographies and current situations. This is why 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973: 1988; Hammersley, 1990; Lincoln and Guba, 1985) of the emergent leaders' experiences is important as a measure of quality and why a biographical approach to the case studies was taken.

This should allow transferability of the findings to other readers by allowing them to better identify with them (Oates, 1991).

Wenger envisaged learning in communities of practice in ways which envisages shared and agreed practices being developed. This study found little evidence from the emergent leaders' accounts of such 'enculturation'. It was not clear how 'expert' leadership was thought about in schools, and therefore the practice to which emergent leaders might aspire. Instead emergent leaders were found needing to 'read' the workplace; reading expectations and possibilities as a result of their observation and experiences through participation.

Lumby and English (2009) offered the idea that enculturation into leadership was analogous to enculturation into the theatre and that, if it was accepted that leadership might be like joining the cast of a play, three questions arise:

> First, as actors compete for a role and wish to achieve one which will put them centre stage or with a significant or interesting part, how do potential leaders attempt to secure their role? Second, a script must be written and learned. How do leaders arrive at and feel confident to deliver a script? Third, how is the performance itself developed to achieve approbation and ultimately acceptance from an audience or audiences? (Lumby and English, 2009, p104).

This study has provided five rich 'accounts' of how leaders came to take on their leadership roles and how they then went on to develop a 'script'[45] for this. There is little evidence as to how 'approbation' and 'acceptance' might be considered from a school's perspective (as this was not the focus of this study). Although emergent leaders like Aimee were interested in gaining feedback on their practice from others,

---

[45] This is a particular use of the term 'script' and not equivalent to cognitive psychologists' use of the term, which refers to those stored in the mind for use in appropriate circumstances (Rogoff, 1990). I use this term from a socio-cultural perspective to refer to how leaders think about enacting their practice in their particular settings.

the way they developed their scripts and felt confident in delivering them related to the decisions they made as they were evaluating their own practice against their developing 'images'.

It is difficult to say what others may conclude from these accounts. I envisage four possibilities. Firstly, it may be that they infer that there are no 'scripts' to learn and there is free rein to write one. Secondly, they might infer that there are sometimes two 'scripts' to learn, one in relation to being accountable to more senior leaders and one in relation to those you are responsible for, and care needs to be taken in writing these, taking account the expectations of others. This relates to the tensions reported in particular by Aimee and Amanda of feeling 'in the middle'. Thirdly, they might infer that there are in fact three 'scripts' to learn and/or write, one as teacher peer to other teachers in the school, one as leader with followers and one as leader with senior leaders. Fourthly, what about the other identities represented in these accounts, such as a musician or a teacher as opposed to as a leader? How do 'scripts' for these identities relate?

Some accounts have revealed synergy can be developed between identities. It may be that identities need to have been 'reconciled', such as Margaret appears to have done in her notion of herself 'as a learner', before a coherent 'script' can be written. What then about those involved in conflicts, such as when one identity becomes prioritised over another? Amanda's problem in reconciling her identity as a teacher, when expected by her headteacher to be a 'model teacher', and the identity she was more interested in developing as a senior leader exemplifies the difficulties she was having in writing 'scripts' about how to act. There is a role for identity talk in helping decide how to resolve these contradictions.

It is easy to appreciate from these emergent leaders' accounts the difficulties they face as they go about making sense of multiple identities as well as between modes of belonging. This study has highlighted the effortfulness emergent leaders are engaging in as part of identity development, as well as the lack of explicit support in doing so.

Aspiring leaders could benefit from reading such accounts before they take on additional responsibilities. As well as making them aware of their own multiple identities it might help contribute to deciding on their psychological 'readiness' (Gronn and Lacey, 2004) to take on such responsibilities. The next stage, if they are to consider what this means for them in their own contexts, is to use 'positioning space' (Gronn and Lacey, 2004) to prepare themselves. This could involve 'self talk' or, ideally, also involve senior leaders in school.

7.2.3 Towards an agenda for talk

The previous sections have highlighted some of the issues those termed 'emergent leaders' face in developing as leaders in English schools. This may make the learning biographies offered in this thesis a daunting read for aspiring emergent leaders in schools, in highlighting the effort of such identity development and how they will be involved in 'reading' their workplace. However, they might also be liberating to find that there is no need to *learn* a 'script' when taking on any particular leadership role, and that leaders can *write* their own.

This study has highlighted that the way forward in terms both of support for and individual agency by leaders is through the explicit use of identity talk. One way of thinking about this is to explore the possible relationships between individual leaders and the school: the 'actors' and the 'play' (Lumby and English, 2009). Both senior leaders and the 'emergent' leaders have a role in this.

A starting point for talk between senior leaders and 'emergent' leaders might be to talk about why any particular role has been created and how it fits in with the school's organisation and strategic thinking. This can be equated to when actors are given roles in a play and it is explained how their role fits in with the overall structure and storyline. What 'emergent' leaders then need to know is how much freedom they have to develop their leadership in their role. In this study it was found that there was very little clarity and therefore a lot of apparent freedom. Constraints were associated with particular school settings and systems and these also needed to be 'read'. A senior leader would be in a position to help an 'emergent' leader interpret the workplace, offering their perspective.

If senior school leaders talk to 'emergent' leaders as I did, they should expect to find them trying to 'write' and enact 'scripts' for multiple identities simultaneously. These can be thought about as being developed through Wenger's three modes of belonging. An awareness of these dimensions to identity development might help senior leaders better support the learning and therefore development of the 'emergent' leaders. It would involve them more actively in the 'emergent' leaders' 'enculturation'. This would be a mechanism not only to help 'emergent' leaders to become more self-aware and forward thinking but, through senior leaders' gaining a greater understanding of the emergent leaders, to develop the school itself. This would be equivalent to actors developing a play together, rather than just adapting lines for their particular part. This would be one response to MacBeath's challenge (2006) presented in section 2.2 that 'successful' leaders might help make a 'successful' school.

The more self aware emergent leaders are of:

- who they identify with,

- what they value and aspire to,

- who they feel accountable to and

- how they express their identities,

the more articulate they will be in discussion with others, such as senior leaders. They will need to have engaged in 'self talk' in order to be articulate in these ways and so some of the responsibility for their development as leaders rests with them as individuals.

I therefore propose two agendas for identity talk in schools – one *for* emergent leaders and one *with* emergent leaders (Table 7.1).

1. For emergent leaders the questions posed aim to support their identity development and help them take responsibility for their own learning.

2. A second agenda is proposed for others to frame discussions with emergent leaders. To further the possibilities of mutual benefit, such talk should be led by senior leaders in the emergent leaders' school. However this agenda would also hold for external 'others' such as researchers (as in this study) or mentors associated with leadership programmes.

Table 7.1 An agenda for 'self talk', complemented by an agenda for talk led by others

	For 'self talk'	**For talk led by others**
The agenda	Who am I inspired by and why? What am I trying to achieve? What do I think expectations of me are? Do I recognise tensions between expectations and aspirations? How do I believe others see me? Do I think there is any tension between what I want and what others think about me? How can I go about resolving these tensions? What are my options? What are the constraints and opportunities to becoming who I want to become?	What do you believe you are trying to achieve as a teacher and a leader? How have these beliefs been developed, for example can you refer to role models and experiences such as courses or situations which have influenced you? Who do you see yourself as currently learning from and with? Who do you not want to/want to be seen as and why? What do you believe expectations are of you? *Note to other: Be prepared to share your thoughts on this* Do these expectations cause tensions with what you aspire towards? Can you identify constraints and opportunities that relate to who you want to become? What do you think can be done to resolve these issues? *Note to other: Be prepared to talk about the possibilities in school and beyond for leadership development.*
Consider-ations about such talk	When should I engage in such 'self talk'? How often? Does it matter where I talk in this way? Do I need to collect any evidence to help answer any of these questions?	Is your relationship with the emergent leader good enough to have this kind of personal discussion? How will you know? Will you be able to ensure that this discussion will not be used judgmentally and reassure the emergent leader? When, how often and where could these kinds of discussion take place? How will you know that these discussions have been of benefit?

This study has not been able to consider how these agendas might be used in practice, and I return to this in section 7.4.

7.3 Conceptual and methodological implications of the study for researchers

In section 7.3.1 I reflect on how well the evidence from this study supports the conceptual framework developed from the work of Wenger and Sfard and Prusak.

In section 7.3.2 I identify some puzzles relating to the use of the framework.

In section 7.3.3 I reflect on the study methodologically to draw out recommendations for other researchers interested in the approaches used.

7.3.1 Thinking and talking about social participation reveals identity development

The generation of the learning biographies presented as chapter 5 were the result of applying a combination of Wenger's conceptualisation of identity development as modes of belonging, taken together with ideas from Sfard and Prusak to the accounts of leaders (see Figure 6.4). This conceptualisation of identity development allowed firstly, the identification of different aspects to a leaders' designated identity, secondly, the charting of their development and thirdly, explanations to be offered through how leaders made sense of their three modes of belonging.

I believe it was justifiable to focus on the perspective of individual leaders, to complement work seeking to understand participation at the level of collectives (Wenger, 1998). My work took a 'worm's eye' rather than this 'bird's eye' approach, so allowing me to 'get a purchase on what individuals are bringing to these interactions and how they adapt as they engage in practices' (Edwards, 2005, p58). This allowed me to find out *how* individuals went about what Edwards *et al* (2002)

termed 'decoding' the world and, hence, redress the lack of voice in socio-cultural studies (Edwards, 2005).

Examining the accounts of emergent leaders' learning as through the three modes of belonging was helpful in unpicking the dimensions of identity development. The focus on the role of talk allowed insights into the mechanisms of this 'decoding'. As well as highlighting the under-use of talk in schools, it suggests its potential to be developed in schools both to encourage agency in and offer support to the development of leaders.

How they went about these interpretations raised three findings not easily accommodated in the conceptual framework, but noted in other literature presented in earlier chapters.

7.3.2 Puzzles in applying the conceptual framework

The three puzzles arising were:

Firstly, that communities of practice were not evident, and yet were thought fundamental to Wenger's work,

Secondly, that Wenger's work does not convey the sense of agency in individual identity development that I noted in the emergent leaders' accounts,

Thirdly, that courses were playing a role in the identity development of leaders, but were not accommodated in either Wenger's or Sfard and Prusak's work.

1. How to think about 'belonging' if not to communities of practice?

Early on in the study I tried to illuminate who the participant leaders felt themselves to be 'becoming' in terms of with whom they identified and to what they felt membership of (Fox, 2008); whether as leaders/managers or teachers. Identity

development was more complex and diverse than movement from the periphery to the centre of participation in bounded communities of practice and, without such communities, other trajectories suggested in Wenger's work could not be revealed (Wenger, 1998).

It was usually possible to reveal who leaders were identifying with, but this would differ depending on which learning episode the emergent leaders were discussing. Sometimes emergent leaders referred to identifying with specific aspects of a person's practice, rather than a person's practice in its entirety (section 6.2.2). Sometimes it appeared that emergent leaders were demonstrating a sense of belonging to the profession as a whole, committing to being 'a teacher' or 'a leader', whilst at other times a sense of belonging to the school or a particular group of people. Sometimes they experienced a conflict in their senses of belonging. At times it was less tangible. Sometimes the emergent leaders were not referring to particular people around them but the ideas of people they had read about or a notion of like-minded others. This was true for Aimee reading about distributed leadership on a course and deciding to try to enact this view in her leadership practice. Phillip explained that he identified with other practitioners who shared the view that children cannot be categorised into 'gifted and talented' but could not cite anyone in particular.

Although trajectories of participation could be charted (as represented in Figure 6.3) it was not easy to assume that there was a particular sense of 'belonging' associated with any one identity. This might be assumed if each identity related to a bounded and identifiable community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Family influences were very important to some leaders, in helping leaders decide what they believed in and aspired to, yet neither partners nor parents could be thought about as part of a community of practice. Amanda regularly turned to people outside of education to find alternative

perspectives to her experiences and gather ideas. These people she identified with were people similarly engaged in improving their organisations, but were not a community of practice.

Exploring leaders' trajectories of participation revealed different connections between an individual's multiple identities. This further complicated how 'belonging' 'as a leader' could be thought about, when developing 'as a leader' was multifaceted.

