

The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher

by

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Abstract

As early career teachers traverse the estranging terrain of education, they are situated at a point of confluence where school biography, individual ideas, university education (including the practicum), and other forms of experiences converge, compete, and confound with conceptions of identity and knowledge (Britzman, 2003). This study sought to gain insight into the ways early career teachers navigated the polyphony of knowledge and the tensions that arise from ideological friction as they are (re)constructing their identity(ies) and contingent understandings in the becoming of teacher (Britzman, 2003). The purpose of this study was to investigate how early career teachers grappled with becoming teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher. This study used a qualitative phenomenological methodology to investigate the lived experiences of six participants who were early career teachers (defined as zero to five years of experience). Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Findings illustrated the participants' indirect engagements with teacher identity(ies) and becoming teacher. Consideration is given to the ways in which space can be made for early career teachers to delve into their identity formation.

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The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher

Teacher Obscura

Teachers new to the profession are faced with a multitude of duties, responsibilities, and expectations upon taking up the work of teaching. These include learning the day-to-day demands of schooling, developing skills and understandings as pedagogues, and dealing with the relational aspects of teaching. In addition, early career teachers (defined here as those with zero to five years of experience) are confronted with the multifaceted engagement of continually negotiating a myriad of knowledge and identity(ies) as teacher. Often unbeknownst to them, early career teachers are confronted with the immense hidden work of *becoming teacher*, that is, of recursively working to (re)define their own identities as they are learning to teach (Britzman, 2003). This confounding experience may disorient early career teachers. The fact that “the teacher’s identity emerges from a conflict in and with authority, imagination, and flurries of autobiography that seem to return when least expected, is of course what makes the teacher’s identity so uncertain and surprising” (Britzman, 2003, p. 20). The dizzying clash between expectations and realities evokes a sense of discord in coming to grips with being and becoming teacher (Ballantyne & Zhukov, 2017; Britzman, 2003; Rich, Mavor, & Webb, 2017).

Teaching, and being teacher, is often reduced and regarded as a simplistic technical vocation rather than an intellectual profession (Britzman, 2003; Clarke, 2009; Popekowitz, 1998). I intentionally refer to *teacher* rather than *a teacher* or *the teacher* because without the article, I am referencing the state or condition of being teacher rather than a specific teacher or person as teacher. In this study, I took up the work of educational theorists, such as Britzman, Zembylas, Clarke, and Moore, to deconstruct the purportedly banal aspects of becoming teacher: a state that is unfixed, dynamic, and multifaceted. Engaging with the poststructuralist concept of

deconstruction, “is not about tearing down but about rebuilding; it is not about pointing out an error but about looking at how a structure has been constructed, what holds it together, and what it produces. It is not a destructive, negative, or nihilistic practice, but an affirmative one” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 482). The analysis of the lived experiences of early career teachers is taken up not with the intention of seeking to find fault and leaving an experience in a shattered state, but rather, deconstruction is taken up with the intention of reconstructing a new perspective and seeking to explore the space between. This is a space where contradictory ways of being and understanding coexist (Britzman, 2003; St. Pierre, 2000).

I was drawn to the topic of early careers teachers and teacher identity through my experiences of taking a course that included the close reading of Deborah Britzman’s (2003) *Practice Makes Practice*. At that point, I was in my fifth year of teaching and finding little fulfillment from the career path that I had selected. I was working on completing my post-baccalaureate diploma in education and had taken a course called *Mentoring for Teachers*. After reading Britzman’s text and completing the course, teaching and being teacher became complex and confounding. The book forever disrupted the ways I was thinking and would think about being teacher. Additionally, I was leaving the “stage” of being an early career teacher (zero to five years) and often wondered about how it is that early career teachers are left to flourish or flounder—perhaps even fail—at the beginning of their careers. What do those experiences do to early career teachers? How might this look different? During my master’s degree program, I took an introductory course on qualitative research. For the coursework, I conducted a mini study with early career teachers to investigate their understandings of being and becoming teacher. This branched off into what is now my thesis project about the hidden work of early career teachers.

Statement of the Problem

It is necessary to consider how early career teachers conceptualize their identity and knowledge as teacher because of the potential impacts on their engagement with curriculum, pedagogy, and students, whether it be with constructive or disquieting consequences. Early career teachers are inserted into a predetermined and prevailing discourse of “teacher as expert” where no conceptual space exists to allow for the (re)consideration or (re)construction of identity(ies) (Britzman, 1996; Britzman, 2003). As Britzman (2003) states, “that student teachers rarely have the space and official encouragement to consistently theorize about their lived experience further distances theory from practice, and diminishes student teachers’ capacity to theorize about the sources of their pedagogy” (p. 64). Although Britzman is referencing preservice teachers in her landmark study, I argue that the lack of conceptual space to theorize and critically engage with lived experiences is also a condition of in-service teachers. By disrupting authoritative discourses that negate the concept of “becoming teacher” (Britzman, 2003), early career teachers might discover spaces that allow for and tolerate a disjointed and multidirectional sense of identity rather than a fluid and linear concept of teacher. Disrupting cultural myths and social constructions of teacher potentially provides early career teachers space in which to question the cycle of reproducing discourses thus allowing teachers to engage critically in deconstructing the myriad assumptions, misconceptions, and prevailing myths (Gore & Bowe, 2015).

Purpose of the Study

As early career teachers traverse the estranging terrain of education, they are situated at a point of confluence where school biography, individual ideas, university education (including the practicum), and other forms of experiences converge, compete and confound their conceptions of

identity and knowledge (Britzman, 2003). This study sought to gain insight into the ways early career teachers navigate the cacophony of knowledge and the tensions that arise from ideological friction as they are (re)constructing their identity(ies) in the becoming of teacher (Britzman, 2003). Thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate how early career teachers grapple with becoming a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher. The specific research questions were:

- a) What types of knowledge do early career teachers encounter?
- b) What are the teachers' experiences of the tensions that are created when conflicting knowledge collides?
- c) In what ways do early career teachers experience and mitigate those tensions?
- d) In what ways do early career teachers understand their sense of teacher identity? Specifically, in what ways do early career teachers experience and attempt to reconcile the idea that they are presumed expert but are in a state of "becoming" teacher?

These questions aimed to provoke and elicit the layers of knowledge, assumptions, discourses, tensions, and dynamics that interact and inform the identities of early career teachers.

Theoretical Perspective

This study used a poststructural lens to frame the research and to consider the data. Poststructuralism is a theoretical stance that positions identity and knowledge as fluid, contradictory, layered, multiple, and dynamic (Weedon, 1997). This perspective was used to examine the lived experiences of the research participants, early career teachers, to investigate the seemingly banal through deconstruction and explore the depth of complexities and complications, rendering teaching as problematic. Peters and Burbules (2004) state that,

“poststructuralism emphasizes the discursive constitution of self (and self-regulation)—its corporeality, its temporality and finitude, its unconscious and libidinal energies, and the historical and cultural location of the subject” (p. 22). Poststructuralism examines the reciprocally reinforcing and power imbued binaries such as good-bad, success-failure, or expert-novice with efforts to “provoke a different way of thinking” (Britzman, 1995).

Research Methodology

This study used a qualitative phenomenological methodology to investigate the lived experiences of six participants who were early career teachers. The study engaged with and relied on the experiences and perceptions of early career teachers to, “develop subjective meanings of their experiences...These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views” (Creswell, 2007, p. 20). Data were collected through one-on-one semi-structured phenomenological interviews to allow for the interview to be responsive to the interviewee. Research participants received the Interview Protocol (Appendix A) prior to the interview in order to allow them time to consider their experiences. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using a phenomenological approach. It is important to note that since the study was framed by a poststructural theoretical framework, “subjects may well be the tellers of experience; but every telling is constrained, partial, and determined by the discourses and histories that prefigure, even as they might promise, representation” (Britzman, 1995, p. 232). The data provided glimpses of shifting and dynamic experiences that were by no means intended to provide generalizations to the larger population of early career teachers or even the sample of teachers who participated in this study. However, what these interviews do provide is the opportunity to consider snapshots of the ways early career teachers negotiate knowledge and

identity formation in order to contribute to the conversations concerning the complexities of teaching and becoming teacher.

Significance of the Research

The purpose of this project was to explore early career teachers' understandings of their own identity, specifically in relation to the various types of (often conflicting) knowledge that they encounter when they embark on their teaching career. My study aimed to contribute to the growing conversation of what teaching does to teachers. This study intended to address identity and early career teachers, through the lens of poststructuralism, in order to contribute to the gap that exists in the literature of teacher education research. Previous studies, such as Britzman's (2003) *Practice Makes Practice*, focus on pre-service teachers and my study considered the experiences of early career teachers. Ideological friction arises amidst the innumerable interactions between the knowledge of oneself and others. Early career teachers are provoked by experiences that demand them to reconcile uncomfortable tensions that rise to the surface; nudging and challenging long held assumptions or beliefs. As Pitt and Britzman (2003) state:

We might consider the time of our research as organized by the pull of mastery against the threat of fragmentation and the push to destabilize old forms of mastery and all new thought. But for this to occur, research must be understood as provoking, not representing knowledge. (p. 769)

The interviews provoked participants to consider aspects of identity and teacher becoming and to provide space and opportunity to talk and think about aspects of teaching and being teacher that are often relegated to the periphery. The findings of this project may inform those who work in educational institutions (such as, school divisions and teacher education programs) and the ways

in which they might provide opportunities for early career teachers to engage in critical considerations of their becoming.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate how early career teachers grapple with becoming teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how the negotiation of tenuous knowledge and experiences thus influences their identity(ies) of teacher. As evidenced in the literature, teacher identity is an area of research that has received increased attention since 1988 (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). The subsequent chapters will detail the literature review related to the topic of this study, the theoretical framework, research methodology, presentation and discussion of findings, and concluding thoughts.

Literature Review: Finding and Making Space

The topic of early career teachers is a broad area of teacher education research that has been, and continues to be, examined from a range of perspectives, frameworks, as well as for a variety of purposes. Considerable literature is available on the subject of early career teachers and includes topics such as: teachers in specific geographical locations, teachers of specific grades or subjects, attrition and retention, and foreign language teachers or teachers of English. This literature review concentrated on the research related to early career teachers, specifically in regards to teacher identity and knowledge. The topic of identity has seen a growing increase in attention amongst educational researchers as evidenced in the literature (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beijaard, Meijer, Verloop, 2004). In this section, I will discuss the ways early career teachers and teacher identity are taken up in the current literature in order to illustrate where my study is situated.

Early Career Teachers: Terminology

This study utilized the term “early career teacher” to represent the initial experiences of a teacher in the outset of their career as they enter into the profession. Variation in the key terms used to denote this initial “stage” of teaching is represented throughout the literature: beginning teachers, early career teachers, new teachers, novice teachers, newly qualified teachers (Kemmis, Heikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors, & Edwards-Groves, 2014), neophyte teachers (Buchanan, Prescott, Schuck, Aubusson, & Burke, 2013; Buchanan, 2015; Mockler, 2011) and new practitioners (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The term *early career teacher* was selected because it references a flexible description and temporal range of the start to a teacher’s professional career rather than using language that conceptualizes teachers in somewhat limiting and loaded terms as *beginner* or *new*. *Early career teacher* is also commonly used throughout the literature

in North American as well as international contexts. The language of *new*, *novice*, or *beginner* suggest that the subject is not yet a teacher and evokes a sense of naivety and lacking, while also proffering assumptions about “deficits” (Gore & Bowe, 2015).

Early Career Teachers: Themes in the Literature

The majority of the research available on early career teachers tends to focus on the performative and technical aspects of teaching; the “doing” of being teacher (Biesta, 2009).

Specific areas of research include:

- challenges and perceptions of early career teachers (Erickson & Pinnegar, 2017; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Kutcy & Schulz, 2006; Tricario, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2015),
- resiliency (Mansfield, Beltman, & Price, 2014),
- retention (Lovett & Cameron, 2011),
- mentoring (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015; Izadinia, 2015; Jaspers, Meijer, Prins, & Wubbels, 2014; Kemmis, Keikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors, & Edwards-Groves, 2014; Richter, Kunter, Ludtke, Klusmann, & Anders, 2013; Crasborn, Hennissen, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2011; Devos, 2010; Elliott, Isaacs, & Chugani, 2010; Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2010; Le Maistre & Pare, 2010; Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009; Oplatka & Eizenberg, 2007),
- professional development (Dharan, 2015),
- professionalism (Moore & Clarke, 2016),
- induction and support (Fox & Wilson, 2015; Tam, 2015; Nasser-Abu & Fresko, 2010; Kardos & Moore Johnson, 2007; Rippon & Martin, 2006; Moore Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Kardos, Moore Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001),
- turnover and attrition (Schaefer, 2013).