2. *How to think about agency and identity development?*

I have discussed how emergent leaders were not passive in their identity development. They did not learn merely by participating in practice with more experienced colleagues. Identity development was active and differences in agency have been illustrated in chapter 6, through differences in how 'self talk' was used in relation to talk with others as well as through their conscious principled action aimed at moving a leader towards their designated identity. Agency was not covered in Lave and Wenger's (1991) original model of apprenticeship.

Wenger, however, has developed his conceptual thinking about identity development (as presented in chapter 3) during the time of my research and this is helpful in reflecting on how he now sees agency as being demonstrated. Wenger presents the idea that individuals choose to 'express' their identities in different ways and at different times (Wenger, 2010). This refers back to his recent ideas of individuals choosing the trajectories that make 'most sense' to them (Wenger, 2009). Accommodating choice seems necessary to help explain how emergent leaders deal with experiences of tension between different expectations by others and when making judgments as to how to act. For example when Aimee was deciding how to respond to colleagues during the timetabling process, she was torn between

expressing an identity as a line manager, as someone who is empathetic and determined to help those in her Faculty, and expressing an identity as a line manager, who is able to be assertive, make decisions and meet the needs of the person timetabling. She described being worried about how two different groups of people would think of her. By thinking about Aimee as expressing two aspects to her identity as a line manager it can be seen how individuals have agency to decide which aspects of their identity to express and which to set aside. This was not considered explicitly in this study.

The evaluations individuals make about 'expressing' their identities Wenger explains through a second development of his thinking about identity development, in terms of the 'accountability' an individual feels. He describes two forms of accountability - vertical and horizontal:

> *Vertical accountability*, associated with traditional hierarchies, decisional authority, the management of resources, bureaucracies, policies and regulations, accounting, prescriptions, and audit inspections.

> *Horizontal accountability*, associated with engagement in joint activities, negotiation of mutual relevance, standards of practice, peer recognition, identity and reputation, and commitment to collective learning (Wenger, 2010, p195).

Aimee's tension can therefore be explained in terms of 'vertical' accountability issues. This relates to perceptions reported by the emergent' leaders of being 'in the middle' (Earley, 1990; Wise, 2001). Emergent leaders such as Jacky and Margaret, however, demonstrate predominantly 'horizontal' accountability - to teams and views of community - and this view helps explain the loyalty they report to these groups. Wenger's views do not offer any further conceptual help in explaining how individuals come to decisions as a result of recognising and dealing with such

accountability. I have found this is likely to involve talk. By discussing concrete examples of practice it was possible to reveal such dilemmas and shed light on the agency 'emergent leaders' were demonstrating in trying to resolve these.

3. How can the role of courses on identity development be considered conceptually?

When considering the influences of others on an emergent leader's identity development it was sometimes difficult to decide whether the way others were affecting them was through the mode of imagination, alignment or engagement. Learning from courses caused a particular problem. Courses are not mentioned in either Wenger's or Sfard and Prusak's (2005) work and yet were evidently important to these leaders' identity development. As discussed (section 6.2.2) all leaders did refer to learning from courses, whether from the substantive elements, tasks or meeting with other leaders on these courses.

Courses were a deliberate feature of this study because my selection of participant leaders was through their nomination for the LftM leadership development programme to ensure that I included leaders who were being identified at this level of the NCLSCS's framework as 'emergent.'

In one sense, going on a course could be considered learning related to the mode of engagement, because it involved interacting with others, participating in the course and possibly developing relationships if the course was not a one-off event. Going on a course was not, however, engagement *with* leadership, as Wenger envisaged, but rather *about* leadership. In another sense, leaders spoke about courses as related to the mode of alignment because they often used the course to reflect on their perceptions of compliance, coordinated enterprise, styles and discourses in their school. They

334

debated these perceptions and experiences with other leaders on the courses trying to gain a new understanding. In a third sense, what leaders were learning on these courses was related to their mode of imagination, offering them theories and ideas about what to aspire to. How to think about their influence on identity development was therefore complex and not easy to assign to the conceptual framework as it currently stands.

As discussed in section 7.2, none of the emergent leaders reported that schools were asking them to discuss what they were gaining from these courses and how they were integrating ideas into their further practice. This is a situation I have confirmed in previous work looking at the way leaders learn from attending day events (Fox and McCormick, 2009). This has implications for schools. If they are to 'grow their own leaders', as is being suggested by the NCLSCS and the UK government (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2005: Barnes, 2009), then conceptually schools need to find a way of understanding the scope and nature of an emergent leaders' learning. Finding out what sense individual leaders have made of engaging with courses and how they plan to use these understandings could be a valuable focus for identity talk with them.

7.3.3 Biographical work with emergent leaders: Empirical reflections

I now reflect on the implications for researchers of the methodological approach taken to studying the learning of 'emergent' leaders, focusing on its biographical approach. I start by reflecting on how well this study met my aims for it in terms of researcher-participant relationships, highlighting key points I feel are important for other researchers wanting to undertake similar research. I then reflect on the quality issues relating to generating biographical accounts of learning.

1. Reflecting on the researcher-participant relationships

I believe that I was able to develop productive researcher-participant relationships with all five of the emergent leaders completing the study and that this was important to the quality of the evidence base for the study. However I highlight three issues relating to these relationships and discuss each in turn:

Firstly, co-construction of accounts was not feasible.

Secondly, being clear about the ethical underpinnings of the study was important in ensuring the quality of the accounts generated.

Thirdly, I could not expect to reveal all of a respondent's innermost thoughts and feelings about themselves as an 'outsider' researcher, during conversations constrained by time and the conventions of the research.

In aiming for co-construction of biographical accounts I wanted to give a 'voice' to emergent leaders, to 'hear' what they said about their experiences and to allow them to 'speak'. This was an overly simplistic expectation and, in fact, I found participant leaders too busy to engage in the co-construction of their accounts at the stage of generating biographical outputs as I had envisaged. They did not have the incentives that I did in my aspiration to complete a doctoral study and were instead motivated by different agendas. Unless researchers can find other ways to spend time with a leader, such as part of allocated and agreed professional development time, or agree aspiring to products that are mutually desired I think other researchers would find the same situation.

I was able to co-construct the data as part of the 'conversations' or 'dialogue' which made up the interviews. I accept that I was not fully able to 'search for areas of shared interest which can be built into the research process', as I intended (see Appendix A).

I also accept that the interview schedules were not co-constructed with the participants. The interviews were, however, semi-structured and developed as conversations. This did allow threads of thought to be followed and questions to be raised by leaders, but, again, I accept that the line of questioning was led by me. If researchers want to achieve a greater level of co-construction to the generation of biographical accounts I believe much greater time needs to be devoted to planning the study before data begins to be collected. This would ideally need to involve a discussion of purposes and a sharing of the conceptual territory of the study. I did not have this time as I wished the study to be longitudinal and it was important I began to collect data as soon as practicable to fit in with the time limitations of a PhD.

Trusting and respectful relationship were key to ensuring the accounts generated were of quality and time was an important factor in achieving this, again explaining my desire to begin the interviews as soon as possible. Although it was important to the quality of the data that forms the basis of the study to develop such relationships as soon as possible, trust and the open-ness that is associated with trust, was unrealistic to assume from the outset. The iterative research design was therefore important to allow opportunities to revisit and develop accounts with participants as the relationships developed. I would advocate this to other researchers wanting to generate biographical accounts. It allowed opportunities to develop a shared understanding of the substantive content of the study in an ongoing way, by linking interviews through the confirmation of data collected and discussions of the way data was being interpreted.

I believed it was important to think carefully and be very explicit about researcher and participant rights and responsibilities (see Appendix A) and plan to set up conditions conducive to a productive relationships from the outset. That the leaders said that they

valued these opportunities to talk implies that these conditions were achieved and was I believe why, with each request for further involvement, they continued to engage willingly and actively in all tasks. I believe it was important that I continued to ask for their consent every time a task was requested of them, in addition to the two formal requests for consent at the start of each phase of the study.

The relationship-building was important ethically to create a safe and supportive research environment. Some biographical researchers call this a 'relational space' (e.g. Stanley, 1992). This environment allowed the leaders to be prepared to disclose personal information and to return to or explore this in greater depth on subsequent occasions. Having made efforts to create this space, it was then important to accept what participants wanted to share and what they chose not to. No doubt participants did not share with me all of their dreams and aspirations. I believe however being an outsider-researcher had benefits in this regard. Researchers should consider their role in relation to participants and consider if there are any circumstances which might affect what a participant might choose to report (or not). Researchers who are already known to the participants may not need to spend so long in building up a productive relationship but they must also be aware that they bring the participant's view of that relationship to the interview situations and the stories they are prepared to tell. Tutors on leadership development courses, e.g. Aimee's Fast-Track tutor, might offer the benefits of being an outsider researcher without having the direct interests of the school in mind and yet having a dual role which would facilitate relationship building. It is particularly important that participants in this kind of research don't feel they will be judged and this might complicate the relationship of course tutors on some accredited courses. In particular, if this sort of research is to be conducted in schools

by senior leaders the issue of judgment needs to be clarified in advance or participants will only express partial and tailored 'stories' of identity development.

2. *Reflecting on the quality of generating biographical accounts about learning*

I now reflect on the quality of what was actually collected in the accounts to recognise qualifications to be considered when interpreting the data presented earlier.

Phase one of the study and its open-ended methods of data collection and analysis increased my confidence in preparing for phase two when interview questions and tasks focused explicitly on learning. Leaders were able to respond to questions and tasks in this phase. Discussing the examples of learning they brought to interviews around various dimensions of learning did generate rich data about learning in practice. I believed this was a necessary approach to take, given the under-conceptualisation about learning in the leadership literature, and I would advocate it to qualitative researchers wanting to build in credibility through developing such shared understandings of the conceptual territory of a study

However the discussions were not as full and as rich as the term 'exploration' implies. Our discussions were limited by:

- the time to meet,

- the lack of any shared reading which saw me needing to interpret my developing understandings of the conceptual territory rather than co-exploring the ideas,

- the ongoing development of research questions which, if clarified earlier, could have directed data collection tools more closely to the way they were finally formulated,

- the ongoing development of analytic thinking and tools which resulted in 'analytic dead-ends' (section 4.9) being explored with leaders,

- the majority of this analytic development, because it relied on immersion in the data and was time-consuming, continuing long after the leaders had been released from the study.

These limitations led to data being collected and analyses discussed that were not useful to the final research focus as well as missed opportunities.

I accept these limitations affected the discussions which are the basis to the accounts generated. I believe that they were unavoidable, however, in an interpretative study of humans by humans in a necessarily time-constrained study.

7.4 What next? Implications for further research and dissemination

I believe future research, which could build on this study, centres around better understandings of the identity talk of and between school leaders (section 7.4.1) and a focus on women (and/or parents) in leadership (section 7.4.2). I also outline how, to meet this study's aims to give 'voice' to emergent leaders, I commit to disseminate this research to the audiences identified earlier (section 7.4.3).

7.4.1 Further research into the role of identity talk in leader identity development

This study was not initially explicitly designed to focus on the role of talk in leadership identity development yet it can conclude that talk is underused but is of great significance to identity development. Further study of the nature and use of talk is justified.