Professional identity, experiences, agency, and emotions were topics that often appeared in literature that were linked to discussions of teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Buchanan, 2015; Bukor, 2015; Darby, 2008; Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; McCormack, Gore, & Thomas, 2006; Mockler, 2011; Nichols, Schutz, Rodgers, & Bilica, 2016; Ruohotie-Lyht, 2013; Smith, 2007; Watson, 2006; Zembylas, 2005; Zembylas, 2003). Teacher becoming has also been explored in relation to teacher identity and in conjunction with psychoanalytic theory and poststructuralist theory (Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 1986, 1992, 2003, 2007; Clarke & Sheridan, 2017; Janzen, 2013, 2014, 2015; Rich, Mavor, & Webb, 2017; Walshaw, 2013). Additionally, there is research specific to the transition from a student of teacher education, teacher candidate, to a professional teacher and the subsequent experiences and perceptions of first year teachers (Ballantyne & Zhukov, 2017; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011; Buchanan, 2015; Mayer, et al., 2017; Nichols, Schutz, Rodgers & Bilica, 2016; Veenman, 1984). I will consider how early career teachers and teacher identity is taken up in educational research, with a primary focus on the studies that work within a poststructuralist framework.

Professional Identity versus Teacher Identity

Throughout the literature related to teacher identity, professional identity is frequently used. Thus, it is important to distinguish the difference between the terms professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) and identity as conceptualized within a poststructural framework. Professional identity “compromises the notion of agency, or the active pursuit of professional development and learning in accordance with a teacher’s goals” (p. 177). Although Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) acknowledge the “dynamism inherent” (p. 178) in teacher identity, their examination of identity is not articulated from a poststructural perspective. Professional identity

is taken up by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) with the intent to consider how it affects the roles and responsibilities of a teacher; the practice and skills. In contrast, Britzman (2003) asserts that:

A dialogic discourse can take into account the discursive practices and their social relationship that realize pedagogy and the lived experiences of teachers...For in considering what teaching does to teachers, our concern is with *how* the activity of teaching expresses something about the subjectivities of teachers and determines ways teachers come to construct their teaching identities. (p. 25)

It is from these conceptual vantages and a poststructuralist theoretical framework that I wish to further explore how early career teachers negotiate their understandings of identity(ies) within the becoming of teacher and the tensions that resonate from collisions of (difficult) knowledge.

Despite the frequent use of professional identity, from a poststructuralist standpoint, professional identity cannot be compartmentalized or partitioned from the identity of the teaching subject. A professional identity does not “exist” outside of or unattached from a subject’s identity. Therefore, when considering the identity of teachers, it seems fitting to regard it as such, identity or perhaps, even *identities*. Subjects have plurality in their identity, as influenced by the social context and multifarious experiences, but it is problematic to accept that one could splinter their professional identity and reflect on that as if it can stand separate and partitioned, ultimately, fractured from all other aspects of identity. In attempting to distinguish professional identity from the totality of a subject’s identity, professional identity may be better characterized as the role and function of the teacher, the professional duties and responsibilities. Perhaps this can be referred to as “the profession” so as to remove it from the individual because, “in actuality, role and function are not synonymous with identity; whereas role can be assigned, the taking up of an identity is a constant social negotiation” (Britzman, 1992, p. 24). Britzman

(as cited in Clarke, 2009) argues that, “role speaks to function whereas identity voices investments and commitments” (p. 29). Identity is essential to learning to teach and becoming teacher but remains obscured and tacit without critical engagement or recognition. This research study aims to consider identity and how early career teachers continually (re)negotiate their shifting identity(ies) amidst knowledge construction and social contexts by considering identity from a poststructural lens.

Teacher Identity Within a Poststructural Framework

The interest in the study of identity, as related to teachers and teaching, is seeing greater representation in the literature (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). Clarke (2009) asserts that, “overall, we can say that identity is increasingly being seen as a crucial component determining how teaching and learning are played out in schools and classrooms” (p. 186). Poststructuralist approaches to theorizing provides a means to realizing the complications and contradictions of becoming teacher; enlivening teaching from being reduced to a simplified and technical means of delivering knowledge to the masses and from implying that strategies and tools will be enough for complex problems that are bound by uncertainty. Taking up teacher identity through a poststructural lens allows for engagement with dominant discourses that authorize and legitimize certain ways of knowing and being (Davis, 1997; Søreide, 2006). This study will utilize a poststructuralist lens to analyze the data and create textual descriptions of the ways in which early career teachers engage with their teacher identity(ies).

Teacher Identity: Shared Understandings

A struggle raised in the literature on teacher identity is the agreement on a common definition or understanding of the concept of teacher identity (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011;

Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004; Nichols, Schutz, Rodgers & Bilica, 2016). The literature does reflect shared understandings of teacher identity: multiplicity of identity, discontinuity of identity, and the social construction of identity (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Nichols, Schutz, Rodgers & Bilica, 2016). This is evident in how teacher identity is conceptualized in the work of many teacher education researchers that take up teacher identity within a poststructural framework. The commonly used characterizations of teacher identity stem from poststructural understandings of identity that, “theorizes subjectivity as a site of disunity and conflict” (Weedon, 1997, p. 21). This philosophical position considers, “how we live our lives as conscious thinking subjects, and how we give meaning to the material social relations under which we live and which structure our everyday lives, depends on the range and social power of existing discourses” (p. 26). Given the hesitancy of poststructuralism to theorize a fixed subject, it is not surprising that a rigid or generalizing conceptualization of teacher identity is not an agreed upon term. Thus, it was important throughout this study to recognize the multifaceted and dynamic layers of teacher identity as it was positioned within a theoretical framework that used a poststructural lens.

Teacher Development versus Teacher Becoming

Within the literature on early career teachers, there are differing positions in relation to conceptualizing or understandings of learning to teach. Some researchers and theorists regard learning to teach through a developmental lens that insists upon a linear and chronological manner of developing as a teacher—a progression. The further accumulation of experiences is understood to support an early career teacher in becoming a “good” or “expert” teacher; knowledgeable and equipped with the quick fix solutions of “best practices.” These conceptualizations of learning to teach are problematic because of the reductive perspective and

attention to outcomes that privilege the accumulation of time and equate this to increased knowledge of teaching. The literature that regards learning to teach as linear often reduces teaching to the performative, narrow, focus of skills and knowledge; predominantly the “doing” of teaching. The absence of consideration for the uneven and uncertain “development” of learning to teach fails to consider the numerous ways in which early career teachers experience interference and tensions manifesting from the tacit but prevailing discourses that permeate teaching and schooling. Within the poststructuralist literature, learning to teach is recognized as uneven development (Britzman, 2007), non-linear, recursive, and unfinished (Ball & Olmedo, 2013). As Britzman (2003) states:

Learning to teach is not a mere matter of applying decontextualized skills or of mirroring predetermined images; it is time when one’s past, present, and future are set in dynamic tension. Learning to teach – like teaching itself – is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become” (Britzman, 2003, p. 31).

Becoming teacher is a multifaceted, dynamic, and ceaseless struggle that is continually complicated through social constructions, interactions, contradictions, tensions, and instability. Regarding teaching as developmental, an orderly checklist of knowledge, experiences, and skills, attempts to stabilize and provide a fixed and linear view of becoming teacher. A developmental view collapses once the dominant discourses of experience and cultural myths of teaching are deconstructed to reveal that a developmental concept of teaching privileges perspectives that attempt to quantify, measure, and evaluate being a teacher. Alternatively, this study recognizes teachers, including early career teachers, as becoming teacher and this will be evident in the

ways in which the participants' lived experiences are analyzed to consider how early career teachers respond to their becoming.

Teacher Identity and Emotions

Just as identity is inextricably linked to becoming teacher, so too are the emotions that become part of the work of being teacher (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). It is inevitable when working in social context with others that times of disruption, interference, uncertainty, or confusion will evoke emotional responses. Nichols et al. (2016) considers the interplay of emotions and teacher identities in early career teachers and the use of reflection to construct understanding of the ways their identity is shaped by emotional episodes. Zembylas (2002) studies the ways in which, "the emotional rules of teaching and curriculum might be constituted and experienced" discursively in relation to teacher identities (p. 189). Zembylas emphasizes the "emotional complexity of schools" (p. 208) and the agency that rests within the capacity to deconstruct dominant discourses that dictate the emotional rules. Poststructuralism is used by Zembylas (2003) to theorize emotion and identity in teaching and the ways in which teachers can embrace agency in their self-reflection in order to locate power and resistance to dominant discourses. Common to the literature of teacher identity (subjectivity) and emotions is the pursuit for "care of the teacher-self" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 127). Early career teachers, in their fragile becoming, are confronted with shifting identities and emotions, "and there is a sense that all of these thoughts and affects should remain hidden, lest the teacher appear too emotional, uncertain, or vulnerable" (Britzman, 2003, p. 21). Shaping an understanding of the dominant discourses that constitute teachers and teaching in specific ways affords early career teachers the opportunities to critically engage with and theorize about what it means to be teacher and become teacher. Such understanding provides opportunities for teachers to deconstruct

discourses that legitimize a certain way of being teacher that stifles the shaping of a teacher's identity. This notion of identity and emotion will become salient in this research, particularly as I engage with the data illustrating how emotions become manifest as a part of the hidden work of becoming teacher.

Teacher Identity, the Neoliberal Agenda, and Agency

In our current society that is driven by accountability, liability, and the quantification of countless aspects of our existence in the pursuit of data, these dominant discourses of the neoliberal agenda permeate teaching and becoming teacher. Researchers and theorists who critically consider teaching and teacher identity in relation to the discourses of outcomes and performance, seek to draw attention to the consequences of allowing the dominant discourses to silently, but forcefully, operate in ways that are undisputed and without being confronted. Biesta (2009, 2013) questions the purpose of education in a climate where every action is measured while overlooking what in fact forms "good education" as opposed to effective education. Ball and Olmedo (2013) consider how neoliberalism creates a site of struggle within the teaching subject as they are becoming teacher and the dominant discourses that incite some teachers to react through resistance in order to maintain their self so that they may construct different understandings of teaching and their teacher identity. Identity and resistance to dominant discourses is taken up by Clarke and Moore (2013) in their critical analysis of the ways in which neoliberal discourses interact with teaching and teachers, and how one might aspire to maintain the individuality of being teacher rather than conform to a product of a system. Buchanan (2015) examines how teacher identity is shaped by educational reform discourses and the ways in which teachers resist and locate agency within the current data driven climate of accountability. Early career teachers are not immune to dominant discourses that legitimize effective teaching with an

outcome focus. The current climate necessitates and creates further urgency for early career teachers to have the understanding and language to critically engage with the discourses that will continue to position teachers to enact cultural myths. Early career teachers require the means to deconstruct the authoritative and dominant discourses to reveal the flawed logic in order to create different ways of constructing understandings of teaching and becoming teacher. This study did not engage with the notion of teacher agency.

Making Space: Reconceptualizing the Spaces Within and Between

Theorists and researchers studying teacher identity in relation to early career teachers, and the transition from teacher candidate to teacher, seek to rethink and explore the spaces that exist. This includes reconceiving the relationship between the university and teaching practicum common to most teacher education programs, seeking out opportunities as teachers enter their initial years of the profession, and looking at the potential of the schools where teachers work. Phompun, Thongthew, and Zeichner (2013) propose a “third space” where practice and theory can be brought together through collaborative engagement by the university and co-operating teachers with the goal of supporting identity development. This study does create pause in the manner it conceptualizes teacher identity because it speaks more to “professional identity;” compromised of the professional skills and knowledge of teaching. Gore and Bowe (2015) offer a framework for “Quality Teaching Rounds” that attempts to “position all PLC [professional learning communities] members as learners, to flatten the power hierarchy, and to avoid the adoption of a mentor/coach/expert role by any individual” (p. 79). Gore and Bowe (2015) consider discourses and becoming teacher in order to mitigate the ways in which early career teachers become isolated and perceive being failed by their lack of experience. Gore and Bowe assert that Quality Teacher Rounds provide a way for early career teachers to critically engage

with their becoming through the development of the language to identify and articulate the ways they are being shaped and shape themselves as becoming teacher. Beauchamp and Thomas (2010) examine teacher identity within the teacher education program and the necessity for reflection as a means to examine “possible future identities.” In taking up such work, it would be necessary to bring a critical poststructural lens to the identity work in order to, “make explicit the orthodoxies which it contests, to investigate the nature and implications of those hegemonic versions of language and subjectivity which most people take for granted and which underpin our notions of common sense, social meaning and ourselves” (Weedon, 1997, p. 72). This body of literature illustrates the ways in which teacher identity is a part of the hidden work of becoming teacher and learning to teach. Engaging with the different ways identity is structured, and perhaps fabricated, is necessary in resisting the ways in which early career teachers are positioned to reproduce images of teacher once known. This study contributes to the ways in which the teacher is, or could be, reconceptualized, elucidating the complexities, contradictions, and uncertainties that reside in the hidden work of becoming teacher. Considerations are given for how teacher education programs and schools might provide opportunities for teachers to engage with their becoming.

Theorizing for the Purposes of Transforming and Reimagining

Teacher education research often seeks to locate the deficits and offer solutions, generalizing teachers’ experiences, and reducing the complexities of become a teacher “into discrete variables” (Britzman, 2003, p. 37). Teacher identity research is sometimes completed for the purpose of improving teacher retention, performance, or well-being; that is, to seek a solution (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Kardos & Johnson, 2007; Larrivee, 2000; Walkington, 2005). However, there is a growing (yet relatively

small) assemblage of teacher education research that theorizes the lived experiences of teachers and offers insight into the myriad complexities that populate the spaces of becoming teacher, such as Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 1986, 1992, 1995, 2003, 2007; Buchanan, 2015; Clarke, 2009; Clarke & Sheridan, 2017; Gore & Bowe, 2015; Janzen, 2012, 2014, 2015; McWilliam, 2008; Miller Marsh, 2002; Moore, 2004; Pitt & Britzman, 2003; Popkewitz, 1997, 1998; Søreide, 2006; Trent, 2011; Zembylas, 2003a. These complexities include the transitions between roles of teacher candidate and professional teacher, considerations of becoming teacher, engaging with the ways teacher identity(ies) are shaped and disrupted, the discourses that structure teacher identity, and the ways in which the theory-practice tension is reflected in identity and knowledge. This study incorporated literature that explored early career teachers and identity for the purpose of theorizing the hidden work of becoming teacher and the ways in which knowledge and identity are structured by discourses. I will use this problematizing of teacher and teaching to engage with and analyze the lived experiences of the teachers who participated in this study.

Theoretical Framework: Important Poststructural Concepts for Teacher Education

Research

This study was positioned within a poststructuralist framework where knowledge is understood as constructed by the individual and influenced by experiences (Weedon, 1997). Plurality is essential to theorizing within a poststructuralist framework. Thus, “no teaching identity is ever singular or without contradictions; the teacher’s identity expresses a cacophony of calls” (Britzman, 2003, p. 223). Knowledge and identity are considered to be shifting; continually (re)constructed and fluid. There is multiplicity within the conceptualizations of knowledge and identity so that multiple, perhaps conflicting, knowledge and identities may exist simultaneously. As Søreide (2006) posits, “Our relations to the world and other people, our

choices, practices and language constantly create, construct and reconstruct our identity (p. 530). Poststructuralism provides opportunities to reconsider the seemingly monotonous and one-dimensional aspects of our daily lives in the attempts to render them problematic and endowed with possible alternative ways of knowing.

Using a poststructuralist framework allows for the acknowledgement of multiple truths, knowledge, and identities, as Weedon (1997) states, “poststructuralism theorizes subjectivity as a site of disunity and conflict” (p. 21). It recognizes that meaning expressed in language reveals “competing discourses, competing ways of giving meaning to the world...[such that] language becomes an important site of political struggle” (Weedon, 1997, p. 23). This study sought to consider these sites of struggle and tensions embedded in the state of flux that is becoming teacher. Taking up these questions within a framework of poststructuralism provided the opportunity for multiple voices to be heard and multiple truths/realities to exist - even if from the same participant. The task of engaging with the lived experiences of teachers is made possible because, “poststructuralism proposes a subjectivity which is precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak” (Weedon, 1997, p.32). It is the notions of instability and plurality that complement the exploration of early career teachers as they come face to face with tenuous knowledge in their becoming of teacher and identity(ies) formation. There can be, “an appreciation of the tension of holding incompatible perspectives together because both or all are necessarily true...it is the tensions of competing perspectives, rather than efforts to resolve them, that make for new reflections and questions about the situation and cultural settings” (Yon, 2003, p. 423).

This study did not produce neat and tidy answers to complex problems. Rather, it provoked and evoked the tangle of multitudinous layers of tensions and overlapping identities

experienced by early career teachers and informing their own becoming. As Britzman (2003) acknowledges:

Individuals must interfere with one another because having to learn and having to teach is felt as interference, as a battle of wills, and as a confluence of influence. Paradoxically, significance, or better, education, is made from this conflict...which feels like a crisis of the self. (p. 8)

By deconstructing the implications of tensions within knowledge and deconstructing the authoritative discourses, the possibilities of (re)construction of knowledge and identity(ies) is explored.

Difficult knowledge. Pitt and Britzman (2003) define difficult knowledge as, “the psychical dynamics that animate teaching and learning...a concept meant to signify both representations of social traumas in curriculum and the individual’s encounters with them in pedagogy” (p. 755). They state that, “because knowledge is lost and found in these psychical dynamics, they leave traces in narratives about knowledge...We are calling these traces ‘difficult knowledge’” (p. 757). Pitt and Britzman (2003) also engage with three psychoanalytic concepts of deferred action, transference, and symbolization. They characterize knowledge as that of the past and present lived experiences and the knowledge from these experiences interacting with one another to create new knowledge, interfere, or create a barrier. Knowledge does not stand separate and immutable. It is in conversation; revealing, restricting, and reverberating. The echoes of difficult knowledge can resonate in tensions when knowledge collides, resulting in “issues of encountering the self through the otherness of knowledge” (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 755). This poststructuralist stance on knowledge provides opportunity to engage with the messiness and complexities of teaching.

Identity. As Britzman (2006) states, “We are affected by the worlds we try to affect; our sense of identity may telegraph this human condition” (as cited in Alsup, p. xi). Identity is interfered with and influenced by the social, historical, and philosophical contexts; we are affected by the spaces, conceptual and physical, that we occupy, have occupied, and will occupy. This study considers that a, “a post-structuralist understanding of teacher identity as a narrative construction opens an understanding of such culturally defined dichotomies as not necessarily opposing or excluding each other. Dichotomies can, on the contrary, be understood as presuppositions of each other” (Søreide, 2006, p. 541). A poststructuralist view of identity recognizes the plurality and unfixity, allowing for the space between binary ideas to be examined. What does it mean to an early career teacher to exist in the betweenness of student and teacher while trying to learn to teach while simultaneously teaching others (Britzman, 2003)? As Clarke (2009) argues:

Identity is at once a complex matter of the social and the individual, of discourse and practice, of reification and participation, of similarity and difference, of agency and structure, of fixity and transgression, of the singular and the multiple, and of the synoptic and the dynamic. (p. 189)

Identity, the (re)definition, (re)negotiation, (re)construction, is part of the hidden work of becoming teacher. This study considers how the participants engage with their teacher identity(ies).

Hidden work. The idea of “hidden work” is used to describe the masked complexity of becoming teacher (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Britzman, 2003). The “hidden work” includes the internal struggles for voice, negotiations of identity, constructions of knowledge, interaction and interference by school biography, as well as engagement with discourses and cultural myths

(Britzman, 1986; Britzman, 2003). Teaching is often viewed as a technical vocation that is concerned with the practical – the doing of teaching. It is reduced to the visible and performative aspects of being teacher. The dynamic intricacies of becoming teacher are often obscured by the school biographies that are acquired through the overfamiliarity of the teacher’s work. Early career teachers are confronted with the discord of their preconceived assumptions as they are inserted into the profession of teaching that demands ongoing (re)construction and (re)definition of what it is to be teacher. Hidden work is woven as a thread throughout this study to characterize the masked complexities of teaching.

Uneven development. The transition of a subject from a teacher education program to the profession of teaching is often assumed to be linear or seamless (Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 1986; Britzman, 2003; Britzman, 2007). The student is presumed to make the shift to being a teacher; leaving one role for another. This dominant discourse simplifies and disguises the complexities of becoming teacher because it:

Is organized on the implicit theory of immediate integration: the university provides the theories, methods, and skills; schools provide the classroom, curriculum, and student; and the student teacher provides the individual effort; all of which combine to produce the finished product of professional teacher. (Britzman, 1986, p. 442)

Britzman (2007) argues that, “we are likely to forget that all of us are subject to the radical uncertainty of being with others in common and uncommon history and, this being with other beings makes development uneven and uncertain” (p. 1). Teacher becoming is a fluid conceptualization of the “development” of teachers that is characterized as, “uneven and as ‘out of joint’ ...an unfinished project, more fragile than we ever imagined” (p. 12). This view of becoming teacher complicates and renders it problematic; an early career teacher can experience

feelings of being teacher and student all at once. By taking up the concept of uneven development in this study, it is used to deconstruct the cultural myths and authoritative discourses that populate the notions of teacher that entangle early career teachers.

Becoming teacher. Conceptualizing teacher development as “becoming teacher” disengages the presuppositions of discourses that constitute teacher as a finished product, expert, and self-made. Britzman (2007) describes that:

Maxine Greene (1973) named the teacher ‘as stranger’. She proposed the teacher as an incomplete project, as unfinished, as in the process of becoming a teacher with others. If the teacher chooses to become a critical subject, she supposed, what is critical only emerges when the teacher understands herself or himself as subject to uncertainty.

Uncertainty resides within the acts of a self-committed to becoming. (p. 3)

Britzman, amongst other researchers highlighted in the literature review, take up teacher becoming from a poststructural perspective that considers identity as, “precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak” (Weedon, 1997, p. 32). Rather than presuming that teachers are complete upon entering the profession, “this latter image of teachers – as negotiators, mediators, and authors of who they are becoming – is the place where identity becomes infused with possibilities” (Britzman, 2003, p. 29). Although unsettling at times, becoming teacher reveals an expanse of opportunities for (re)defining what it means to be teacher. Becoming teacher is part of the hidden work of learning to teach and is a focus of this study.

School biography. School biography is the idea that a subject who has experienced the school system will have assumptions about the work of teaching and being teacher due to the extensive time observing teachers from the vantage point of a student. In teacher education

programs, “the overfamiliarity of the teaching profession is a significant contradiction affecting those learning to teacher...It is taken for granted that we all know what a teacher is and does” (Britzman, 2003, p. 27). This idea of the school biography extends into the early career teacher’s experiences as they enter the profession and continue to negotiate an understanding of their teacher identity. As a result of the influence of school biography, tensions emerge in such that, “theoretical knowledge of teaching is not easily valued and school biography matters too much” (Britzman, 2003, p. 1). Teachers come to rely on school biography to not only inform their decisions regarding pedagogy and curriculum but to construct their identities of teacher. As Britzman (2007) cautions, “newcomers learning to teach enter teacher education looking backward on their years of school experience and project it into the present” (p. 2). School biographies create problematic conceptualizations, “when the directions of education, knowledge, authority, and power become entangled with the scenery of self and other learning, the script of the teacher’s school biography becomes relational” (Britzman, 2003, p. 2). School biography is valued on the assumptions that experience creates learning - I saw it, so I know it. The data collected from participants in this study illustrated the influences of school biographies.

Collective identity work. Identity is understood to be socially constructed and fluid; continually affected by a cacophony of influences. Danielewicz (2001) defines collective identity work within the field of teaching as, “the solidification of this identity through the reactions of other teachers...being recognized and accepted as a teacher by other teachers, and by students, administrators, other school personnel” (p. 112). Collective identity is the external validation of one’s identity as an early career teacher. This idea comes into play when one’s identity is internally disputed and conflicted and the early career teacher is receptive to external voices, the other, that attempt to stabilize an otherwise unstable identity. Within this concept, I would argue

that the “solidification” is temporary or illusory as a teacher’s identity is continually in flux and often negotiating contradictory tensions. As an early career teacher, there is an interplay between simultaneously feeling like an insider and outsider to the teaching profession. This study considered how early career teachers engage with the other to reify their fragile teacher identity(ies).

Cultural myths. Cultural myths are socially constructed beliefs or ideologies that create fallible but powerful justification for authoritative discourses (Britzman, 2003). They legitimize discourses of knowledge, power, identity, and authority that structure the understandings a subject has of teaching and being teacher. Cultural myths, “provide a set of ideal images, definitions, justifications, and measures for thought, feelings, and agency that work to render as unitary and certain the reality it seeks to produce. Myths provide a semblance of order, control, and certainty in the face of the uncertainty and vulnerability of the teacher’s world” (Britzman, 2003, p. 222). Britzman (2003) engages the concept of cultural myths in relation to teaching and states that:

Cultural myths serve as a kind of defense mechanism for teachers. Each myth distorts the social sense and institutional context of learning to teach, the constructed qualities of knowledge, and the ambivalence made from relations of power. Three cultural myths are discussed: everything depends upon the teacher, teachers are self made, and teachers are experts. They situate the teacher’s individuality as the problem and proffer a static solution of authority, control, mastery, and certainty as the proper position. They seem to explain competency as the absence of conflict” (p. 7).

Cultural myths obscure and mask the complexity of the work of being teacher and create an illusion of teacher as a stable and fixed product of experience. As a result, the cultural myths that

permeate teaching misleadingly position theory as irrelevant and practice, through experience, as the means to learning. Cultural myths create a structure where certain ideas are valued and accepted over others without providing consideration that binary notions can exist in tandem, not just in the absence of one over the other. The data collected from this study was deconstructed to consider the ways cultural myths structure the understandings of the participants.

Discourse. Discourse can be defined as the, “narrative conventions, modes of reasoning, categories of thought, styles of meaning making, and implicit and taken-for-granted values” (Britzman, 2003, p. 11). Discourses structure and create rationale for knowledge and understanding, as well as how one constructs identity. Authoritative, or dominant, discourses present themselves as fixed bodies of knowledge that appear to be without fault or contradiction and lend validation to beliefs and ideologies. Additionally, authoritative discourses present as objective, immutable, normative, and transparent when in fact they mask contradictions and flawed rationale. Weedon (1997) states that, “discursive fields consist of competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes. They offer the individual a range of modes of subjectivity” (p. 34). Poststructuralism’s recognition of plurality and contradiction of structures within or between discourses allows for the possibility to seek to, “understand the relationship between language, social institutions, subjectivity and power” (p. 34). The critical analysis of discourses by deconstruction is utilized as a means to provoke and disrupt the structures that give meaning and power.