To study reflective 'self talk' will involve the development of data collection methods. A starting point could be developing ideas from Gronn and Lacey's (2004) study of leaders keeping journals. These could be web-logs, audio diaries or paper-based journals. This would be a demanding request of a leader as regular and thoughtful entries would be needed to explore the talk's contribution to identity development. The brief for such a task would need to be clarified and possible benefits explored with leaders before they were asked to undertake such a task. The agenda for talk (Table 7.1) offers an outline of what might be asked of leaders. Ethically, and in terms of credibility, it would also be important for leaders to know who would see these journals because this would affect what they were prepared to articulate there. Some questions arise: Would the leader be considering particular episodes, as in my study, and, if so, on what basis would these be selected or, is it possible to reflect on a whole day and, if so, on what basis would days be sampled? I believe longer than a day would not generate credible accounts, given the number of interactions a leader makes in any one day. To consider issues of dependability it would be important to decide whether an open-ended response to episodes (or the day) would be expected or whether guidance would be given on content. I suggest that either, as in this study, the diary be used with researchers to build up a shared understanding of the conceptual territory or a thorough exploration of the conceptual

framework made with leaders <u>before</u> they undertake this kind of task. Thought would have to be given to how analysis would be undertaken. I suggest that Wenger's model of three modes of belonging is a possible starting point, although 'belonging' 'to what' is still likely to be difficult to work with. Perhaps leaders could be asked to locate different identities early on in the research, rather than as I did retrospectively. I anticipate, however, that, based on the findings of my study, leaders would not find it easy to separate diary entries for different identities. Because of the synergies found, as well as tensions between identities, it would not be helpful to limit the diaries to considering only the leader's perceived identity as a leader. I found it helpful to work with learning 'as a teacher' and 'as a leader' as this fits in with roles held. However I have outlined that it is important that whoever locates these identities recognises that they are not linked simplistically to holding particular roles.

A study of the nature or value of talk through journal use need not be limited to emergent leaders. It would be equally applicable to teachers who do not yet formally hold leadership responsibilities or more senior leaders. It could be justified by the likely benefits to participants.

One particular application of this kind of study could be in relation to exploring how leaders learn from courses, and what role these play in identity development. Before this, conceptual work is needed, as I have found that the conceptual framework used in this study does not adequately deal with learning in this context. This would need to explore both 'self talk' and talk with others.

Studies are also needed about the nature and scope of this talk, with others (in school or on courses) to find out what ideas are being shared, with whom, as well as the extent of any debate or negotiation of meaning. Again new data collection methods would need to be developed. This would pose a challenge as this talk is often

unplanned and would require both parties to agree to it. The challenges are therefore both practical and ethical.

The most productive area of further study to me would be, however, to become involved in some development and research work in schools which involves not outside researchers, like my study, nor focuses only on 'self talk', as suggested above, but aims to develop and study the talk senior leaders are involved in supporting 'emergent', and also aspirant leaders.

Ideally this would advocate developing 'leaders as researchers' in some form of action research study with the aim of improving the support for leadership development support in schools. If senior leaders, rather than external researchers, were to take a lead in this future research further ethical issues might be expected to arise. Would individual leaders feel so able and willing to reveal their perceptions to senior school leaders? How judged would they feel if this researcher was also a line manager with responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating their work on behalf of the school? How judged would they feel if they perceived such a leader is involved in potentially 'talent spotting' or making judgments about suitability for further responsibility? In these situations it would be expected that identities would be expressed in ways guided by perceptions of these other agendas.

I suggest, to alleviate some of these concerns, development work would need to precede any such research. Issues surrounding the school's view of leadership, whether there was a 'school view' and views of leadership development would need to be aired. One possibility for a school to take on such research would be to consider centring the research cycle around the potential for performance management systems as a location for mentor-mentee relationships to develop and so opportunities for

productive identity talk. To reiterate points made earlier non-judgmental spaces with a productive relationship between both parties would be needed.

Any research of the significance of these opportunities for identity talk would need to follow such conditions being negotiated with senior leaders and 'so-called' emergent leaders alike.

7.4.2 Career changers and career breaks: Women and leadership development

One particular area of interest raised by my study has been the identity development of women in teaching (and school leadership). I would like to widen the biographical work undertaken in this study to cover more women at different stages of their time in teaching. Margaret and Jacky offer accounts in which I could find both similarities and differences. How do other women make sense of their professional and family identities? How typical are these two leaders' 'stories' and what can be learnt from them that would be useful to other women in, or considering, teaching? The accounts of 'women as mothers' perhaps should also be considered within the wider context of 'individuals as parents' to consider which experiences are associated with gender and which with parents when viewed across both sexes. I did not have any participant leaders in this study who were both male and parents.

7.4.3 A commitment to dissemination

In section 4.3.2 four potential audiences for this thesis were identified: other emergent leaders, teachers yet to take on a leadership role in school, those who support emergent leaders either in or beyond school and other researchers interested in the learning of school leaders. My findings have led me to be most motivated, in terms of maximising the study's consequential ethical validity, to raise awareness of the

importance of identity talk in schools. This is tied in with my aspiration, now more fully supported by conversing with contemporary school leaders, to ensure that the experiences of emergent leaders in schools are heard and the implications discussed. To do this requires schools to be aware of the findings of this research. This commitment relates to reaching the first three audiences identified earlier.

I commit to finding ways to disseminate the findings of this study in ways that can reach those in schools. This may be as a book for practitioners and/or offering workshops to practitioner audiences. I would like to ensure the form of output reaches senior leaders, other emergent leaders and teachers. Two senior leaders who are looking at how to support leadership development in their schools have expressed the wish to incorporate case study accounts from this study into in-house leadership development courses to stimulate debate about leadership development.

To satisfy the fourth audience I assert my commitment, as an academic researcher interested in making the voices of these leaders heard, to publish academically for example in journals and at further conferences. As a result of the study I also identify a fifth audience - Policy makers - who I believe should also be interested to hear of the experiences of school leaders in contemporary English schools.

7.4.4 Alternative interpretative frameworks to apply to the data sets

This thesis has put to work a particular conceptual framework to explore the learning of school leaders as their identity development (Wenger's view of learning through participation, taken together with Sfard and Prusak's view of identity development as through talk). This has revealed both the framework's utility as well as remaining puzzles. With reference back to section 1.3, I accept that to employ this framework required rejecting others. These, by offering different perspectives, could be expected

to offer different insights into the learning and identity development of these school leaders.

In particular it might be fruitful to subject the data collected to re-analysis. I consider there to be three possibilities. The first is to consider cultural, historical activity theory, as noted in section 1.3 (e.g. Edwards, 2009; Engeström and Kerosuo, 2007). The second are the ideas of social psychologists referred to in section 3.3.1, in particular footnote 12, (e.g. Dreier, 1999; 2003); Salling Olesen, 2001; 2007; Bloomer and Hodkinson, 2000; Hodkinson and Bloomer, 2002). The third potentially useful perspective is returning to the ideas of how planned or spontaneous leadership was, highlighted at several points of the thesis. The notion of distributed leadership could prove a useful lens to re-examine the leaders' perceptions of their experiences, with particular reference to the findings of Bennett and colleagues' extensive literature review of distributed leadership completed for the NCLSCS (Bennett *et al*, 2003).

References

Adey, K. (2000). Professional development priorities: the views of middle managers in secondary schools. *Educational Management and Administration, 28*(4), 419-431.

Alsup, J. (2006). *Teacher identity discourses: negotiating personal and professional spaces*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.

Amin, A., & Roberts, J. (2008). Knowing in action: Beyond communities of practice. *Research Policy, 37*(2), 353-369.

Anderson, J. R., Reder, L. M., & Simon, H. A. (1997). Situative versus cognitive perspectives: Form versus substance. *Educational Researcher, 26*(1), 18-21.

Anderson, J. R., Greeno, J. G., Reder, L. M., & Simon, H. A. (2000). Perspectives on learning, thinking and activity. *Educational Researcher, 29*(4), 11-13.

Antonacopoulou, E. P., & Bento, R. F. (2004). Methods of 'learning leadership': taught and experiential. In J. Storey (Ed.), *Leadership in organizations: current issues and key trends*. London: Routledge.

Bainbridge, A. (2010). *Prequels and sequels: The life story and professional narratives of new educational professionals*. Paper presented at the ESREA Biography and Life History network annual conference, March, 2010, University of Vaxjo and Kalmar, Sweden.

Baines, E., Blatchford, P., & Chowne, A. (2007). Improving the effectiveness of collaborative group work in primary schools: effects on science attainment. *British Educational Research Journal, 33*(5), 663-680.

Ball, S. J., & Goodson, I. F. (1985). *Teachers' Lives and Careers*. London: Falmer.

Banks, F., Leach, J., & Moon, B. (1999). New understanding of teachers' pedagogic understanding. In J. Leach & B. Moon (Eds.), *Learners and Pedagogy* (pp. 89-110). London: Paul Chapman.

Barker, D., Carter, K., Coles, M., Ireson, J., Martin, A., Southworth, G.& Williams, C. (2002). *Distributed Leadership in Discussion: Perspectives from the NCLSCS for School Leadership*. Paper presented at the BELMAS International Conference, Aston University, UK, September 2002. Available from: http://networkedlearning.ncsl.org.uk/knowledge-base/conference-papers/belmas02-distributed-leadership-in-discussion.doc. (last retrieved 27 July 2011)

Barnes, I. (2009). *Identify and grow your own leaders: A practical guide and case studies*. Nottingham: NCSL.

Bell, D. B. (1996). *Subject specialist, coordinator, leader or manager?* Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association annual conference, Lancaster University, UK, September 1996.

Bennett, N., Newton, W., Wise, C., Woods, P. A., & Economou, A. (2003). *Role and purpose of middle leaders in schools*. (Report prepared for the NCSL). Milton

Keynes: Centre for Educational Policy and Management, The Open University for the National College for School Leadership.

Bennett, N., Wise, C., Woods, P. A., & Harvey, J. A. (2003). *Distributed Leadership: A Review of Literature*. (Report prepared for the NCSL). Milton Keynes: Centre for Educational Policy and Management, The Open University for the National College for School Leadership.

Bennis, W. (1997). *Organizing Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration*. London: Nicholas Brealey.

Berk, L. (1980). Education in lives: Biographic narrative in the study of educational outcomes. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 2*(2), 88-155.

Biesta, G. (2008). Learning Lives: learning, identity and agency in the life course. Retrieved September 2009, from http://www.learninglives.org/

Biesta, G., Hodkinson, P., & Goodson, I. (2004). *Combining life history and life-course approaches in researching lifelong learning: some methodological observations from the 'Learning lives' project*. Paper presented at the Teaching and Learning Research Programme annual conference. Retrieved from: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educal/documents/00003908.htm (May 2008) no longer available from this website.

Billett, S. (2001). Learning through work: workplace affordances and individual engagement. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 13*(5), 209-214.

Billett, S. (2008). Learning throughout working life: a relational interdependency between personal and social agency. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 56*(1), 39-58.

Bloomer, M., & Hodkinson, P. (2000). Learning careers: Continuity and change in young people's dispositions to learning. *British Educational Research Journal, 26*(5), 583-597.

Boeije, H. (2010). *Analysis in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1982). *Qualitative Research for Education: Introduction to Theory and Methods* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bolam, R. (2004). Reflections on the NCSL from a historical perspective. *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership, 32*(3), 251-267.

Borko, H., & Putnam, R. T. (1995). Expanding a teacher's knowledge base: a cognitive psychological perspective on professional development. In T. R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional Development in Education; New Paradigms and Practices* (pp. pp. 35-65). New York: Teachers' College Press.

Bowen, C., & Bateson, D. (2009, Last updated 26/03/2009). Everyone a leader. *School Leaders report*. Nottingham: NCSL.

British Educational Research Association (BERA). (2004). *Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. Nottingham: British Educational Research Association.

Brown, M., Boyle, B., & Boyle, T. (2000). The shared management role of the head of Department in English secondary schools. *Research in Education, 63*, 33-47.

Brown, J. S., Collins, A., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. *Educational Researcher, 18*(1), 32-42.

Burgess, R. G. (1982). Keeping a research journal. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 2*(1), 75-83.

Burton, N., & Brundrett, M. (2005). *Leading the curriculum in the primary school*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Bush, T. (2003). *Theories of educational leadership and management* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Bush, T. (2008). *Leadership and Management Development in Education*. London: Sage.

Busher, H., & Harris, A. (1999). Leadership of School Subject Areas: tensions and dimensions of managing in the middle. *School Leadership and Management, 19*(3), 305-317.

Caldwell, B. (1992). The principal as leader of the self-managing school in Australia. *Journal of Educational Administration, 30*(3), 6-19.

Cannata, M. A. (2009). *Mid-career entrants and the Teacher Labor Market*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual conference, San Francisco, CA, April 2009.

Carey, J. (2009). *School Self-Evaluation – what's in it for middle leaders? A Focus upon the Processes and Impacts of School Self-Evaluation - the Perspectives of Middle Leadership*. Unpublished MEd, University of Cambridge, Cambridge.