Deconstruction. The theoretical concept of deconstruction is a poststructuralist approach to analyzing the structures that support knowledge and identity. As Derrida (1970) states, “it is a question of knowing where it comes from and how it functions” (as cited in Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 67). Deconstruction aims to question the assumptions that organize self-authorizing

knowledge and bring attention to the contradictory reason that remains masked for the purpose of reconstructing a different understanding (Peters & Burbules, 2004). It aspires to provide, “a transformative and critical way that opens it to its own future” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 72). Taking up deconstruction in regard to education creates opportunities to reveal the complexities and contradictions that are inherent in becoming teacher, thus providing early career teachers with an alternative of considering the structure of teacher knowledge and identity.

The Importance of Poststructuralist Perspectives in Teacher Educational Research

Common to the underpinnings of research and writing from poststructural education theorists is the position that education and teaching are assumed to be problematic. Britzman (2003) states that, “multiple perspectives on the same event, however, are both inevitable and desirable” (p. 38). The work is marked by a critical disengagement from hierarchies and a collapsing of paradigms dominated by binary ideology—a deconstruction. Smith (2010) states that, “Derrida offers us readings of texts where, at the touch of a careful reading, these binaries turn through a hundred and eighty degrees, or fall apart altogether” (p. 146). Poststructural education theorists complicate that which is assumed to be immutable, dominant, authoritative, and stable. Britzman (2003) argues that, “for those who leave this world to enter teacher education, their first culture shock may well occur with the realization of the overwhelming complexity of the teacher’s work and the myriad ways this complexity is masked and misunderstood” (p. 27). Through a poststructuralist lens, the hidden complexities, contradictions, and confusions are explored and questioned. Theorists of this kind consider teaching to be a, “process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become” (Britzman, 2003, p. 31). Teaching is not viewed as a technical and simplistic vocation; it is acknowledged to be a dynamic and undulating (re)construction that

engages (and disengages) the dominant discourses that permeate the field. Pitt and Britzman argue (2003) that:

Poststructuralist method heightens the problem of the verisimilitude embedded in such foundational concepts in qualitative studies as voice, identity, agency and experience while still expecting to offer some contingent observations about how individuals – including the researcher—make knowledge in and of the world. This methodology offers a new tension to educational studies by bringing to bear on participant narratives the very problem of narrating experience and by asking what conditions or structures the narrative impulse. (p. 756)

Poststructuralist education theorists disengage the teacher from a stationary and isolating position of completeness and renders teacher as continually becoming; capable of responding, reacting, and renegotiating their identity and knowledge as teacher (Britzman, 2003).

Poststructuralists upset the notion of the fixed self; the subject does not remain immutable. Knowledge and identity are socially (re)constructed, pluralistic, and fluid. Erica McWilliam (2008) acknowledges that the idea of a complete and expert “Great Teacher” with a fixed notion of knowledge that is no longer accepted. The notion of a teacher that is becoming is reflective of a poststructuralist understanding. McWilliam (2008) notes, “that teachers are shaped – and shape themselves” (p. 39). This speaks to the understanding of identity and knowledge as being socially constructed. Knowledge, specifically new knowledge and ways of knowing, will not be found in re-enactments of authoritative and dominant discourses (Britzman, 2003). It is necessary that, “radical doubt is the basis of so much that is original and creative in the production of new knowledge” (McWilliam, 2008, p. 42). The struggles and entanglements with

competing, conflicting, and confounding knowledge will provide opportunity for new ways of knowing and disrupt assumptions.

Alex Moore (2004) takes up dominant discourses in teaching through a poststructuralist lens and recognizes, “the notion that, whether professionally or more generally, we need to perceive and understand our ‘selves’ as compromising multiple rather than singular identities” (p. 142). Moore (2004) also discusses that identity and knowledge can be considered with:

An emphasis on accommodation rather than assimilation (opening ourselves to the possibility of modifying our own understandings and behaviours rather than limiting our understandings and behaviours to what we have pre-decided, or seeking to force situations and other people into conforming to our unquestioned world-view). (p. 143)

This speaks to (re)constructing ways of knowing by recognizing or seeking out new knowledge from ideological friction. Moore speaks to the open-ended possibilities of knowing that exist without the constraints of pre-determined, assumptive, dominant discourses. When engaging with knowledge and identity:

Reflexivity moves the critical practitioner *beyond* such forms of self-evaluation towards its location...in a much bigger picture...that which is being evaluated or reflected upon...is not treated as if it were the whole of the picture, but is made sense of by reference to what is happening in the rest of the larger picture. (p. 149)

The poststructuralist conception of identity recognizes the multiplicity, overlap, entanglement, interference, and instability. In relation to teacher identity, poststructuralists continually speak to an understanding of identity that is shaped by innumerable experiences. The struggle is making space to critically engage with and deconstruct the myriad of layers in flux that inform teacher identity. The work is in taking up:

The messy meanings of teacher identity as it comes to be constituted through social interactions, performances, daily negotiations with in a school culture that privileges emotional self-discipline and autonomy...identity is not a pre-existing stable element...but something that is constituted through power relations. (Zembylas, 2003a, p. 109)

Considering educational research from a poststructuralist perspective provides opportunities to recognize the fluctuating dynamics inherent to teaching and becoming teacher. Poststructuralism proffers opportunities to disrupt and provoke the obscured and hidden complexities; creating ruptures that invite alternative ways of knowing and thinking about becoming teacher.

Theoretical Conflation

An issue that arises in the literature on teacher identity is the interchangeable and sometimes synonymous use of postmodernism and poststructuralism by some of the researchers (Arvaja, 2016). Postmodernism and poststructuralism differ in their theoretical tenets but are often conflated (Peters & Burbules, 2004; St. Pierre, 2000; Wright, 2003). Peters and Burbules (2004) suggest that:

While there are both historical and theoretical overlaps and “family resemblances” between postmodernism and poststructuralism, it is possible to distinguish between the two movements in terms of their respective intellectual genealogies and their theoretical applications. One important set of theoretical and historical differences can be seen most easily by recognizing the differences between their *theoretical objects of study*. (p. 29)

Postmodernism sought to take down the metanarratives that prevailed during the modern period and poststructuralism was a philosophical response to structuralism, focusing on critical theorizing of language. The tendency to collapse the two different movements into one, demands

awareness for the attempts to reduce and simplify the theoretical density that exemplifies the theorizing of poststructuralism and postmodernism. This study attempted to make space to explore the participants' shifting identity(ies) of teacher by considering their experiences of conflicting knowledge. The use of poststructuralism, and deconstruction, creates opportunities to consider the hidden complexities of becoming teacher while disrupting the dominant discourses; (re)constructing new ways of considering becoming teacher. In the next chapter, the educational research related to the field of teacher identity and knowledge will be examined to situate this study within the current research.

Where to Next?

Many researchers and theorists discuss teachers' becoming, developing, school or educational biography, and identity but research is sparse in regard to authoritative discourses and cultural myths that structure and discursively constitute teacher becoming particularly with early career teachers. Re-enacting conceptions of teacher identity driven by cultural myths and dominant discourses, suffocates teacher becoming and denies opportunities to critically engage with what being teacher means and what teaching does to those who enter the profession (Britzman, 2003). As suggested throughout the literature, there are many facets of the experiences of early career teachers that requires further research and study. My hope with this project is to contribute to the research in early career teachers' understandings and experiences of their conceptualizations and negotiations of identity. The next chapter will provide an overview of the research methodology and design of this study.

Research Methodology: Fleeting Glimpses of Lived Experiences

Phenomenology is “to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself” (Hiedegger as cited in van Manen, 1984, p. 4).

This study used a qualitative phenomenological methodology to investigate the lived experiences of the participants who were early career teachers. Because of the poststructural underpinnings of the research, my epistemological position assumes that knowledge is subjective, fluid, dynamic, and multi-faceted. Therefore, the study is situated within the realm of interpretivism with the aim of, “seeking understanding of the world in which [we] live and work” (Creswell, 2007, p. 20). The study engaged with and relied on the experiences and perceptions of early career teachers to, “develop subjective meanings of their experiences...These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views” (p. 20). Data was collected through one-on-one semi-structured phenomenological interviews to allow for the interview to be responsive to the interviewee.

A Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenology is understood as a type of qualitative inquiry where, “you open up a question, which becomes bottomless” (van Manen, Higgins & Van der Riet, 2016, p. 5). It does not seek to create a defined list, criteria, or set of descriptive characteristics; rather, phenomenology seeks to, “come to a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences...it attempts to gain insightful descriptions of the way we experience the world” (van Manen, 1984, p. 1). Phenomenology “sponsors a certain attentive awareness to the details and seemingly trivial dimensions of our everyday educational lives. It makes us thoughtfully aware of the consequential in the inconsequential, the significant in the taken-for-granted” (van Manen, 1984, p. ii). By closely examining the lived experiences of early career

teachers, the purpose of this study was not to define the experience of all early career teachers nor is it to capture an “accurate” account.

This phenomenological study sought to make space for the hidden experiences of early career teachers and thoughtfully consider what their experiences indicate about their entanglements with competing knowledge and their identity(ies). Educational research is saturated with studies on the pragmatics of teaching: the strategies, models, programs, and best practices (emphasis on the practice). What remains an area of research is the examination of what teaching does to teachers; that is, how teachers are affected by the work that they do. Phenomenology provides a means for researchers to engage with teachers and seek insight from their experiences. As van Manen (1984) reminds us, “phenomenological research consists of reflectively bringing into nearness that which tends to be obscure, that which tends to evade the intelligibility of our natural attitude of everyday life” (p. 4). Phenomenology allowed me, as the researcher, to draw out the hidden work of teaching to explore the fluctuating and complex dynamics that are masked by the visible and (presumed) familiar work of teachers.

The Semi-Structured Interview and Phenomenology

The semi-structured interview complemented a phenomenological approach as it provided space and flexibility for each interviewee to share and talk about their experiences in detail without feeling restrained by the rapid fire of rigid questioning. The adaptable interview protocol was comprised of open-ended prompts instead of a series of questions, which allowed for, “opening up, and keeping open, of possibilities [...] Even minor phenomenological research projects require that we not simply raise a question and possibly soon drop it again, but rather that we ‘live’ this question or, better, that we ‘become’ this question” (van Manen, 1984, p. 8). Instead, the interview prompts invited participants to consider and reconsider their experiences

and have the space to talk in detail; the flexibility to return and expand on a specific experience. Each participant decided on which prompt to start, when to spend more time speaking to one prompt rather than another. The openness of the interview format also allowed me to interject with additional questions or wonderings as the conversations progressed. Additionally, by providing the participants with the interview protocol ahead of time, they had the opportunity to spend time thinking about how they would like to respond. As described by van Manen (1984), “the essence or nature of an experience has been adequately described in language when the description reawakens or shows us the lived meaning or significance of the experience in a fuller or deeper manner” (p. 1). Phenomenology aims to think deeply about experiences; deconstructing the layers and seeking to capture the multitude of experiences that inform a subject’s knowledge and identity.

The Phenomenological Semi-Structured Interview and Poststructuralism

Poststructuralism recognizes that there are multiple ways of knowing. Knowledge is understood to be anything that a person knows or believes that they know. Knowledge may exist simultaneously, may align, may compete, and might disrupt. The flexibility of the semi-structured interview allows for and provides space for the participant to (re)engage with multiple experiences and ways of knowing. Phenomenology is not seeking “Truth” just as poststructuralism aims to disrupt authoritative discourses. Phenomenology and poststructuralism both acknowledge the fluidity and plurality of knowledge and identities. As van Manen (1984) notes, “phenomenological research consists of reflectively bringing into nearness that which tends to be obscure, that which tends to evade the intelligibility of our natural attitude of everyday life” (p. 4). The semi-structured interviews will delve into understanding the everyday experiences and hidden work of early career teachers as they grapple with competing knowledge

and (re)construct an identity of teacher against a backdrop of assumption in which they may be presumed to be “experts”.

Teacher as Interviewer

Taking up the role of interviewer is not without complications of also being a teacher like those involved in my study. I felt that I was positioned as an insider in regards to being a member of the population I was working with (Asselin, 2003; Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Kanuha, 2000). During the interviews there was a shift from the interview feeling like a question and answer routine, to a conversation about teaching once the interviewee was reminded that I was also a teacher. As Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009) explains:

The benefit of being a member of the group one is studying is acceptance. One’s membership automatically provides a level of trust and openness in your participants that would likely not have been present otherwise...Participants might be more willing to share their experiences because there is an assumption of understanding and an assumption of shared distinctiveness; it is as if they feel, “You are one of us and it is us versus them (those on the outside who don’t understand)”. (p. 58)

Often coming up organically, the research participants seemed to be put at ease when an opportunity arose in which I shared that I was also an elementary level teacher (this information was also included in my recruitment materials). There was often a role reversal where the interviewee became the interviewer and asked questions about my background in teaching. This relationship speaks to the insider-outsider status and roles that exist in qualitative research (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Being a teacher myself, situated me in a position where I too was affected by the questions I was posing as they evoked my own lived experiences as a teacher.

Although challenging, I was cognizant of maintaining my role as researcher during the interview so as not to potentially influence the responses of the research participants. Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009) caution against some of the potential consequences that arise as a result of the interviewer having an insider status. Both the researcher and participant can make assumptions about understanding of experience so as to limit the response to a question by the participant or for the researcher to fail in questioning in a way that elicits enough depth and explanation from the participant (Asselin, 2003; Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Kanuha, 2000). Either or both parties may assume that the other, or themselves, has a thorough understanding of the experience in question. Insider status may also hinder or influence the researcher's analysis of the data by projecting their own experiences (2009). Insider-outsider status has advantages and disadvantages that create pause for consideration. Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009) maintain that despite the status of the researcher, the most impactful quality of qualitative research is, "the ability to be open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one's research participants, and committed to accurately and adequately representing their experience" and that, "a prudent researcher must be aware of these aspects in relation his or her particular status to the group under study (p. 59). Despite having an insider member status, I researched a subculture of the teaching population – early career teachers – a group that I was no longer a part of but had once been. Additionally, I interviewed teachers who were not previously familiar to me, did not work in the same school that I did, and, with the exception of one, did not work in the same school division that I did. Although I had insider status by being a teacher, I felt removed from the teachers who participated. I was intentional in maintaining my stance as researcher so as not to begin an exchange of anecdotal experiences that would have detracted from the intention of the interview and compromised the potential data.

The interview, although assumed to be uncomplicated, is a problematic interaction. Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009) believe that, “the time has come to abandon these constructed dichotomies and embrace and explore the complexity and richness of the space between entrenched perspectives” (p. 62). Further considerations of the interview as problematic will be discussed later in this chapter.

Research Methods: Participant Recruitment

For this study, I initially intended to recruit six early career teachers, defined as having zero to five years of experience from elementary schools (kindergarten to grade five). As I was developing the project, the focus was narrowed to seeking out participants with three to five years of experience in the teaching profession. This change was made as a result of my previous experience with a small pilot study that involved early career teachers. I found that teachers with zero to two years of experience were limited by their time in the profession to engage deeply with the interview prompts. By maintaining a range of three to five years of experience, I was able to recruit a variety of participants with diverse experiences. I was cognizant of entering a study with recruitment criteria that could be perceived too narrow and that makes assumptions; thus, excluding participants who should have the opportunity to have their experience included in the study. Upon reflection, the first year of teaching is a specific experience in and of itself that would warrant a study that included only a sampling of that specific population. The decision to recruit and interview teachers with three to five years of experience still adhered to the commonly utilized definition of an early career teacher that was represented in the literature.

I chose to recruit participants from the elementary levels because of my familiarity with those grades, and it created a participant pool that shared a similar context. This could be represented as insider research where the researcher shares characteristics with the population

they are researching and are considered a member – insider role status (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

The participants were recruited through purposeful sampling. After receiving ethics approval (see Appendix G for the Protocol Approval), I sought approval from the school division to recruit teacher participants (see Appendix D for School Division Permission Form). Upon approval from the school division, cover letters of information (Appendix E) and a letter of invitation (Appendix B) were sent to all principals of the elementary schools in the school division. I did not recruit participants from the school at which I currently work as an ethical consideration, so as to avoid participants' perceptions of a power imbalance. The principals were asked to distribute the letters of invitation to their teachers who met the criteria for the study. Potential participants contacted me via my university email address. I then emailed them the consent form (Appendix C) and arranged interviews. I originally intended to interview the first six teachers who contacted me.

The recruitment materials were distributed to schools in March of 2018. I received one email reply and conducted one interview in May 2018. By the end of the school year (June 2018), I had received no further interest in the study from within my school division. It was at this point that I revised my recruitment strategy, resubmitted an amendment request to the university ethics board, and received approval to recruit participants using snowball sampling (Creswell, 2008, p. 155). I emailed the recruitment materials to colleagues who were known to me in my professional network. They then forwarded the email to their colleagues who may either know of someone or who were someone that fit the criteria of having approximately three to five years of experience. Again, teachers who were interested in participating in the study were invited to contact me via my university email. By amending my original strategy for

recruitment, I was able to recruit an additional five teachers. The revised recruitment strategy also resulted in having a sample of early career teachers who represented more than one school division. In total, I recruited six early career teachers, all with three to five years of experience, and all who worked in elementary schools in an urban setting.

The early career teachers who volunteered to participate in this study were all female and white. At the time of the interview, Tricia, who was in her late twenties, was completing her fifth year of teaching. She was a single parent of a young child. Tricia had experienced stress induced seizures during her first few years of teaching and had to take a medical leave. Rylie, at the time of the interview, had completed her fourth year of teaching. She was in her early thirties and had sought out education as a second career but had always planned to be a teacher. Rylie had previously completed a degree in business and worked in finance at an investment firm. She also experienced stress induced seizures during her first few years of teaching. Jennifer, a third-year teacher in her later forties, came to education after working in her children's schools as a volunteer, lunch supervisor, and educational assistant. McKenzie had just completed her third of teaching and was in her mid-twenties. Andrea was in her late twenties and had just completed her fourth year of teaching. Stephanie, in her mid-twenties at the time of the interview, had also just completed her fourth year of teaching. All six of teacher who participated had completed teacher education programs at universities in the same province in which they taught. Two of the teachers completed their teacher education programs in French.

The timing of the distribution of the recruitment materials proved to be an important element in the recruitment process. I was most successful when I distributed my recruitment emails during the summer break. This study was conducted in a province where most schools take summer break during the months of July and August. I could infer from this experience that

teachers may not feel they have the time to take on another task during the busyness of the school year. Going forward, I would consider my research timelines so that I was distributing recruitment materials at the beginning of a school break. Additionally, I wonder if the recruitment materials that were distributed by principals were inadvertently lost in the immense and overwhelming shuffle of papers that loom over teachers. Both these components of recruitment, specifically the timing for distribution of recruitment materials and the specific recruitment strategy employed, require consideration for subsequent studies involving teachers as research participants.

Data Collection

This study used semi-structured phenomenological interviews in order to elicit participants' stories and responses to the interview protocol. Participants received a copy of the Interview Protocol (Appendix A) via email at the same time that they received the consent form so that the participants could review and consider the questions in advance. In fact, many of the teachers arrived with notes that they had prepared prior to the interview. The Interview Protocol contained an introduction that included an analogy related to how knowledge was taken up within the theoretical framework of the study and open-ended question prompts for discussion. The prompts asked questions that elicited teachers' stories, for example, about the conflicts in knowledge that they experienced and how they navigated those conflicts. The interview prompts were modelled after the structure and rhetoric of Pitt and Britzman's (2003) example. The interviews were approximately 60 to 120 minutes in length and were held at a time and location that was mutually agreed upon and convenient for both the participant and researcher.

Interviews were recorded with a digital audio recorder and transcribed. I also took notes during

the interviews in order to record any observations that could not be captured by an audio recorder.

As per my approved ethics protocol, all data had identifying characteristics removed (including names of individuals, schools, colleagues, universities or colleges, school divisions, cities, or provinces) and replaced with pseudonyms. Only my research supervisor and I had access to the data. The data were stored separately from the consent forms and on a password-protected computer. Any hardcopy data were stored at my home in a locked cabinet. The data were analyzed to write this thesis and will be used for subsequent conference presentations and manuscripts. All digital recordings, transcripts, and notes will be destroyed by December 2020, allowing enough time to complete my thesis and any follow up manuscripts or conference presentations.

Problematic Nature of the Interview

The space of the interview undulates and morphs as subjective perceptions, from the interviewer and interviewee, shift in relation to the accumulating experiences and reconstructions of knowledge. Despite its seemingly innocuous appearance, the interview is rife with tensions that require critical awareness and engagement. In deconstructing and “unpacking” the interview through a poststructural lens, it quickly becomes problematic. The interview is a complicated and dynamic space where one subject attempts to construct, reconstruct, deconstruct, and analyze another subject’s perceived experiences. The tensions around power, voice, and the illusion of dialogue render the interview problematic. In doing so, the problematic interview calls upon the researcher to engage in a reflexive consideration of the embedded hidden tensions. The interview space is not a sterile or stable environment; rather, it is a fluid, dynamic, and shifting space that continually requires contemplation and deliberation of the multiple truths that balance

momentarily and sway precariously upon the tensions that render the interview space problematic.

Ethical Considerations

I did not anticipate any risks to the participants of this study and was not made aware of any such risks. Participants were informed and reminded that they could opt out of the study at any time during the interview or after the interview was completed. I reminded participants that all data would be anonymized so that there would be no means by which to identify a participant's identity. The recruitment materials also reinforced to the participants that the study was not in any way a means of surveillance by any of the school divisions. As well, interviews were conducted at a location of the participant's choosing that was not on or near divisional property.

As a currently employed teacher, I was alert and mindful to the potential conflicts in relation to my position and the position of the participants. Because I am a resource teacher, I may be perceived to be in a position of power within my school, and so, as mentioned, I did not recruit participants from the school at which I then worked. The power relationship between interviewer and interviewee can manifest itself in a variety of ways throughout the interview process and therefore influence the data. Although the participants and I had an equal power relationship (we were all teachers), I recognized that an imbalance of power exists between the interviewer and interviewee whether it resides explicitly or implicitly, (Kvale, 2006; Pillow, 2003). The literature acknowledges that, "the power dimension of interviewing is dangerously likely to be overlooked by well-intentioned interviewers" (Kvale, 2006, p. 484). This reinforces the need to examine the tensions that surround the imbalances of power and how this dynamic may influence the interview. Power imbalances have the capacity to create an interview space

that can risk shame through perceived judgment, rigid adherence to the research topic, and the interviewer manipulating the interviewee's story into a narrative for their research purposes (Owens, 2006). As the interviewer, I invited the interviewee to share personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences that would be drawn into public spheres through publication or presentation of the research. The imbalance of power could cause the interviewee to feel obligated to share but may have also caused them to withhold information that was requested. I was conscious of these power dynamics during the recruitment, interview, and analysis phases of the study.

Through the consent forms, participants were made aware that the findings of the study would be disseminated in presentations or publications. This included presentations at national conferences. They were informed that this study was being done as part of my master's thesis. When study results are shared, all findings will be presented in a way that does not identify any participants. This information was captured in the considerations outlined in the Informed Consent (Appendix C).

Data Analysis

The aim of phenomenological research is to understand the essence of an experience. Drawing on Creswell's (2007) approach to phenomenological analysis, I analyzed the participants' narratives and found statements within the data that illustrated how the participants experienced the topic, seeking moments or events that illustrated tension or conflict for the participants, bringing to the fore complexities of knowledge and identity. I read and re-read the transcripts in order to identify the statements that were layered with tensions and contradictions. I then collected the statements in a separate document and sorted them into thematic groupings. In the analysis and the writing, I considered how the experiences occurred while also reflecting on setting and context. Finally, I wrote composite descriptions of the phenomenon while

incorporating textual and structural elements, the essence of the experience and the culminating aspect of the analysis (Creswell, 2007). Poststructural theory was used as the lens through which to read and consider the transcripts and the iterative process of creating the phenomenological narratives. In writing and rewriting descriptions of the participants' lived experiences, I began to create themes that spoke to the phenomena and the theory. Initially, the themes were grouped under *identity* or *knowledge* and separated into compartmentalized categories. I refined those headings and collapsed the subsections so that multiple themes were reflected in the textual descriptions of a particular teacher's experiences. This also allowed for a particular teacher's experiences to be considered in relationship between one another, reflecting the fluctuating and fluid shifting of thought. I then selected particular teachers' stories to be included in my findings.

Theoretical stance. It is evident in my research and writing that I place great value on the work of Deborah Britzman. Britzman's research and theoretical stance have been influential in how I have established my stance as a researcher. This is of importance to note because it is influential to the ways I am interpreting the data. I am not considering the participant data in a manner that only considers the visible; rather, I am deconstructing the oft-thought tedious and banal aspects of teacher to reveal the hidden complexities and tensions. Acknowledging the use of post-structuralism as a theoretical lens and the impact of Britzman's work, will allow the reader some transparency in understanding how I approached the data and why I made the research decisions that I did.

Reflexivity. Considering qualitative research in the realm of poststructuralism brings forth the pluralistic voices, multiple constructions of knowledge, and cacophony of realities that can exist in tension with one another. Analyzing the interview through a poststructuralist lens draws attention to, "the surprises, contradictions, conflicting desires, ironies, and ambivalence of

everyday life...without trying to domesticate the incongruities for the sake of theoretical coherence” (Yon, 2003, p. 424). A poststructuralist lens provides opportunity for ideas to break out of rigid binary conflicts and exist simultaneously, perhaps in the space between (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009), engaging in dialogic tensions with one another (Pillow, 2003). Rather than it being one or the other, multiple truths can exist within the same space and the friction between multiple truths provides avenues for investigation into new ways of knowing (Britzman, 2003). Exploring a dialogic engagement with the problematic tensions that are embedded in the interview will help bring life to a dynamic opportunity for the researcher to engage in a reflexive position in relation to their research (Britzman, 2003).