Chapman, C., Ainscow, M., Bragg, J., Gunter, H., Hull, J., Mongon, D., Miuijs, D., West, M. (2009). *Emerging patterns of school leadership: Current practice and future directions*. Nottingham: NCSL.

Chapman Hoult, E. (2010). *Recognizing the sham: authority moves, truth claims and the fiction of academic writing*. Paper presented at the ESREA Biographical and life history network annual conference, March, 2010, University of Vaxjo and Kalmar, Sweden.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education* (5th ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.

Collarbone, P. & Southworth, G. (2009). *Learning to Lead: NCSL's strategy for leadership learning*. Nottingham: NCSL.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 19*(5), 2-14.

Cornelissen, J., Delios, A., & Floyd, S. W. (2006). Limits to communities of practice. *Journal of Management Studies, 43*(3), 621-622.

Crainer, S. & Dearlove, D. (2008). *The future of leaders.* Nottingham: N.C.S.L.

Crawford, M. (2009). *Getting to the heart of leadership: emotion and educational leadership.* London: Sage.

Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology (CREET) (2006). *Online Evaluation and Impact Study ITT055.* Milton Keynes: Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology, Open University.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundation of Social Research.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Crowther, F., Kaagan, S., Ferguson, M., & Hann, L. (2002). *Developing Teacher leaders: How teacher leadership enhances school success.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Day, C., Stobart, G., Sammons, P., Kington, A., Gu, Q., Smees, R., Mujtaba, T. (2006). *Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effectiveness* (No. RR743). London: DFES.

Day, C. & Gu, Q. (2007). Variations in the conditions for teachers' professional learning and development: sustaining commitment and effectiveness over a career. *Oxford Review of Education, 33*(4), 423-443.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Stobart, G., Kington, A., & Gu, Q. (2007). *Teachers matter: connecting lives, work and effectiveness.* Maidenhead: Open University Press - McGraw-Hill education.

Day, C., Sammons, P., & Gu, Q. (2008). Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies in Research on Teachers' Lives, Work, and Effectiveness: From Integration to Synergy. *Educational Researcher, 37*(6), 330-342.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Hopkins, D., Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Gu, Q., Brown, E. (2010). *Ten strong claims about successful school leadership.* Nottingham: NCLSCS.

Denscombe, M. (2007). *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects* (3rd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Denscombe, M. (2010). *Ground Rules for Social Research: Guidelines for good practice.* (2nd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Denzin, N. K. (2001). *Interpretive interactionism.* (2nd edition ed. Vol. 16). Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications Inc.

Department for Education and Schools (DFES). (2000). *Good practice guidelines for learning mentors. Available from:*

http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&Page Mode=publications&ProductId=LEARNINGMENTORS& (last accessed 30 May 2010).

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). (2010). Schools Minister takes action to prepare young people for employment. *DCSF News* (4 March 2010), retrieved from: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2010_0056 (last accessed 30 May 2010).

Dreier, O. (1999). Personal trajectories of participation across contexts of social practice. *Outlines: Crtitical practice studies, 1*(5-32).

Dreier, O. (2003). Learning in personal trajectories of participation. In N. Stephenspn, H. L. Radtke & R. J. Stam (Eds.), *Theoretical Psychology*. Concord, Canada: Captus University Publications.

Earley, P. (1990). Piggy in the Middle: Middle Management in Education. *Education, 176*(10), 192-193.

Earley, P., Weindling, D., Bubb, S., & Glenn, M. (2009). Future leaders: the way forward? *School Leadership and Management, 29*(3), 295-306.

Edwards, A. (2005). Let's get beyond community and practice: the many meanings of learning by participating. *The Curriculum Journal, 16*(1), 49-65.

Edwards, A. (2009) Agency and Activity Theory: from the systemic to the relational, pp. 197-211 in A Sannino, H Daniels, and K. Guttierez (Eds.) *Learning and Expanding with Activity Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, A., Gilroy, P., & Hartley, D. (2002). *Rethinking teacher education: collaborative responses to uncertainty*. London: Routledge.

Elbaz, F. C. (1983). *Teacher thinking: a study of practical knowledge*. London: Croom Helm.

Engeström, Y. & Kerosuo, H. (2007). Editorial: From workplace learning to organisational learning and back: the contribution of activity theory. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 19*(6), 336-342.

Eraut, M. (1994). Headteachers learning about management: types of management knowledge and the role of the management course In M. Eraut (Ed.), *Developing professional knowledge and competence* (pp. p75-99). London: Falmer Press.

Evans, K., Hodkinson, P., Rainbird, H., & Unwin, L. (2006). *Improving Workplace Learning*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Fay, M. (1990). *Leading: In the teacher's voice*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual conference, Boston, Mass, April 1990.

Fessler, R. (2001). Dynamics of Teacher Career Stages. In T. R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education: new paradigms and practices* (pp. 171-192). New York: Teachers College Press.

Fitzgerald, T. & Gunter, H. (2006). Leading learning: middle leadership in schools in England and New Zealand. *Management in Education, 20*(3), 6-9.

Fletcher, L. & Bell, D. B. (1999). *Subject Leadership in the Primary School: Views of Subject Leaders*. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association annual conference, University of Sussex at Brighton, UK, September 1999.

Flinders, D. J. (1992). In search of ethical guidance: constructing a basis for dialogue. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 5*(2), 101-115.

Fox, A. (2008). *Exploring biographical approaches to understanding learning as identity: cases of emergent school leaders*. Paper presented at the European Society for Research into the Education of Adults (ESREA) 'Access, Learning careers and identities network' biennial conference, December 2008, University of Seville, Spain.

Fox, A. (2010). *Becoming a teacher-leader: Exploring biographical representation of teachers experiences of transition*. Paper presented at the ESREA Life History and Biographical Research network annual conference, March 2010, University of Vaxjo and Kalmar, Sweden.

Fox, A., McCormick, R., Procter, R., & Carmichael, P. (2007). The design and use of a mapping tool as a baseline means of identifying an organisation's active networks. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 30*(2), 127-147.

Fox, A. & McCormick, R. (2009). Events and professional learning: studying educational practitioners. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 21*(3), 198-218.

Fox, A., Deaney, R., & Wilson, E. (2010). Examining beginning teachers' perceptions of workplace support. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 22*(4), 212-227.

Frost, D. & Durrant, J. (2003). *Bottom up? Top down? Inside-out? Joined up? Building capacity for school improvement through teacher leadership.* Paper presented at the International Congress for School Effectiveness & Improvement annual conference, Sydney, Australia, January 2003.

Frost, D. (2008) Teacher Leadership: values and voice, *School Leadership and Management*, 28(4), 337-352.

Frost, D., MacBeath, J., & Moller, J. (2008). Leaving a legacy: helping schools to collaborate in a climate of competition. In J. MacBeath & N. Dempster (Ed.), *Connecting Leadership and Learning: Principles for Practice.* London: Routledge.

Fuller, A., Hodkinson, H., Hodkinson, P., & Unwin, L. (2005). Learning as peripheral participation in communities of practice: a reassessment of key concepts in workplace learning. *British Educational Research Journal, 31*(1), 49-68.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In C. Geertz (Ed.), *The intepretation of cultures: Selected essays* (pp. 3-30). New York: Basic Books.

Geertz, C. (1988). *Works and lives: The anthropologist as author.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

General Teaching Council for England (2002). *Teachers on Teaching: a Survey of the Teaching Profession*. Cited in Rhodes *et al* (2004) Valuing and supporting teachers: A survey of teacher satisfaction, dissatisfaction, morale and retention in an English local education authority. *Research in Education, 71*, 67-80. but no longer available from the GTCE website: http://www.gtce.org.uk/.

Gibson, D. E. (2003). Developing the Professional Self-Concept: Role Model Construals in Early, Middle, and Late Career Stages. *Organization Science, 14*(5), 591-610.

Glover, D., Gleeson, D., Gough, G., & Johnson, M. (1998). The meaning of management: the development needs of middle managers in secondary schools. *Educational Administration Abstracts, 34*(1), 1999.

Glover, D., & Miller, D. (1999). The working day of the subject leader and the impact of interruptions on teaching and learning in secondary schools. *Educational Research, 41*(3), 341-349.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam.

Goleman, D. (1996). *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam.

Goleman, D. (2006). The socially intelligent leader. *Educational Leadership, 64*(1), 76-81.

Goodson, I. F. (1992). *Studying Teachers' Lives*. London: Routledge.

Greeno, J. G. (1997). On claims that answer the wrong question. *Educational Researcher, 26*(1), 5-17.

Gronn, P. (1999). *The making of educational leaders*. London and New York: Cassell.

Gronn, P. (2003). *The New Work of Educational Leaders: Changing Leadership Practice in an era of educational reform*. London: Sage.

Gronn , P. (2009a). From distributed to hybrid leadership practice. In A. Harris (Ed.), *Distributed School Leadership: Different Perspectives*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Gronn , P. (2009b). *Leadership: Its genealogy, configuration and trajectory*. Paper presented at the Inaugural lecture at the University of Cambridge, 17 June 2009.

Gronn, P. & Lacey, K. (2004). Positioning oneself for leadership: feelings of teachers on teaching: a survey of the teaching profession vulnerability among aspirant school principals. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(4), 405 - 424.

Gronn, P. & Ribbins, P. (1996). Leaders in Context. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 32*(2), 452-473.

Hammerness, K. M. (2009). *A first look at mid-career entrants: Findings from a literature review*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual conference, San Francisco, CA, April 2009.

Hammersley, M. (1990). What's wrong with ethnography? The myth of theoretical description. *Sociology, 24*, 597-615.

Hammersley, M. (1992). Some reflections on ethnography and validity. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 5*(3), 195-203.

Handley, K., Sturdy, A., Fincham, R., & Clark, T. (2006). Within and Beyond Communities of Practice: Making Sense of Learning Through Participation, Identity and Practice. *Journal of Management Studies, 43*(3), 643-653.

Hargreaves, A. (1992). Cultures of Teaching: A Focus for change. In A. Hargreaves & M. G. Fullan (Eds.), *Understanding Teacher Development* (pp. 216-240). New York: Teachers College Press.

Harris, A., Busher, H., & Wise, C. (2001). Effective training for subject leaders. *Journal of In-Service Education, 27*(1), 83-94.

Hartle, F. & Thomas, K. (2003). *Growing Tomorrow's School Leaders: The challenge*: Nottingham: The Hay Group for the NCSL. Available at: http://www.transforminglearning.co.uk/Documents/Growing_Tomorrow%27s_Schoo l_Leaders.pdf

Hay Group. (2007). *Rush to the Top: Accelerating the development of leaders in schools*. London: The Hay Group.

Hobson, A. J., Tracey, L., Kerr, K., Malderez, A., Pell, G., Simm, C., *et al.* (2004). *Why people choose to become teachers and the factors influencing their choice of Initial Teacher Training route: early findings from the Becoming a Teacher project* (Report no. DFES RBX08-04). London: DFES.

Hobson, A. J., Malderez, A., Tracey, L., Kerr, K., & Pell, G. (2005). *Becoming a teacher: students' preconceptions and early experiences in school*. Report Brief - RB 673). London: DFES.

Hodkinson, H. & Hodkinson, P. (2005). Improving schoolteachers' workplace learning. *Research Papers in Education, 20*(2), 109-131.

Hodkinson, P. & Bloomer, M. (2002). Learning careers: Conceptualising lifelong work-based learning. In K. Evans, P. Hodkinson & L. Unwin (Eds.) *Working to learn: Transforming learning in the workplace*. London: Kogan Paul.

Hodkinson, P. & Hodkinson, H. (2003). Individuals, communities of practice and the policy context: school-teachers learning in their workplace. *Studies in Continuing Education, 25*(1), 3-21.

Hodkinson, P. & Hodkinson, H. (2004). The significance of individuals' dispositions in workplace learning: A case study of two school-teachers. *Journal of Education and Work, 17*(2), 167-182.

Hogg, M. A. & Ridgeway, C. L. (2003). Social Identity: Sociological and Social Psychological Perspectives. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 66*(2), 97-100.

Holland, D., Lachicotte, W., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Identity and agency in cultural worlds*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Holland, J. (1998). *Emergence: From chaos to order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Horsdal, M. (2007). Therapy and narratives of self. In L. West, P. Alheit, A. Siig Anderson & B. Merrill (Eds.), *Using Biographical and Life History Approaches in the Study of Adult and Lifelong Learning: European Perspectives* (Vol. 2, pp. 187-203). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (HCESC). (2004). *Secondary Education: Teacher Retention and Recruitment*. Fifth Report of Session 2003-04 Volumes I and II (Report nos. HC 1057-1 and HC 1057-11). London: The Stationery Office.

Huberman, M. (1989). The professional life cycle of teachers. *Teachers College Record, 91*(1), 31-57.

Huberman, M. (2001). Professional careers and professional development: some intersections. In T. R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education: new paradigms and practices* (pp. 193-222). New York: Teachers' College Press.

Hutchinson, G. & Johnson, B. (1993). Teaching as a career: examining high school students' perspectives. *Action in Teacher Education, 15*, 61-67.

Jensen, J. & Rodgers, R. (2001) Cumulating the intellectual gold of case study technique. *Participatory Action Research*, March/April, 235-246.

Johnson, S. (2001). *Emergence*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Johnson, S. & Birkeland, S. (2003). Pursuing a 'sense of success': new teacher's explain their career decisions. *American Educational Research Journal, 40*(3), 581 - 617.

Juzwik, M. M. (2006). Situating narrative-minded research: A commentary on Anna Sfard and Anna Prusak's 'Telling identities'. *Educational Researcher, 35*(9), 13-21.

Katzenmeyer, A. & Moller, G. (2001). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers develop as leaders* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Kelchtermans, G. (1994). Biographical methods in the study of teachers' professional development. In I. Carlgren, G. Haandal & S. Vaage (Eds.), *Teachers' minds and actions: Research on teachers' thinking and practice*. London: The Falmer Press.

Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z. (2002). *The Leadership Challenge*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leithwood, K. (1994). Leadership for School Restructuring. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 30*(4), 498-518.

Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Likeman, A. (2009). *Kirklees CPD Toolkit Section 3: Talent Spotting and Succession Planning - Identifying and Implementing CPD Opportunities. Available at:* www.kirklees-ednet.org.uk/management/cpd/toolkit/3Strategy/3Talent-Spotting-and-Succession-Planning.doc (Last accessed 27 July 2011).

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS). (2010) *Subject Learning Coaches programme*. Retrieved 3 August 2010: http://tlp.excellencegateway.org.uk/tlp/slc/ (last accessed 30 July 2011).

Lortie, D. (1975). *School Teacher: A sociological study*. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press.

Lumby, J. & English, F. (2009). From simplicism to complexity in leadership identity and preparation: exploring the lineage and dark secrets. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 12*(2), 95 - 114.

Martin, A. & Williams, C. (2003). Heart of the matter: a practical guide to what middle leaders can do to improve learning in secondary schools. *Leading Edge Series*. Nottingham: NCLSCS of School Leadership.

MacBeath, J. (2006). The talent enigma. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 9*(3), 183-204.

MacBeath, J., & Dempster, N. (2008). *Connecting Leadership and Learning: Principles for Practice*. London: Routledge.

MacBeath, J., Frost, D., Swaffield, S., & Waterhouse, J. (2006). *Making the Connections: The story of a seven country odyssey in search of a practical theory*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.

Markus, H. & Wurf, E. (1987). The dynamic self-concept: a social psychological perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology, 38*, 299-337.

McCormick, R., Carmichael, P., Fox, A., & Procter, R. (2010). *Researching and Understanding Educational Networks*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge in association with the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction.

McDermott, G. R. (1994). Partnering with God: Ignatian spirituality and leadership in groups. In J. A. Conger (Ed.), *Spirit at work: Discovering spirituality in leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

McGuinness, C. (2005). Behind the acquisition metaphor: conceptions of learning and learning outcomes in TLRP school-based projects. *The Curriculum Journal, 16*(1), 31-47.

McWilliam, E. & Hacker, C. (2007). Killing me softly: the 'making up' of the educational leader. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 10*(3), 233-246.

Merrill, B. & West, L. (2009). *Using Biographical Methods in Social Research.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Miller, L. (1999). Reframing teacher burnout in the context of school reform and teacher development in the United States. In R. Vandenberghe & A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout : A sourcebook of international research and practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mumford, A. (1993). *How managers can develop managers.* Aldershot: Gower.

Myers, E. & Murphy, J. (1995). Suburban Secondary school principals' perceptions of administration control in schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 33*(3), 14-37.

National College for School Leadership (NCSL) (1999). *Code of Research Practice.* Nottingham: NCSL.

NCSL. (2001). *Leadership Development Framework.* Nottingham: NCSL.

NCSL. (2004). *The Five Pillars of Distributed Leadership: an investigation into the advantages, disadvantages, causes and constraints of a more distributed form of leadership in schools.* Nottingham: The Hay Group for the NCSL.

NCSL. (2006). *Succession Planning: Formal Advice to the Secretary of State.* Nottingham: NCSL.

NCSL (2009) *Accelerate for success: identifying the next generation of great school leaders.* NCLSCS press release (10 March 2009). Available at: http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/about-us/news/press-release-detail.htm?id=15713 (last accessed 30 July 2011).

National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (NCLSCS). (2010a). *Leadership succession: An overview - Securing the next generation of school leaders.* Nottingham: NCLSCS.

NCLSCS. (2010b). *What are we learning about...identifying talent.* Nottingham: NCLSCS for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services

NCLSCS (2010c, Date last modified: 22/12/2010). *Developing Middle Leaders.* Available from: http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/leadershiplibrary/leadingschools/developing-your-leadership/middle-leadership/developing-middle-leadership.htm (last accessed 30 May 2011).

NCLSCS. (2010d). *What we are learning about ...retaining headteachers.* Nottingham: NCLSCS.

NCLSCS. (2010e). The emotionally intelligent leader. Nottingham: NCSL. Available from: http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/interactiveinfo.htm?id=19986 (last accessed 30 May 2011).

Nielson, K. (2008). Learning, Trajectories of Participation and Social Practice. *Outlines: Crtitical practice studies, 10*(1), 22-36.

Oates, S. (1991). *Biography as History.* Waco, TX: Mankham Press Fund.

Packwood, T. (1989). Return to the hierarchy. *Educational Management & Administration, 30*(1), 9-15.

Pedder, D. (2006). Organizational conditions that foster successful classroom promotion of Learning How to Learn. *Research Papers in Education, 21*(2), 171-200.

Pegg, A. & Fox, A. (2007). *Contrasting approaches to researching lifelong learning: the leadership group and individual biographies.* Paper presented at the Centre for Research into Lifelong Learning 4th international conference, Stirling, UK, June 2007.

Pink, S. (2001). *Doing visual ethnography.* London: Sage Publications.

Prosser, J. (Ed.). (1998). *Image-based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers.* Falmer Press: London.

Prosser, J. (2006). *Researching with visual images: Some guidance notes and a glossary for beginners* (No. 6/06). Southampton: ESRC National Centre for Research Methods.

Purcell, K. & Wilton, N. (2005). *Education as a Career: Entry and Exit from Teaching as a Profession* (DCSF Research Report No. 690). Bristol: The University of Warwick and the University of the West of England.

Putnam, R. T. & Borko, H. (2000). What do new views of knowledge and thinking have to say about research on teacher learning? In B. Moon, J. Butcher & E. Bird (Eds.), *Leading professional development in education.* London: Routledge Falmer.

Reid, I., Brain, K., & Comerford-Boyes, L. (2004). Teachers or learning leaders?: Where have all the teachers gone? Gone to be leaders, every one. *Educational Studies, 30*(3), 251-264.

Rhodes, C. P. (2005a). *'Growing Your Own Leaders' in Sandwell LEA.* Wolverhampton: Sandwell LEA/The University of Wolverhampton.

Rhodes, C. P. (2005b). *'Growing Your Own Leaders' in Walsall Education.* Wolverhampton: Walsall Education/The University of Wolverhampton.

Rhodes, C. P. & Brundrett, M. (2005). Leadership Succession in Schools: a cause for concern? *Management in Education, 19*(5), 15-18.

Rhodes, C. P. & Brundrett, M. (2006). The identification, development, succession and retention of leadership talent in contextually different Primary schools: a case study located within the English West Midlands. *School Leadership and Management, 26*(3), 269-287.

Rhodes, C P., Brundrett, M., & Nevill, A. (2006). *The Identification, Development, Succession and Retention of Leadership Talent: An Investigation within Contextually Different primary and secondary Schools* (No. 1: Overview of Project Report). Nottingham: of Birmingham/University of Manchester/NCSL.

Ricoeur, P. (1992). *Oneself as author* (K. Blamey, Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Robson, C. (1993). *Real World Research.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research* (2nd ed.). London: Blackwell.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Salling Olesen, H. (2001). Professional identities as learning processes in life histories. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 13*(7-8), 290-297.

Salling Olesen, H. (2007). Theorising learning in life history: A psychosocial approach. *Studies in the Education of Adults, 39*(1), 38-53.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action.* New York: Basic Books.

Seedhouse, D. (1998). *Ethics: The Heart of Healthcare.* Chicester: Wiley.

Senge, P., Scharmer, C. O., Jaworski, J., & Flowers, B. S. (2004). *Presence.* Cambridge, MA: Society of Organizational Learning.

Sikes, P., Measor, L., & Woods, P. (1985). *Teacher careers: Crises and continuities.* London.: Routledge.

Sfard, A. & Prusak, A. (2005). Telling identities: In search of an analytic tool for investigating learning as a culturally shaped activity. *Educational Researcher, 34*(4), 14-22.

Sfard, A. (2006a). Participationist discourse on Mathematics learning. In J. Massz & W. Schloeglmann (Eds.), *New Mathematics Education Research and Practice.* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Sfard, A. (2006b). Telling ideas by the company they keep: A response to the critique by Mary Juzwik. *Educational Researcher, 35*(9), 22-27.

Smithers, A. & Robinson, P. (2004). *Teacher Turnover, Wastage and Destinations* (DFES Research Report No. 553). Liverpool: University of Liverpool.

Sparrowe, R. T. (2005). Authentic leadership and the narrative self. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*, 419-439.

Spillane, J. P. (2005). Distributed Leadership. *The Educational Forum, 69*(2), 143-150.

Stake, R. E. (1978). The case study method in social inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 7*(2), 5-8.

Stanley, L. (1992). *The Auto/Biographical I: Theory and Practice of Feminist Auto/Biography*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Stenhouse, L. (1978). Case Study and Case Records: Towards a Contemporary History of Education. *British Educational Research Journal, 4*(2), 21-39.

Stenhouse, L. (1980). The study of samples and the study of cases. *British Educational Research Journal, 6*(1), 1-6.

Storey, A. (2004). From performance management to capacity building: an escape from the *cul de sac*? *The Curriculum Journal, 15*(3), 207-218.

Storey, J. (1983). *Managerial prerogative and the question of control*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Stryker, S. & Burke, P. J. (2000). The past, present and future of identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 63*(4), 284-297.

Stutchbury, K. & Fox, A. (2009). Ethics in Educational Research: introducing a methodological tool for effective ethical analysis. *The Cambridge Journal of Education, 39*(4), 489-504.

Sugrue, C. (1997). Student teachers' lay theories and teaching identities: their implications for professional development. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 20*(3), 213-226.

Surowiecki, J. (2004). *The Wisdom of Crowds*. New York: Random House.

Tanggaard, L., & Elmholt, C. (2007). Learning trajectories among educational psychologists. *Studies in Continuing Education, 29*(3), 295-314.

Thomson, P., Blackmore, J., Sachs, J., & Tregenza, K. (2003). High stakes principalship-sleepless nights, heart attacks and sudden death accountabilities: Reading media representations of the United States principal shortage. *Australian Journal of Education, 47*(2), 118-132.

Times Educational Supplement. (2005). TLRs: Your questions answered. *Times Educational Supplement* (2 December 2005). Available from: http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=2170139 (last accessed 30 July 2011).