By reflexively engaging with the research, a researcher can begin to delve into the issues that render the interview as problematic and begin to make them visible (Pillow, 2003). Examples of tensions that reside in research are power imbalances (present or perceived) such as intimidation or coercion, insider-outsider status, consequences as a result of participating, manipulation of narratives for the benefit of the researcher, and the illusion of dialogue. I mitigated tensions of power and insider-outsider status by ensuring that I was mindful in not recruiting participants that may have perceived me to be in a position of power. I provided participants with the Interview Protocol prior to the interview so that they had the option of time to make an informed decision about participating and consider their responses if they chose to participate. I also ensured that I was reflexive throughout the process and attuned to the narratives from the participants.

Limitations of the Study

The sample population for this study was recruited from within one Canadian city and all participants worked in urban school divisions. These shared aspects were part of the social

context for the participants. Identity and knowledge are recognized to be socially constructed in relation to cultural, historical, and political contexts. Therefore, different contexts (rural, Northern, private schools, First Nation's schools, etc.) may provide insight into different and differing experiences. This study did not aim to be representative of all early career teachers' experiences. Rather, it was an attempt to draw out teachers' experiences in order to both validate and enliven a discussion about early career teachers' experiences. Therefore, the larger purpose was to bring forth the complicated nature of teacher becoming, rather than attempt to generalize and provide subsequent "solutions" to these experiences.

Findings and Discussion: Lived Experiences of Early Career Teachers

As van Manen (1984) states, “phenomenology is less interested in whether something actually happened, how often it tends to happen, or how the occurrence of an experience is related to the prevalence of other conditions or events” (p. 1). This study is not seeking to find themes that are representative of all early career teachers or even all of the teachers involved in the study, rather, it is seeking to consider the “lived experience...to come to a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences” (van Manen, 1984, p. 1). The six interviews provided glimpses, albeit shifting and fluid, into the lived experiences and hidden work of a small number of early career teachers. The analysis will illustrate the tensions within identity and knowledge construction in relation to the presumption of early career teachers being experts from the outset. The following discussion will examine the uneven and problematic experiences of becoming teachers that are often characterized as being seamless, linear, and constant (Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 2003; Clarke, 2009; Trent, 2011). Specifically, I will explore the participants’ experiences through the themes of identity and knowledge, inquiring into the tensions that arise and that are embedded. I will share excerpts of the data that highlight certain phenomena, deconstruct the structure of the data through descriptions, and put it into context with theory. Each section, identity and knowledge, will conclude with a discussion of the themes.

Teacher Interrupted: Tensions of Identity

As evidenced in the interviews that were a part of this study, the engagement with one’s identity as it is shaping and being shaped is a daunting task for all and a particularly overwhelming undertaking for early career teachers. Often obscured to the subject by the commotion of the daily life and work of a teacher, the struggle of negotiating and

(re)constructing identity(ies) is that of the hidden work of becoming teacher and learning to teach.

Jennifer – Expert (novice in obscurity). Becoming teacher acknowledges that one is evolving, although in an uneven manner (Pitt & Britzman, 2003), and is not expected to be the “finished” teacher that is often presumed by newly graduated teacher candidates as they depart from the training grounds of teacher education programs. Early career teachers are continually (re)negotiating their fluid and precariously constructed identity(ies). This is part of the obscured work of becoming teacher and temporarily offers respite from the dichotomous clutches of ignorance/knowledge, success/failure, or good/bad teacher. Jennifer depicted her perceptions of the unevenness of becoming teacher in response to the question of a time when she wished that she knew more about something or felt uncertain or overwhelmed by what she was required to know or learn:

Yeah, there’s lots of times where I don’t feel certain. I know that I am going to have those times and I think that comes with experience, even with life, not just teaching. That there’s always another day to fix things and make it better. You know, there’s another side to the story, you know. It’s not always, “Okay. That’s it, you failed, we’re over.” It continues and you have opportunities, right?

Jennifer begins to hesitantly, and indirectly, articulate that teachers do not arrive “finished” once they have completed their teacher education program. Her acknowledgment of being able to “fix things” speaks to the recursive nature of teaching; a profession that begs the subject to reflect and revisit with the hopes of gaining further insight. She also touches upon being able to find space to sit in the uncertainty of not knowing; to find comfort with the awareness of continuing to learn. Jennifer’s retelling of her experiences of teaching suggest that, “understanding the

experience of having to be educated and then trying to learn how to educate others is far more complex, ambiguous, and paradoxical than supposed in the reigning binary split of success and failure and the rigid notions of authority and control that follow” (Britzman, 2003, p. 2). Jennifer is confronting the space between the dichotomy of success and failure and recognizing that she can learn from those moments of uncertainty and confusion; they offer opportunity for (re)negotiation and (re)construction. By fleetingly touching upon her becoming, Jennifer allows for openness to evolve and engage with the mistakes and mishaps because becoming teacher is part of the unseen, potentially transformative, work of teaching and being teacher.

Jennifer’s comment, “that comes with experience,” speaks to the myths of learning resulting solely from experience and that teachers are self-made. Her comments suggest that she expects to arrive at a place of greater understanding once she has accumulated further years of teaching experience. Jennifer believes that there is a correlation between experience and knowledge or mastery. Additionally, accepting teacher as self-made suggests that there is limited space and place for theory or intellectual considerations; merely amassing experiences of seeing and doing will suffice in becoming teacher. By enacting these cultural myths, Jennifer is raising the value of learning from experience over theory or the university learning that was part of her teacher education program. She rationalizes that she will be rescued from this unknowing and uncertain place in her teaching career by collecting and having more experiences because her statement rests on the assumption that learning comes from experience. In her statement, Jennifer is explicit about valuing experience and may suggest her denial for the value of theory, but there also remains a hint of external validation seeking to confirm that this is in fact an accurate portrayal of the early career teaching experience when she concludes with, “right?” She seems to be seeking reassurance and attempting to stabilize and secure the teacher identity that is in flux.

Through critical reflection of “the ‘unfinalizability’ of identity...that what at first appears to be a threat to the integrity of identity may turn out to be a source of opportunity” (Clarke, 2009, p. 189) provides one with possibilities that were previously obscured. Recognizing that a teacher is always becoming allows for temporary, if not fleeting relief from the expectation that one is flawed if they are not a fully formed teacher from the outset.

We see with Jennifer the force of the cultural myths and socially constructed normative discourses that support authoritative beliefs about the work of being teacher. One of the pervasive cultural myths is the notion of teacher as expert, manifesting in Jennifer’s desire to be “certain.” Despite only being recently defined as a student, Jennifer may expect and be expected to arrive ready and complete—a “finished” teacher. This belief may set Jennifer up for disappointment and frustration; the tenuous pull between where Jennifer is at in her becoming and where others expect her to be. Jennifer resists confinement by the conundrum of trying to maintain the appearance of being teacher while being unsure of what to do.

Jennifer struggles with the realization that she is presumed to be expert but recognizes her present limitations: “I guess sometimes it’s just those—how they expect you to—how *do they* expect you to know all this? If somebody has never taught me something, do you know it?” Jennifer expresses the estrangement that occurs when being confronted with the overwhelming endeavor of reconciling the presumptions of being expert teacher, by self and others, and the contradictory reality of not knowing quite what to do. All the while, mitigating the interferences and interruptions in identity formation and knowledge. Jennifer is enacting the cultural myth of teacher as expert and in turn it, “tends to produce the image of the teacher as an autonomous and unitary individual and as the source of knowledge” (Britzman, 2003, p. 229). She experiences the

expectation that she is to know all that she needs despite recognizing that she is in a process of becoming.

We see Jennifer's desire to be seen and recognized by others as *being* teacher. This can be characterized as "collective identity work" (Danielewicz, 2001) which is understood as, "the solidification of this identity through the reactions of other teachers...being recognized and accepted as a teacher by other teachers, and by students, administrators, other school personnel" (p. 112). The perceived expectations of students, parents, colleagues, and administrators may encourage an early career teacher to enact the cultural myth of "teacher as expert" in an attempt to organize the confusion, vulnerability, and uncertainty. This tension is reflected in Jennifer's comments as she continued to share about times of uncertainty and feeling overwhelmed:

Sometimes I feel like, um, somebody's going to go (laughs), "you're not really a teacher, are you?" Like somebody is going to turn me into the teacher police (chuckling). But then everybody just gives me confidence and says, "You are doing a great job," you know, everybody feels that way...but there are days where I come home and think, "wow, I really screwed that up." Like, the lesson didn't go well...

Jennifer touches upon not feeling like a "real" teacher; perhaps, feeling like she is playing at teaching, going through the motions of what she believes a teacher should be doing. Her internal sense of self is that of uncertainty and failure; that her inability to be an expert in her role will result in punishment—that she has failed. Jennifer must keep secret the current state of her condition as teacher. Taking up this perspective of hiding uncertainties, inadequacies, confusions only works to confine a teacher within an isolating space; letting no one in and sharing nothing. This self-inflicted isolation suffocates teacher becoming by eliciting internal beliefs of inadequacy and failure.

Being receptive to (or seeking out) external validation and reassurance of being teacher, as Jennifer stated, “everybody just gives me confidence and says you are doing a great job,” allows Jennifer to have her fragile and shifting identity confirmed—she is in fact a “real” teacher even if she is “screwing up.” External validation from students, parents, colleagues, administrators, or others, works to superficially and temporarily allow for her sense of stability while also permitting fluidity for Jennifer’s identity; providing a fleeting moment of comfort and relief from the shock of, “how the beginning of learning a profession is chaotic, disorganizing selves in the search for meaning” (Alsup, 2006, p. ix). Jennifer also engages with the binary thought of, “if I’m not a real teacher then I must be a fraud”; rather than recognizing her becoming and that she is in fact learning to teach. From that failure emerges opportunities to engage with revisiting and rebuilding the teacher identity; all the while continually shifting and evolving, providing instances that are, “fractured, multiple, contradictory, contextual, and regulated by social norms” (Zembylas, 2005, p. 938). Avoiding the difficult moments that create frustration only continues to reinforce the idea of teaching as technical and performative; that the right lesson or strategy will rescue the early career teacher from moments of doubt and uncertainty (Clarke & Sheridan, 2017).

We can see through Jennifer’s comments, the ways in which early career teachers can be caught in the perplexing space of being a novice but expected or presumed to be an expert; a teacher that is ready to go, a finished product. In this conflicting and tenuous departure from what is often expected of being a teacher, early career teachers might grasp for lifelines by connecting, intentionally or unintentionally, with colleagues in the hopes that they will provide rescue from the perils of the classroom through solutions, strategies, and concrete ways to reign

in the conceptual chaos. As Britzman (2003) asserts, “one wishes someone would magically appear and help because that other knows exactly what to do to fix a mess” (p. 21).

Jennifer echoed this sentiment by stating the following in response to questions about things she learned as an early career teacher and how or who she learned them from:

I had amazing, like, mentor teachers and I don't mean like *official* ones. I just mean teachers who helped you because they want you to be a better teacher. So, I had mentors that helped me, um, realize how to put certain things into practice...I learned that from the teachers, not from the school. It's kind of theory but how do you put that theory into practice.

Jennifer discusses the role her colleagues have played in her becoming teacher—her accidental mentors. She emphasizes that it was the experience of working as a teacher, with other teachers, that predominantly informed her understanding of what to do as a teacher. She recognizes that theory is connected in some regard to her practice but questioned the practicality or even logistic reality of connecting theory and practice. Having colleagues support Jennifer undoubtedly provided her with validation and reassurance that she is teacher; attempting to stabilize an instable identity of teacher. When asked about instances when she learned something new, Jennifer stated that:

Um, I guess I kind of talked about, like, my colleagues and how they—if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be the teacher, even after three years, that I am now. Just helping me with what to do in certain situations.

Jennifer is receiving advice, encouragement, support, and guidance that may rescue her from confusion and uncertainty—temporarily.

In response to questions about learning something new that conflicted with previous ideas about teaching, Jennifer shared her perspective on theory and practice:

I don't even remember what I learned because I don't know if I'm using those things. I don't really go back to my books. I just look forward and take what's in my head and what's with my staff that I work with and go forward.

Jennifer's comments presuppose that her teacher development will be linear and progressive in the sense that she will continually move forward when in fact teacher development is understood to be uneven and recursive (Pitt & Britzman, 2007). She relies on her recollections of experiences, those she had and those that were shared by colleagues, to inform her practice. In stating, "I don't really go back to my books," Jennifer's words can be read as viewing the knowledge of theory as outdated, static, and having no place in her contemporary practice despite her reliance on the memories of experiences that could date as far back as her own experience in school. Reverberating throughout the history of early career teachers' experiences can be heard the echoes of frustrated declarations of how the university teacher education program failed to provide adequate preparation for entering the teaching profession. The, "education course work that does not immediately address 'know how' or how to 'make do' with the way things are and sustain the walls we have come to expect, appears impractical, idealistic, and too theoretical" (Britzman, 2003, p. 64). Jennifer's understanding of teacher does not leave room for theoretical or abstract insights.