Tracey, L., Homer, M., Mitchell, N., Malderez, A., Hobson, A. J., Ashby, P., Pell. G. (2008). *Teachers' Experiences of their Second Year in Post: Findings from Phase IV of the Becoming a Teacher project* (Research Report No DCSF-RR041). Nottingham: University of Nottingham.

Training and Development Agency (TDA) (2007). *Professional standards for teachers.* Available at: http://www.tda.gov.uk/teacher/developing-career/professional-standards-guidance/downloads.aspx (last accessed 30 July 2011).

Thrupp, M. (2005). The National College of School Leadership: a critique. *Management in Education, 19*(2), 13-19.

Topping, K. & Thurston, A. (2004). *Enjoying Science Together.* Grangemouth, UK: Geoquest/British Petroleum.

Turner, C. (2006). Subject leaders in secondary schools and informal learning: towards a conceptual framework. *School Leadership and Management, 26*(5), 419-435.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. (2009, 15 September 2009). Etienne Wenger talks about 'walking the landscape of practice' Retrieved 26 May 2011, from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjw0YoqpEq8 (last accessed 29 July 2011)

Wenger, E. (2010). Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems: the Career of a Concept. In C. Blackmore (Ed.), *Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice* (Vol. III, pp. 179-198). Buckingham: Springer and Open University.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. M. (2002). *Cultivating communities of practice.* Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press.

West, L. (2010). *Challenging stories: the poetics, science (and politics?) of representing learning lives.* Paper presented at the ESREA Biographical and life histories network annual conference, March 2010, University of Vaxjo and Kalmar, Sweden.

West, L., Alheit, P., Anderson, A. S., & Merrill, B. (Eds.). (2007). *Using Biographical and Life History Approaches in the Study of Adult and Lifelong Learning: European Perspectives.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

West-Burnham, J. & Ireson, J. (2005). *Leadership development and personal effectiveness* (Report no. PB74). Nottingham: NCSL.

Wilson, E. & Deaney, R. (2010). Changing career and changing identity: How do teacher career changers exercise agency in identity construction? *Social Psychology of Education, 13*, 169–183.

Wise, C. & Bush, T. (1999). From teacher to manager: the role of academic middle manager in secondary schools. *Educational Research, 41*(2), 183-196.

Wise, C. (2001). The Monitoring Role of the Academic Middle Manager in Secondary Schools. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership 29*(3), 333-341.

Wolcott, H. F. (1995). *The art of fieldwork.* Walnut Creek ; London: AltaMira Press.

Woods, P. (1978). Negotiating the demands of schoolwork. *Curriculum Studies, 10*(4), 309-327.

Woodd, M. (1999). The psychology of career theory - a new perspective? *Journal of European Industrial Training, 23 (4/5),* 218-223.

Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: design and methods.* (4th ed.) Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Zigo, D. (2001). Rethinking reciprocity: collaboration in labor as a path toward equalizing power in classroom research. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 14*(3), 351-365.

Appendices (A – N)

Appendix A: Invitations and assurances used for recruitment

i – Invitation to potential participants also recruited for another study (termed OLEI)

Dear school leader,

I am writing to confirm that you are happy to contribute not only to the OLEI study, for which I am part of the Open University research team, but also in the initial stages of my Postgraduate research degree project.

My focus is to explore how school leaders manage their learning, and hence continuing professional development, such that they follow both their personal aspirations and interests alongside their responsibilities of working towards school-defined goals. (My research questions are appended). This is an area that I feel is very important to supporting teachers if they are to have access to the sort of personalised learning that is currently a national priority for the children taught in their schools. I hope to construct with you collaboratively a career biography which highlights critical decision points and strategies you employed to manage your learning. I feel that the results of such research into your experiences would be pertinent to senior school leaders in their support of middle leaders, to other teachers and student teachers yet to develop their careers and would say something about being an educational professional.

This letter sets out the additional things I would be asking of you, to help you reach an informed decision as to whether you are happy to participate in this study or not. **Your decisions will be treated independently from the OLEI study.**

<u>What I will be asking of you</u>

In the time-span of the OLEI study (until May '06) at times convenient to you, I would like to trial some of my intended research methods. The data collected will form part of the final PhD thesis. I see interviews you agree to participate in as being semi-structured and building upon each other. I welcome comments on the process as well as the content to be covered and hope that the process can be beneficial to you as a chance to reflect on your career to date.

Firstly, I would like to conduct a series of short (45min) interviews in which you summarise your career history to date under a series of headings, map out your connections with resources and people (networks) and summarise your activities and roles within school. Some of these could be by carried out by telephone.

Secondly I would like to trial a questionnaire with you, your line manager and colleagues.

Thirdly, I would like to explore with you the keeping of a log or diary. I am proposing that this could be a photojournal which will allow me some access to where and when you learn.

Finally, I would hope that you would be willing to share with me anything considered evidence of the impact of your learning.

In an ideal case, it would be helpful if you would let me continue to work with you to follow your learning into the academic years 06/07 and 07/08. I fully appreciate that you will not yet be able to say whether this will be either possible or desirable and a further request for participation will be used to cover any extension to this initial request.

<u>My agreement with you</u>

My aspirations

I am both an experienced teacher (active from 1994-2003) and researcher (on-going since 1999) and hope that there can be mutual benefits from this project in which I can share my

experiences with you as much as you do with me. In this spirit of collaboration I hope I can build a positive working relationship with you which avoids imposition and through which we can both learn. I intend to keep an open agenda to search for areas of shared interest and which can be built onto the research process. I too will keep a research log which we will be available to you at any point.

My responsibilities to you

For your and my own protection, I will abide by the ethical guidelines of the NCSL and the OLEI study, both of which are drawn from the revised BERA *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (2004). I will be happy to talk you through these nearer the time of our first meeting. They are based on honesty, integrity and anonymity. I am clear that to achieve my aspirations I will need to be allowed the privilege of being allowed to share your time, knowledge and ideas. I am fully aware of the pressures educational professionals are under and through my desire to explore your professional life and experiences it will be difficult to avoid impositions on your time. You must guide me on this and it may be that my time with you might ebb and flow.

Thank you for reading these requests. **If you are happy to proceed as a participant of my study, please could you contact me at my email address [given] by the end of term (or earlier if possible).**

I look forward to talking, debating and working with you in a way that I hope can include you in the analysis and synthesis more integrally than has been possible in the OLEI study. I thank you in advance for your generosity.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Fox (Research Fellow, Open University)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

How do individual teachers manage to achieve balance between their learning (involving individual and social processes) within the structural/institutional constraints of a school?

1) How are an individual's personal learning goals derived? (prior questions needed to elucidate such goals)

2) How do individual teachers construe the opportunities and constraints to their learning of the goals and imperatives of the school?

3) Is there a conflict between an individual teacher's aims for, and use of, learning for their continuing professional development (CPD) and their organisation's aims and, if so, how do they reconcile the two?

II- Information given about a grievance procedure

I have also got here on this piece of paper a contact to use that if you are ever upset or unhappy with me or my actions - the grievance procedure would be to contact my boss. He prefers to be called Bob McCormick and this is his telephone number. I thought that would be the most useful contact for you.

iii – Example of invitation to gain further consent for phase two (Jacky)

Dear [name of participant leader],

Despite your happy circumstances which I know mean that you are taking maternity leave, this letter sets out a further request to ask if you would generously consider remaining in my Postgraduate research degree project.

I have been very grateful to you for your time and thoughts over the last year and would greatly value your continued involvement. As you are aware my focus is to explore how school leaders manage their learning, and hence continuing professional development, such that they follow both their personal aspirations and interests alongside their responsibilities of working towards school-defined goals. After this first year you have been able to answer the following questions.

> 1) From whom or from what past experiences you have learnt and are drawing on in your professional roles?
>
> 2) What you are trying to change in their school and why?
>
> 3) When, where, how and from whom you are learning in your current school context?

The questionnaire will also be able to give me an insight into the school culture in which you are working and you have been able to tell me about your school context.

Together with the other participants in my study, who cover a range of roles and come from primary, middle and secondary school phases, I hope to be able to present your perceptions of how you manage your professional learning whilst being both a school leader and classroom teacher. Should you return to teaching, by considering how you cope with maintaining a career straddling a maternity leave, important work-life issues will no doubt be raised. By highlighting the strategies you employ the research will be pertinent to senior school leaders in their support of middle leaders, to student teachers who are yet to develop their careers and would say something about the profession of being a teacher/school leader.

What I will be asking of you next

The next phases of interviews I expect you to miss as they are requested to be in the Spring term of 2007. These will consist of a revisiting interview in January, a progress interview in March and a photojournal carried out between times. These will revisit goals, motivations, learning opportunities and progress/constraints. At some point I hope to interview, after consultation with you, a senior colleague ([named headteacher] would be the best) to provide their perspective on your roles and how you are managing these.

The next cycle of interview, journal, interview (along with a repeat of the questionnaires of staff) I would like to repeat in the Autumn term of 2007 when you may expect to be back in school. I understand that this is a long way off and that you cannot be expected to commit absolutely to involvement at this stage, especially given your life changing event and in any case, as I have explained before, you are able to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

In addition to feedback given within interviews, I expect to be able to complete my analyses and report back to you in Spring 2008.

Thank you for reading these requests. **If you are happy to proceed as a participant of my study, please could you contact me at my email address [given] or by phone [given] - by the end of July if possible.**

I look forward to talking, debating and working with you in a way that I hope continues to include you in the analysis (and hopefully also) synthesis. Thank you for your time in considering this request.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Fox (Research Fellow, Open University)

NB. [Aspirations and responsibilities affirmed as previous letter]

Appendix B: Summary of interviews completed in phase one

Phase one interview order	1	2	3	4
Jacky	Z	X	Y	Y
Amanda	X	Y	Z	
Margaret	Y	X (online)	X and Z	
Phillip	Z	X and Y		
Aimee	Y and Z	X		

Appendix C: Data collection plans (final version)

NB. See overleaf

Data collection details	Term 1 (Autumn 05)	Term 2 (Spring 06)	Term 3 (Summer 06)	Term 4 (Autumn 06)	Term 5 (Spring 07)	Term 6 (Summer 07)	Term 7 (Autumn 07)	Term 8 (Spring 08)	Term 9 (Summer 08)	Term 10 (Autumn 08)
(Primary and female) Amanda	Identify pilot sample.*E1[46] As 1 and 2.	Trial ints and photo log with 3 individuals As 1 and 2.	Questionnaire of key staff and feedback interview. *E2 As 1 and 2.			CYCLE ONE: Revisiting int (May)	NEW SCHOOL Photo log (Nov) Progress int (Dec)	Questionnaire new key staff (Feb) Int - senior colleague (Jan)	CYCLE TWO: Feedback and revisiting int (Apr) Wed 16th Photo log (May) Progress int (May) Thur 8th	Final feedback int (Nov/Dec)
(Middle and female) Margaret						CYCLE ONE: Revisiting int (May) Photo log (Jun) Progress int (Jul)	SCHOOL MERGER		CYCLE TWO: Feedback and revisiting int by email (May) Photo log (June) Progress int (June) Int - senior colleague (June)? - agreed but not possible	Final feedback int (Nov/Dec)
(Primary and female) Jacky				Maternity leave		PART-TIME *E2 CYCLE ONE: Revisiting int (May)	SCHOOL MERGER Photo log (Nov) Progress int (Dec)	Repeat questionnaire (Feb) Int - senior colleague (Mar) – no reply to requests	CYCLE TWO: Feedback/Revisiting int (May) Thur 1st Photo log (May) Progress int (June) Thur 5th	Final feedback int (Nov/Dec)
(Primary and female) Laura			Identify replacement for teacher 3. *E1		Prelim int 1: the present (Jan) photo log (Feb). Prelim int 2: the past (Mar)	Feedback by email (Mar). Maternity leave			LEFT AREA	
(Secondary and female) Aimee			Identify main sample. *E1		Prelim Int 1 (Mar/Apr)	Photo log (May). Int 2: the past (May/Jun) Feedback (Jul) *E2	Questionnaire key staff (Nov) CYCLE ONE: Revisiting int (Dec) 12TH	Photo log (Jan) Progress int (Mar) 5th Int - senior colleague (Jan) 23rd	CYCLE TWO: Revisiting int (May 21st) Photo log (May) Progress int (Jun 25th)	Final feedback int (Nov)
(Secondary and female) Sandra							NEW SCHOOL Can't get back in touch with			
(Secondary and male) Phillip							Questionnaire key staff (Dec) CYCLE ONE: Revisiting int (Dec)	Photo log (Feb/Mar) Progress int (April) by email Int - senior colleagues (Feb) – no reply to requests	CYCLE TWO: Revisiting int (missing) Photo log (May) Progress int (Jun) – request by email	Final feedback int (Nov/Dec)

[46] *E1 = ethical agreement for the exploratory phase and *E2 = ethical agreement for the main phase

368

Appendix D: Evidence of the way sensitivities were handled in interview situations

Text box 1: Reflecting on a response to a request for data and how this might relate to sensitive issues

One aspect that probably would have been helped me in questioning Jacky would have been to have her CV in advance. I did ask for one but Jacky obviously doesn't have one to hand such that she was able to produce it despite my asking when I first met her and a week ago and this is obviously a big ask to expect her to prepare one. I asked about her last job application as an alternative, which was three years or so ago, but she is obviously too busy to find that. I did wonder whether she would have felt hindered by my knowing exact places and I am thinking specifically about her school placements as a trainee as she was quite negative about those and I expect these details would have been on her CV. It was evident she really didn't want to name them with my being local, that was obviously one issue and there may be more to this (reflective diary after the life history interview X, December 2005).