Jennifer's experiences express her struggle in becoming teacher while simultaneously being expected to already *be* teacher. The cultural myths of teacher as self-made, as expert, and a product of experience can be heard resonating throughout Jennifer's comments. She seeks out external validation and reassurance to reaffirm that she is a teacher (rather than an imposter). As

Britzman (2003) states, “learning to teach—like teaching itself—is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformations, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become” (p. 31). Embracing the chaos and confusion disrupts the illusory role that cultural myths play in attempting to simplify that which is complex and complicated. Cultural myths, (accidental) mentors, and external validation all contribute to providing a sense of order to the tumultuous, frenzied, and overwhelming experience of becoming teacher. Teaching and becoming teacher are fraught with uncertainty. Early career teachers are besieged with the clashing reality of becoming teacher while continually being placed in a position that demands they are an expert.

Andrea - Illusions and expectations. School biography is the assumption that teaching, and being teacher, is known and comprehended by the subject as a result of the experiences of going to school and observing the teacher as a student (Britzman, 2003). Teaching is understood, and presumed, as that which is visible; the performative and technical aspects of the role. A subject’s school biography will contribute to shaping the expectations of what a teacher does and what a teacher is to be. School biography interacts with, and sometimes conflicts with, the experiences that teachers acquire during their teacher education program and as they begin their careers. Andrea discussed her school biography in recollections of her schooling experiences when asked to describe her current understanding of teacher:

I think that when I first started teaching, maybe I was like, okay, well now that I’m the teacher, obviously I’m the one that always has to be doing the talking. I’m the one that always has to be in front of the class doing all these lessons...because when I think about my classrooms growing up, it was definitely the teacher in front talking, um. You would have to raise your hand to say anything. Um, like we would have lots of little activities

and lots of worksheets and things like that. Where now that I'm a teacher, it's more so like I - if they can do it on their own, I would rather not kind of interfere with that and not be in front giving them kind of rote things. I think definitely, that my understanding of being a teacher is just from what I remember growing up, always the teacher talking, um, always at the front of the class.

Andrea acknowledges her own school biography and how it has influenced and shaped her expectations of the work of a teacher. School biography punctuates the practice of teachers and parades itself as a relevant contributor to effective practice and a source of pedagogy.

Interestingly, Andrea was not calling upon her university coursework or her practicum experiences; rather she was reaching beyond that to draw in her childhood memories of school and the teachers that she observed. Additionally, Andrea believed that, "when you go in you think you know so much from university but then you realize, honestly, the more experience you get, that's the best learning you can do." Initially, she understood teaching as the teacher being in the position of authority and control, dispersing parcels of knowledge by way of worksheets and activities. Andrea's school biography eclipsed her experiences in her teacher education program. Her school biography became difficult knowledge in the formation of her teaching identity; interacting, interfering, and creating barriers to constructing other understandings of teacher. Andrea's experience of entanglement with her school biography suggests the need for her to critically reflect on her individual experiences and how those shape, interact, or interfere with the construction of their teacher identity.

Andrea's focus on the "doing" also emphasizes the technical and performative aspects of the work of a teacher thereby reducing her engagements with the complexities of teaching and of becoming teacher. By adopting a reductionist perspective of teaching, Andrea expects the work

of teachers to be predictable and controllable; where outcomes are a result of a “best practice” or “effective” strategy. This in turn masks the interplay and reciprocal relationship between theory and practice and obscures the complexities of myriad decisions that are relentlessly demanded of teachers. Theory and practice cannot stand outside of one another as they inform each other. Artificially partitioning practice from theory, relegates teaching to be regarded as a mechanized and streamlined system of cause and effect rather than the intellectual profession that it is. Andrea’s comment about seeking permission to speak in class also suggests the belief of the teacher being the authority and power in the classroom; controlling the students and their speech in order to achieve learning (Britzman, 2003). This realization suggests that Andrea is reflecting on her practice and there is potential for her to reflect further on what assumptions and misconceptions provided a basis to construct her understanding of teacher.

Andrea may have thought she understood what being teacher meant but is now confronted with the pieces of that understanding strewn about her. She describes her expectations of teaching as being far more stable than what she encountered; a “perfect world kind of thing.” The dizzying disorientation of being confounded by the illusion of familiarity only to be met with the unfamiliar creates disequilibrium for the early career teacher: “do I know what I have gotten myself into?” “Praxis shock” is conceptualized by Ballantyne and Zhukov (2017) in a pragmatic manner to examine “the experience that teachers have when their expectations of teaching life do not match up with the realities of teaching” and the subsequent ramifications for their ability to perform their job and remain in the profession (p. 241). Here, I have taken up the concept of “praxis shock” in relation to knowledge and identity. I use the idea to describe the experience of early career teachers as they enter a profession that they believe to know and understand and yet, are shocked by their experiences of uncertainty; coming face to face with the

surreal realization that all that appeared to be familiar is in fact unrecognizable and strange. Consequently, entering into a space of conceptual friction where preconceived notions of teacher are continually disrupted by the disorienting experiences that begin to deconstruct their understandings of teacher identity and knowledge. Andrea described her experience when asked to reflect on how early career teachers are presumed to be “expert” and how that can lead to feelings of conflict, confusion, uncertainty, inadequacy, or overconfidence:

Um (pause), I think—I think just coming out of university, the big thing that they teach you is kind of, like, it’s almost like teaching in a perfect world kind of thing, if that makes sense. And coming out of university, it is such a shock. You know, day-to-day you don’t know what’s going to happen. And I think too, dealing with issues, like behaviour issues with kids sometimes too, it happens that I literally have no idea how to deal with this and I think that that often leads to uncertainty and you have to act so much in the moment that you don’t have a second to stop and think about what would be the best thing to do.

Andrea’s account of her lived experience as an early career teacher articulates her “shock” when expectations and reality do not align, resulting in confusion and uncertainty. She expects teaching to be far more stable and predictable than what she experienced. As Britzman (2003) ominously cautions, “For those who leave this world to enter teacher education, their first culture shock may well occur with the realization of the overwhelming complexity of the teacher’s work and the myriad ways this complexity is masked and misunderstood” (p. 27). I would argue that the immense force of the complexities faced by Andrea, such as becoming teacher, school biography and praxis shock, are not fully realized until she has re-entered the world of the

classroom as a professional teacher. In response to questions about finding time to reflect and think about teaching, Andrea describes her initial experiences in her first year of teaching:

Like, my first year, I was trying to keep my head above water and didn't really know what I was doing. And then I think too that comes from over-confidence. You realize that you don't really know what you're doing when you get into it your first year. When you think, "I got it. I can manage my lessons and everything." And then you realize it's not what you expected...

The "praxis shock" (Ballantyne & Zhukov, 2017) experienced by Andrea interacted with her burgeoning sense of teacher identity and knowledge; the precarious foundation of what she has established her knowledge upon. Having been confronted with the moments of instability and disordering, Andrea's teacher identity is in disarray and in turn interferes with the knowledge — "managing my lessons" — that she thought she had to be teacher. This knowledge is comprised of the experiences that she has collected throughout her practicum and most likely infused with some influence from her school biography.

Unpacking the "Little Gifts of Error": Tensions in Knowledge

In this study, knowledge is conceptualized within a poststructural framework to be socially constructed, fluid, malleable, responsive, open-ended (Britzman, 2003; Weedon, 1997). As early career teachers navigate their way through the conceptually bizarre space of teaching, which initially presents as familiar and known, they are continually (re)negotiating and (re)constructing their knowledge of teaching. Yet, in the uncomfortable moments of uncertainty and missteps, there lies the opportunity for the teacher to (re)create, (re)construct, and transform understanding. Through the participants' narrations of their experiences, we see the tensions that

arise amidst competing knowledge, the forceful effects of the teaching practicum, and the desire to acquire knowledge.

Mckenzie – Tensions within competing knowledge. Frustration with inadequate knowledge or lack of knowledge about teaching is often characterized within a binary relation between practice and theory. Mckenzie's comments echo this dichotomous relationship and illustrate her frustrations with theory when asked about the things she learned since she started teaching:

Like, maybe, that's my big thing that so much of the stuff they teach you in university doesn't matter once you get into the classroom. All the practical knowledge just not all the textbook knowledge, this doesn't matter because you have 25 screaming children in front of you all crying about 27 different things. No theorist wrote about that.

Mckenzie views theory as a frivolous and unsupportive aspect of her teacher education program. She values the "practical knowledge," presumably comprised of strategies, tips, or experiences from the practicum, which will protect her from the arduous and frenetic life of the classroom. Mckenzie is overwhelmed with the day-to-day busyness that a classroom entails and in her preoccupation with controlling the chaos of the students, she is unable to recognize the potential efficacy that theory could contribute to her classroom. This plays into the cultural myth of the teacher as, "the sole bearer of power" (Britzman, 2003, p. 31) which positions the teacher in a power-laden role of authority that equates learning with control (Britzman, 1996; Britzman, 2003; Popewitz, 1998). We see how Mckenzie is absorbed into the cyclical reproductions of cultural myths because, "the normalizations are so deeply embedded in the routines and practical wisdom of teaching as time make them invisible (Popkewitz, 1998, p. 98). Mckenzie is

entrenched in the preconceived constructions of being teacher and left with little recourse than to continue and repeat that which is familiar.

Andrea - Memories of the practicum. Memories of the practicum may temporarily remain illuminated by the impenetrable notion that in those experiences, the *real* learning to be a teacher took place. Not until one is further removed from the initial time and place does the backdrop and props of the production, that was the practicum, come into focus; previously obscured and disguised as the closing delivery of complete teaching knowledge. When asked about the differences between teaching during her practicum and teaching once she was in her own classroom, Andrea articulated her revised perspective on the practicum:

I feel like in your practicum you're almost like, it's still—I guess the right word would be staged. You come in with your perfect lesson all typed out and expect it to go a certain way. But in your real-life career you get things thrown at you: “Oh, by the way, we have this going on today and we didn't really know about it,” or, “Can you do this extra on top of whatever else you have?” So, I feel like sometimes I have to put that aside and do this and sometimes it's a lot more balancing that way when you're in control of the *whole* classroom.

Andrea distinguishes between the student teaching practicum and her work as a teacher by recognizing that the practicum tends to be performative and highly focused on the doing of teaching; the technical and practical aspects of being teacher—the visible. Andrea experiences a discord between the seemingly controlled experience of the practicum, tempered by the co-operating teacher, and the staggering pandemonium of being *the* teacher in a classroom of her own. Upon entering a classroom as a teacher, the obscured and hidden work begins to punctuate

the visions of doing the things one thought a teacher ought to be doing. Britzman (as cited in Alsup, 2006) emphasizes that:

The drama of student teaching is also the drama of being a student teacher. Its stage and its staging are overpopulated with the instructions from actual and imagined others. There one confronts, and hopefully may learn to play with, the contents of one's own educational archive. Curiously, it is the history of one's own making and, until it can be spoken, it remains a hidden force. (p. ix)

At this impressing juncture, dwells the opportunity, or perhaps, one could argue, the responsibility, to take up the implications of one's school biography and the potential effects on the others who are impacted by becoming teacher and the understandings of being teacher.

Reiterated throughout the moments examined from the interviews is the notion that experience is held in the highest regard in relation to learning about and being a teacher and that the knowledge from those experiences is attainable, fixed, and applicable. Resonating beneath the assumptions is, "the myth that experience makes the teacher and hence that experience is telling in and of itself, valorizes student teaching as the authentic moment in teacher education and the real ground of knowledge production" (Britzman, 2003, p. 30). This discourse of experience providing knowledge continues to prevail across the transition from teacher candidate to teacher. In response to questions about the types of things she learned as an early career teacher that she did not already know, and how she learned that, Andrea expresses:

Um, I think too when you go in you think you know so much from university but then you realize, honestly, the more experience you get, that's the best learning that you can do; not necessarily what you learned in university. So, um, a lot of that I kind of just took

bits and pieces from colleagues and like asked their advice and what not, but I think a lot of it you kind of have to learn yourself. What works for you too.

Echoing in Andrea's comments is the belief that learning is best acquired from experience and the theoretical or abstract ideas of the university have no value in the classroom. Andrea views her most valuable learning as having arrived by way of experience; the experience of doing teaching. She does touch on the idea of being falsely confident in her knowledge of teaching upon her exit from the teacher education program only to experience the perceived let down of the theory. Additionally, Andrea's explanation for how she is becoming teacher, that is, "you kind of have to learn it for yourself," is situated within the cultural myth of teacher as self-made, a product of experience (Britzman, 1996; Britzman, 2003). By believing that teacher is self-made, theory is rendered useless because there is no place for it when being a teacher rests on the accumulation of experiences by way of the day-to-day or through advice. In fact, the hidden work of making sense of teaching does not end and begin with experience as it does not necessarily provide the understanding that is required.