Text box 2: Checking as to how the interview had made Jacky feel and confirming that she was in control of the boundaries of comfort

Alison: So how did you feel about it, how did you feel about it as an emotional experience last time?

Jacky: It did make me reflect quite a lot about what I do at school and what I see as time wasting at the end of the day and what we said about going to that meeting, going to meetings sometimes and it made me feel like ..'Am I being a bit sneaky by going into those meetings and trying to get to the point where I want...

Alison: I took it as a positive rather than a negative but I just wondered whether you felt happy with me picking you up on it (Jacky: No not at all) because it is difficult to get that feeling of discomfort on the tape so if you do ever feel uncomfortable then... (Jacky: No, no.) Because if I say I am going to pick you up on everything and if it gets too intrusive tell me to 'Rack off!'. (Life history interview X, December 2005)

Text box 3: Dealing with the issue identified in the reflective diary in the following interview – how much could this interchange be seen as coercion?

Alison: If you remember I only really found out about the geology not being finished by default later on in the interview. You know that was not a particularly important question to me but again (Jacky: yes, I know) it was perhaps an area I felt perhaps I couldn't touch on and you didn't offer so…

Jacky: Possibly…yes…it probably was that I was thinking 'God, don't ask me'

Alison: That's interesting isn't it?

Jacky: Yes…it is sort of the confidence thing.

Alison: I think I did reflect on that in the margin somewhere that it probably is (with emphasis) important because here I said, (reading from comments on earlier transcript) 'I didn't ever find out how Jacky did in her A levels and it was only by chance later that I found out that she had not completed geology. She did not offer this so this may be a sensitive area. We did not explore expectations of grades and how she realised these. If the school had made predictions that she didn't realise (reading again) this would have been fed into her discussions of low self-confidence felt by the end of sixth form'.

Jacky: I think my A level results were two Ds (laughs self-consciously), which I am not at all proud of, and that didn't inspire me to go on to university. I don't think the teachers thought that I would go on there with those grades (emphasising last three words) which made me, when I was on my degree, be more determined and to really work harder and I got a high 2:1 which I was really pleased with.

Alison: Yes, that was great! (Jacky, Life history interview Y, January 2006).

Text box 4: Querying the impact of my offering too much information

Alison: Now, there was one thing, actually two things, that were worrying me and the first was because it was quite new for me, the interview I did with you last time, I found myself telling you about me. I know I am wanting this to be a two-way thing but I found that when you spoke about things that I had experienced I found myself telling you about them (Jacky: OK, alright) and I wondered what you thought about that a) whether you thought that was wasting your time, b) whether you noticed or c) whether it helped?

Jacky: I don't really recall you really doing that.

Alison: Let's see, I am just trying to think...looking through the transcript here. I know I was talking about the hockey club for example (Jacky: Right) or about that particular school which I knew a bit about or my own bad experience on a PGCE placement.

Jacky: No, I think that kind of relaxes me and I just think it kind of makes it flow. I don't think it influences anything (Jacky, Life history interview Y, January 2006).

Appendix E: First learning opportunity map for Phillip

Appendix F: Ethical protocols for the collection of images

i Ethical statement relating to the use of photographs taken at [named school]

[name of case] has agreed to take photographs as part of an Open University research project into the personalisation of teachers' learning. Although principally about herself, these photographs are likely to include other people in the school. As the researcher, I wanted to explain to staff why these were being taken and how they would be used.

The photographs will be used by [name of case] and the researcher in the first instance. They may be shared with a wider, but limited, research team at the Open University. If they are likely to appear in published work, faces will be anonymised and copies passed to the school to reassure staff as to their use. Photographs involving children will **not** be used in published work.

Please ask [name of case] to pass on my contact details if at any stage you have any queries or concerns about these photographs.

Alison Fox, Open University Research Fellow   12 January 2006

ii Request and ethical statement relating to the use of photographs taken by [name of case] at external events

[name of case] has agreed to take photographs as part of an Open University research project into the personalisation of teachers' learning. Although principally about herself, these photographs are likely to include other people. As the researcher, I wanted to ask whether she was allowed to do this at your event. You may feel that before you can decide on this matter, other participants at the event might need an explanation as to why these were being taken and how they would be used.

The photographs will be used by [name of case] and the researcher in the first instance. They may be shared with a wider, but limited, research team at the Open University. If they are likely to appear in published work, faces will be anonymised and copies passed to [name of case] to reassure her as to their use. Photographs involving children will **not** be used in published work.

Please ask [name of case] to pass on my contact details if you have any queries or concerns about these photographs.

Alison Fox, Open University Research Fellow   12 January 2006

Appendix G: Examples of interview schedules for phase two interviews (one and four)

i - Revisiting Interview one (Interview one of four)

Learning goals: current learning

1. What aspirations do you have currently as a teacher and as a leader?

   Be aware of the language they use. Ask whether it would be reasonable to call these goals or targets?

2. What do you do to further these aspirations?

3. Summarise the constraints you feel are impacting on your aspirations.

4. Does continuing professional development or performance management have a role in furthering your aspirations?

5. What opportunities do you feel are available to you to further your aspirations?

   Be alert to the timescales of what is being offered.

Learning goals: past learning

When I looked through what you had said in the exploratory phase .... (*goals*) seemed important to you.

1. Have you made any progress towards these aspirations since then?

2. How did that take place?

   e.g. actively – planned and conscious or passively – reactive and unconscious.

3. If not, why do you think this is?

4. Do these aspirations still hold true for you?

Sites of learning (have learning opportunities map as prompt)

1. Where would you say, on balance, most of your learning which influences you as a teacher takes place?

2. Where, on balance, does your learning as a leader take place?

3. If there any new sites for learning not currently shown on your map please represent them and explain their importance to you?

4. If there are sites that are no longer important to you on the map please indicate these and explain why you think this is the case?

5. Are there sites for learning which you feel you do not have enough opportunity to learn from?

Motivations

Consider the following questions from the perspectives of both your teaching and your leadership roles.

1. What is it about your current job that; a) motivates you, b) gives you satisfaction?

2. What aspects of your current job; a) demotivate you, b) frustrate you?

3. How do your answers differ with respect to your teaching as opposed to your leadership roles?

Agency in learning (rather than in job)

1. Summarise how you feel about having made the transition into taking on leadership roles.

2. How supported have you been and by whom have you been supported in making these changes in role?

3. As a leader, to what extent do you consider yourself to be reflective about your learning?

4. To what extent have you been able to take control of your own learning?

ii - Progress Interview two (interview four of four)

Based around 10 examples of learning as image or diary evidence. 8 of which relate to learning as a leader, including where most learning takes place, and 2 which represents where most learning as a teacher takes place.

Task 1: Exemplification of the major sites of learning

Starting with those you feel are to do with your learning as a teacher (with the most typical first) and moving on to those where you are learning as a leader (with the most typical first), for each example, explain:

1. What was learnt?

2. How did you know that you had learnt something?

3. What were the motivations behind this learning?

4. What agency (control) did you have over this learning experience?

5. Was it significant as to where this learning took place?

Task 2: Sorting according to formality and intentionality

From the full set of 10 learning experiences sort them according to the following criteria:

1. Whether they were formal or informal experiences?

   Explore what is formal or informal about each.

2. How planned the experience was?

   a. If it was planned, who planned it and why?

   b. If it was incidental/spontaneous, how did you benefit from it?

3. How individual or how social the learning was.

4. How conscious, deliberate and proactive the learning was (with reference to Mumford's grid).

Figure in Appendix G: An example of Amanda's card sort for formal to informal learning episodes
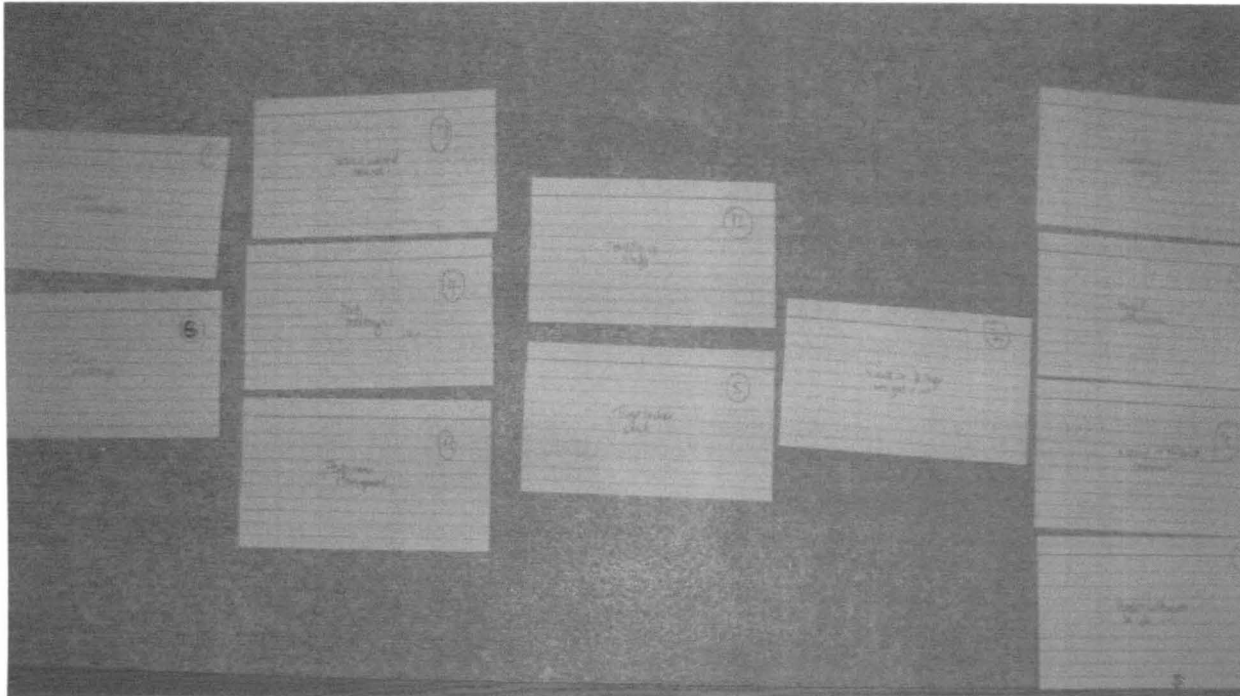
Task 3: Selecting examples that represent agency in learning

Pick out from the set of images/examples the ones that show the following:

1. Help in making the transition into taking on leadership roles.

2. The role of reflection in your learning.

3. Taking control of your own learning.

4. Being supported in your learning.

Task 4: Generic questions about identity and beliefs

1. How do you perceive of yourself as a teacher and a school leader.

2. How do you marry these two identities? Do you feel that you are learning mostly as a leader or a teacher?

3. What beliefs do you hold as a teacher and as a leader? What are you trying to achieve in each role?

Task 5: Reflections on participating in this study

1. Has there been any impact by being part of the study?

2. Have there been any benefits/drawbacks?

Appendix H: Interview schedule with senior leader (for Amanda in school two)

Perspectives on CPD in the school

1. Please summarise continuing professional development in the school.

   a. If there is a policy or statement referring to CPD

   b. How did this originate?

   c. What are you aiming to achieve with this policy/statement?

   d. What opportunities did staff at different levels of the school organisation have to feed into the development of this policy/statement?

   e. What aspects of your situation here help and hinder you achieving your goals in relation to this policy/statement ?

   f. How does CPD relate to performance management in the school?

2. Please summarise the procedures for performance management in the school.

   a. What opportunities do members of staff have to feed into their performance management?

   b. How does performance management relate to whole school aims and goals?

   c. What aspects of your situation act as affordances or constraints with respect to operating performance management ?

Individual aspects

1. How do you view Amanda in terms of her continuing professional development?

2. What has Amanda been doing in terms of her professional learning this year?

3. How do these activities relate to school issues and objectives?

4. To what extent do you believe Amanda's activities reflect personal issues and objectives?

5. How do you consider them to have changed since she joined the school?

6. What kinds of support are you aware that Amanda has used for her professional development?

7. Amanda has identified you as a key source of support to her learning. What do you do to support her?

	Interview X	CV/Job application	Interview Y	Interview Z	Pilot learning log as images	Learning opportunity map	Knowledge map	Feedback interview	Revisiting interview 1	Learning log cycle 1 (not all as images)	Amended learning opportunity map	Progress interview 1	Analysis feedback	Revisiting interview 2 Interview 6	Senior leader interview	Learning log cycle two	Progress interview 2
Laura	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√									
Sandra	√		√	√		√	√	√	√								
Aimee	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Amanda	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Jacky	√		√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Phillip	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√		√	√ (email)
Margaret	√	√	√ (email)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√

Appendix J: The 'knowledge' map used during phase one

(i) The map as used for phase one analysis
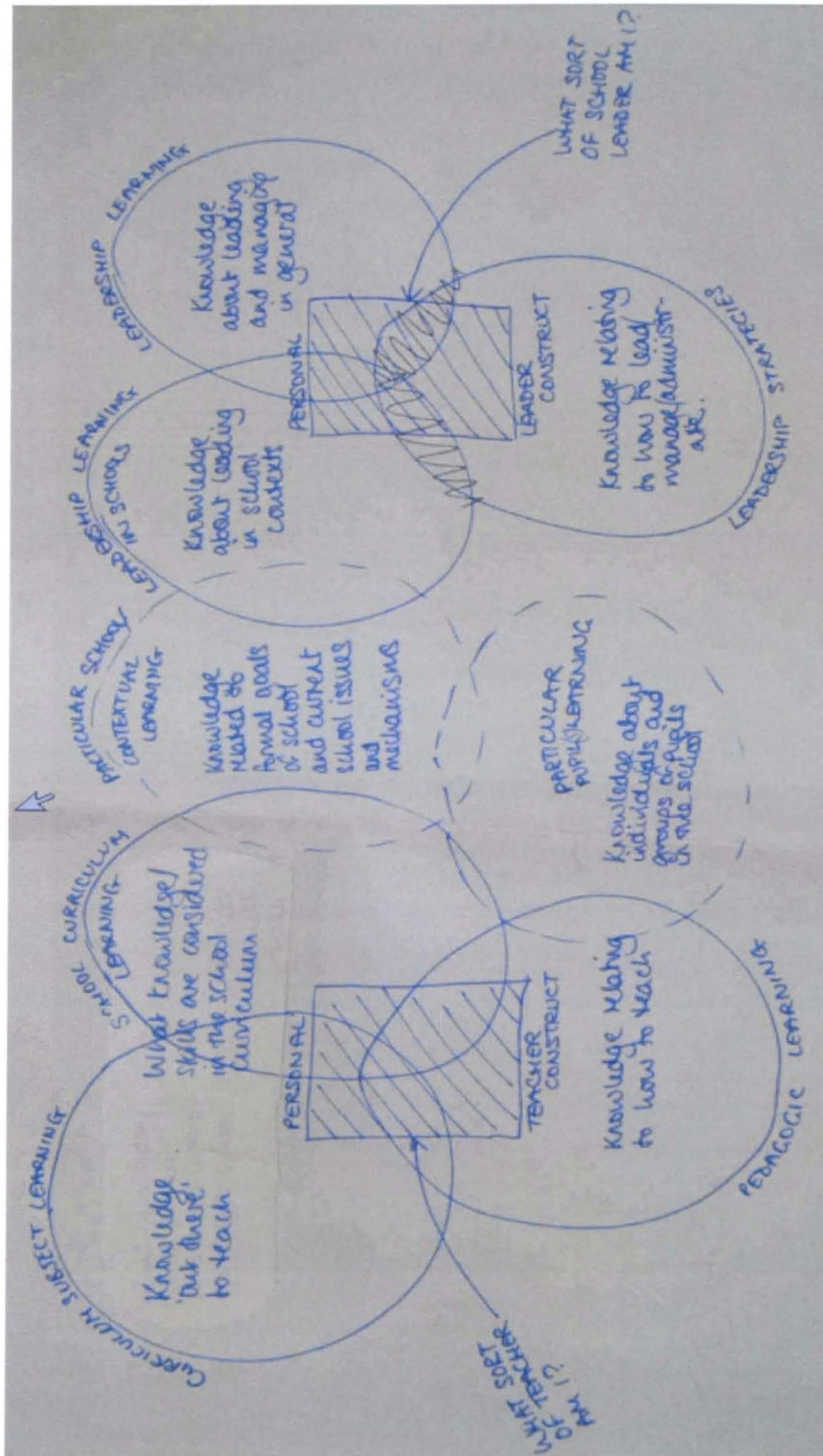
Appendix K: The results of analysis for phase one data relating to Aimee and Margaret

i - inferences of identity

	Aimee (cycle 1)	Margaret (cycle 1)
Learning as a teacher		Teacher and lifelong learner (3)
	Adult in collaborative enterprise (1)	One of number learners in classroom to shared goals (3)
	Subject teacher with responsibility for this within faculty (2)	Future year 6 teacher (1)
Learning as a leader	Leader with overall responsibility for faculty activities (4)	Middle school teacher with co-ordination responsibilities (2)
	Secondary school learning leader (1)	Middle school learning leader (1)
	Head of Faculty (2)	

ii – inferences of membership

	Aimee (cycle 1)	Margaret (cycle 1)
Belonging to teacher communities		All teachers in my school (3)
	Community of pupils and staff at school (1)	Particular classroom of learners (3)
	Member of my school (2)	Colleagues in my school (3)
	Potential team of subject teachers in my school (1)	Particular team of teachers in my school (1)
Belonging to leader communities	Community of leaders at my school (6)	

Appendix L: Table of contents of Phillip's case record biography (showing inductive themes and their organisation)

Prologue

1.0 Summative statements about identity

Philip, how do you think of yourself...

    ...as a teacher?

    ...as a leader?

    ... as a teacher and a leader?

2.0 Career path

    2.1 ...as a teacher

    2.2 ...as a leader

3.0 Range and changes to current role as Learning Director

4.0 Inhabiting the role

    4.1 Learning to manage managers

    4.2 Encouraging autonomy in those manage

    4.3 linking in with senior management

    4.4 becoming more assertive

    4.5 Learning to listen

5.0 Learning from others

    5.1 ...as a teacher

    5.2 ...as a leader

6.0 Reflections on how to enact key responsibilities

    6.1 Personal, social and health education

    6.2 Intervention strategies

    6.3 'Gifted and talented' children

7.0 Importance placed on developing additional responsibilities

    7.1 Mentoring new teachers

    7.2 Learn-to-learn curriculum development

8.0 Learning from courses

    8.1 ...as a teacher

    8.2 ...as a leader

9.0 Reflections on participating in this study

Epilogue

Appendix M: Examples of coded extracts of data by mode of belonging for Phillip

Identities	Imagination	Alignment	Engagement
As leader	So that was one of the things that motivated me to go for the Head of History job here. My thoughts were that if I became Head of Department then I will be able to become a mentor, and then I would get that experience... I just assumed that pretty much if you were Head of Department you would be a mentor. That's not the case... but I was really pleased that one of the things I most wanted and appealed to me about the idea of coming here was to be involved with the Teacher training (second interview, May07, 2: 56)	I think we're really just exploring things. A lot of this is all of us just finding our way. I may be getting into the stage now where I have always wanted where people start pushing themselves forward to do things because they start seeing what's on offer and what's going on, so its become much easier in effect (third interview, July07, 3:44)[47].	The whole thing about being on the SLT now is actually a really big thing in itself, and I think it's the regular attendance that is valued now. I'd say well over half of the stuff is very interesting. I don't feel that I have a great deal to contribute because there's stuff I don't know enough about, but I now can identify what is interesting to start to learn and find about (final interview, June08, 5: 33).[48]
As teacher	It's been interesting to look at how they work in Maths, and what they understand of peer assessment, and actually that's been an interesting one between the three of us. Trying to get to the nuts and bolts of almost what peer assessment isn't, that's the way to we are trying to sort it out (final interview, June 08, 5:7)	You know at the moment we are doing something I've not done before. I've taught the content but we are teaching one of the strands of the national curriculum in a different way. I like it and personally it's the most complicated one to teach effectively to adolescents just because it's difficult, and so I wouldn't say we've got it right for the department yet, but I was trying out a different way of doing that and... that was very much a long discussion and thinking as a department about how we might actually break down this quite difficult concept and I was thinking this	I think within the department [in my first school] we did a lot of discussion of lesson planning and that sort of thing. [My colleague] and I again talked a lot about lessons. We wrote an article about teaching History together about some of the stuff we'd been doing (third interview, July07, 3:23)[50].

---

[47] Later sub-coded as coordinated enterprise

[48] Later sub-coded as incidental learning

[50] Later sub-coded as retrospective learning

		[learning episode] was an example of me trying to do that with this class. I think I learnt quite a lot in terms of seeing where it worked better than what we'd done previously and I'd certainly go with the activities again in that format, but I think I will change some and I think we should try to develop these skills more (second interview, May07, 2,6)[49]	
As historian	I think the subject... is good because I really enjoy it. I came out [of the PGCE] just as keen to want to teach history. In fact I think the love of history as a subject has developed. I think a lot of my difficulties were conceptual about actually really understanding what is to learn history. I've got there through a lot of hard work (second interview, May07, 2:46).		
As someone with social concern	If I did do Voluntary Service Overseas I could get involved more in teaching training, because it would be interesting. So that was why I was keen to do it [become a Head of Department] (second interview, May07, 2: 56).		

---

[49] Later sub-coded as coordinated enterprise.

Appendix N: Leadership role progression for the five leaders in the study

Year	Amanda	Margaret	Aimee	Phillip	Jacky
NQT year	Music, Modern Languages & Geography coordinator		Fast-Track teacher (year 1 of 4)		PE coordinator
2	+ Shadow SENCO & Joint assessment coordinator (TLR post on senior leadership team)	Deputy literacy coordinator			+ Numeracy coordinator & Joint assessment coordinator (TLR post on senior leadership team)
3	+ Acting Deputy & Headteacher intermittently	Senior pupil coordinator (school 2)	'Gifted and talented' coordinator within the Department	Head of Subject (school 2)	+ Acting Deputy Head until maternity leave
4	Assistant Headteacher (school 2)	Humanities coordinator (7-13 year olds)	Head of Subject (school 2)		As year 2 part-time (with shadow)
5			Head of Faculty		Left school and teaching – Beyond study
6	Headteacher (school 3) – Beyond study				
7			Extended SLT secondment – Beyond study		
8		Humanities coordinator (2-11 year olds), 'Gifted and talented' & Educational visits coordinator			
9		Beyond study		Learning Director	
10				+ Extended SLT	
11				Assistant Headteacher – Beyond study	