The practicum is the eagerly anticipated opportunity to be teacher. Overflowing with expectations and promise of being the answer to all that remains unlearned; the practicum is championed as to where the *real learning* will happen. These expectations are informed by the experience myth (Britzman, 2003). Prior to accepting an initial teaching assignment as a professional teacher, teacher candidates are constructing their beliefs of being teacher, and the related work on discourses that work against recognizing teaching as an intellectual profession. Early career teachers then find themselves at a pause; interrupted in the first few years of their career where they begin to reflect on, and perhaps even unpack, their practicum experiences

where the opportunity exists that a reconstructed understanding may be procured and a recognition of the impactful prevailing discourses.

Where is an early career teacher left when they are failed by experience or when their memories of the teaching practicum are inadequate? Britzman (2003) contends that:

Learning to teach is a search for meaning and a hope that experience in teaching can make meaning into insight. At times, meaning and experience are collapsed.

Traditionally, it is thought that experience makes meaning...I try to keep them separated in order to account for what happens when experience cannot deliver its promise:

competence, clarity, and confidence. (p. 19)

Early career teachers anticipate and expect that the accumulation of experience and experiences will bring forth an abundance of knowledge that will provide comfort and bring stability. Dismay and disappointment emerge when experience fails to produce the anticipated and expected expertise. The perpetual motion, and commotion, of classroom life in schools is a confounding shock when predictability and linear growth is expected.

Stephanie - Insta-knowledge. Early career teachers are bombarded by information, resources, advice, experiences, and conversations. There is a struggle to “get the job done” but not really knowing what exactly that job entails. Therefore, early career teachers may find themselves in a precarious position of needing to find something that will work—a panic-induced need for a quick fix. In response to questions about her understanding of being teacher, Stephanie shared her reasoning behind sourcing out curricular resources from a well-known teachers’ website:

I love teacherspayteachers.com. Why am I going to spend 5 min—I mean 5 hours making something if *I can just buy it!* And I love Pinterest. My admin hates Pinterest and hates

Teachers Pay Teachers. She refuses, if she sees Teachers Pay Teachers, she will throw it out. It's just stupid. I like it because I've bought whole units on there, all the experiments and all the knowledge and this is great for twelve bucks!

Stephanie's assumption of knowledge as static and fixed are revealed in her belief that she can purchase parcels of knowledge and disperse it to her students; that knowledge is a product that can be bought, delivered, and consumed. In the dizzying and frenetic profession of teaching, we see Stephanie seeking out the "recipe-like" methods to preserve her perceived status as a *real* teacher; maintaining the appearance of *doing* teaching. In purchasing pre-packaged, aesthetically crafted units of study, Stephanie may find relief in knowing that she is able to continue her responsibility of being teacher because she has the knowledge in her hands. Stephanie's comments also suggest a resistance to engagement with her administration (i.e., principal) about the use of electronic pre-packaged units of study. The avoidance speaks to the desire to maintain her understanding and knowledge of teaching. Engaging with the other who is in disagreement will inevitably result in conceptual friction and perhaps the expectation to consider justification of pedagogical decisions. Purchasing parcels of knowledge keeps the process simple; participating in critical conversation about pedagogy and knowledge makes for a theoretical mess. Stephanie is side-stepping the potential interference with her knowledge of teaching and by doing so, she is protecting her identity of teacher.

The desire to accumulate parcels of knowledge speaks to an understanding of knowledge as fixed and stable; being able to get and give knowledge. From a poststructuralist perspective, knowledge is socially constructed, fluid, and dynamic. Early career teachers continually seek out knowledge in the hopes of attaining enough to be a "good" or "real" teacher—finding the answer! There is difficulty in trying to acquire what you are not really sure what you need. In the

accumulation of books, strategies, tips, resources, and websites, the task of teaching seems to become more complicated than clarified. Missing from the need to collect more knowledge is the critical engagement with the numerous resources. What aligns with a teacher's beliefs? What is supported by research? An infinitely growing collection of resources and bookmarked websites will be unable to satisfy the search for the "right" knowledge.

Knowledge is not immune to the tenuous dynamics of normative discourses that permeate the profession of teaching (Britzman, 2003). In fact, knowledge is imbued with power in the words that are used, how they are used, where, and when. The conflicting moments with knowledge conjure up disruptions that interfere with assumptions, misunderstandings, and misperceptions—difficult knowledge. Knowledge is unable to remain in a neutral and sterile space. It interacts, interferes, and creates barriers (Pitt & Britzman, 2003). Knowledge is entrenched in the underlying philosophical, theoretical, or historical influences, structures, and relationships, in reference to social context. If knowledge is understood to be stable and defined, then it exists only in the context of itself. When knowledge is bound by self-prescribed parameters it is then prevented from being transformed by contemporary perspectives, interpretations, or insights. As Britzman states (2003), "learning to teach is not a mere matter of applying contextualized skills or of mirroring predetermined images; it is time when one's past, present, and future are set in dynamic tension" (p. 31) and those tensions can raise conflict both internally and interference with others.

Discussion

Identity is an unfinished project that early career teachers take up prior to the first moment they step into a building as a teacher with their degree in hand. A prospective teacher candidate will already have an incomplete, yet influential, perception of the teacher's work as a

result of their experience as a student in school—their own school biography (Britzman, 1986; Britzman, 2003; Clarke & Sheridan, 2017). The work of constructing and understanding one's teacher identity is a labour that is veiled and eclipsed by the assumptions of what being teacher entails, cultivated by the “mass experience” of schooling (Britzman, 2003; Britzman, 2006). Identity is continually being negotiated and renegotiated, continually influenced, interrupted, and complicated by a polyphony of voices, knowledge, and experiences. Britzman (as cited in Alsup, 2006) posits that, “To know thyself is a paradox. It is to know that one must meet, again and again, the unknown other and, in so doing, the unknown self” (p. xii). Becoming teacher is an endless engagement that requires the subject to continually reconstruct, reconsider, and renegotiate their conceptualization of becoming teacher as contexts and experiences are perpetually shifting. Danielewicz (2001) states that, “an identity is never fully or finally achieved; we are always actively being and becoming” (p. 35).

In those times when “the teacher's identity emerges from a conflict in and with authority, imagination, and flurries of autobiography that seem to return when least expected, is of course what makes the teacher's identity so uncertain and surprising” (Britzman, 2003, p. 20). In these moments of interference, disruption, and discord, the potential for reconceiving and reimagining what it means to be teacher persists; moving beyond the silent but powerfully prevailing authoritative discourses and cultural myths (Britzman, 2003; Moore, 2004). Although the moments of mistakes and miscalculations are immediately felt as failure and inadequacy, “identities are constructed within discourse, through difference and in the context of contingency and ambiguity. While at first glance this may seem disconcerting, it opens up creative possibilities for political practices of ethical self-formation” (Clarke, 2009, p. 196). And here we are confronted with a profession, seemingly familiar to the masses, that receives early career

teachers who want to *be* teacher but will inevitably be encountered with the bewildering undertaking of *becoming* teacher in the estranging predicament that is the problematic experience of learning to teach and becoming teacher.

This pre-conceived construction of what teaching is going to *be* is informed predominantly by the *doing* of teaching and then supported by the normative discourse that teachers are products of experience (Britzman, 2003; Clarke & Sheridan, 2017). That is, here we see how the identity of teaching is conceptualized through what it is the teacher does—not who the teacher is. The performative facets of teaching maintain prominence in the conceptualization of how teachers come to be. Additionally, this cultural myth often directs early career teachers to isolate themselves in fear of being seen as anything less than a teacher; exposing them as imposters. Alsup (2006) cautions that as a result of teacher education focusing on the students that teachers will come to teach, “this externally focused approach tends to assume that the teacher is already self-actualized, already emotionally and affectively prepared to assume the teacher identity, with few personal challenges left to face” (p. xv). Neglecting to provide space and time for early career teachers (and their former “selves” as teacher candidates) prevents any critical engagement with the indiscernible tensions that often reside in teaching and manifest themselves as fear, inadequacy, frustration, struggle, and defeat. Learning to teach, despite the dominant cultural myths, is uneven, recursive, and infused with interference and disruption (Clarke & Sheridan, 2017). In recognizing or sensing the conflicting state of being presumed expert, early career teachers seek to stabilize their identity that is in flux.

In an unspoken commitment, teacher education extends an illusory promise of practical and prescriptive means to achieve that which is perceived to be the work of a teacher. As Britzman (2003) states, “If schools depend on success and failure, then teacher education fills

this gap with classroom practice as the royal road to success. This also means that university theory comes to be dreaded as the dead-end” (p. 5). The expectation that seeing and doing will provide the knowledge necessary to be teacher is continuously punctured by the lived experience that, “in the daily work of learning to teach, experience in education feels discontinuous, disjointed, fragmented, and alienating” (Britzman, 2003, p. 4). Early career teachers may experience feelings of betrayal by the institution that silently sold them the promise of learning to teach when, in fact, the work of becoming teacher is a tenuous and multifaceted project that is shifting and fluid, responsive to the social context and engagements with others. Early career teachers are critical of their teacher education experiences but hold high the practicum experience as the saving aspect of their university career in education. This tension of valuable/invaluable knowledge, the practical over the theoretical, is supported by the normative discourse of learning being made through experience (Britzman, 2003; Popkewitz, 1998) that eventually fails to support the early career teacher as they enter the profession.

Negotiating teacher identity(ies) precipitates tensions and conflicts—external as well as internal. Betrayal, between self and others, emerges as the flawed image of teacher concedes to the lived experiences of being teacher. Gripping to the preconceived notions of what teaching was going to be allows the early career teacher to make frantic attempts to regulate the uncertain and disorganizing feelings that are summoned by the complexities of teacher life. Early career teachers feel betrayed both by the memory of the imagined teacher from their school biographies, as well as by the anticipated teacher promised by their teacher education programs. In turn, early career teachers are incited to abandon their fantasy of teacher, only to be left with a dizzying and fractured confusion of thought. These complex conceptual interferences—difficult knowledge—are exacerbated by the profession that welcomes them as a novice but expects them

to be an expert, providing little to no time to wrestle with the tensions that reside in the cultural myths or authoritative discourses and the implications or manifestations of one's school biography.

Early career teachers tend to applaud their student teaching practicums and rebuke the hours spent in university classes. As Popkewitz (1998) affirms, "practice does not stand outside of theory but is itself a theoretical concept that 'tells' one how the world is to be held together and reflected upon" (p. 80). But left to the accumulations of experiences, left unconsidered, early career teachers have little recourse than to continue the cycle of re-enacting the cultural myths that are infused with the work of being teacher (Popkewitz, 1998; Britzman, 1996; Britzman, 2003). In the throes of abandonment and betrayal, early career teachers are left to raise isolating walls to protect their fragile identity of teacher as expert and self-made; rejecting the role of theory and relying on experience that they do not yet have. Britzman (2003) asserts that:

These processes of projection, identification, and disassociation, partly render teaching its emotional flavour. The other part, of course, is that becoming a teacher in a classroom is a personal matter. And it can feel as if experience itself is a crisis. (p. 4)

The artificial separation of theory and practice is due to a number of factors: the belief that experience is how one learns and is of most value, that teacher is self-made, and therefore, looks to only common sense, and teacher is expert. Experience is longed for and anticipated; idealized as the means that will make an early career teacher "great." Time in the profession is equated with expertise; once I get to year x, then I will have it all figured out. The expectations that are placed upon experience often result in the early career teacher finding themselves secluded in the remoteness of a classroom that confines them to be victim to their crises of identity and knowledge. Thus, experience becomes displaced from the position of knowledge production to

crisis when the realization arises that there is no point of “enough” experience and that experience fails to provide the expertise desired for by early career teachers.

As Britzman so aptly states, “the immediacy of classroom life threatens to unravel efforts to be thoughtful” (Britzman, 2006, p. 6). In seeking to understand the types of knowledge that early career teachers are exposed to, and in turn are accepting, rejecting, and redefining, the greater question is the motivation. If a teacher enacts the cultural myth of “teacher as expert” then they are bound by the inherent assumptions that they should be able to produce the answers and information they seek. In addition, if they are situated within the myth of “teacher as self-made” then they may refrain from reaching out to colleagues for support in fear that they appear as a fraudulent and failed teacher. In deconstructing the lived experiences of the early career teachers who participated in this study, it is made clear that, “the overfamiliarity of the teacher’s role, the taken-for-grantedness of school structure, and the power of one’s institutional biography are open to the suggestions cultural myths offer about the work and identity of teachers” (Britzman, 2003, p. 30). So then, what is gained by undertaking this study and recognizing the experiences of early career teachers and their indirect, often fleeting, engagement with their becoming?

Conclusion: Insights and Possibilities

Teaching, and becoming teacher, encounters a complex space of negotiating multifaceted identities and knowledge, which evoke tenuous moments of perplexing uncertainty and confusion. The confounding and shifting space of becoming teacher becomes liminal as early career teachers (defined as those having zero to five years of experience) enter the profession and are met with the contradictory realities of learning to teach in response to their preconceived perceptions of already being teacher. They are met with experiences of concurrently being student/teacher, expert/novice, as well as insider/outsider. School biographies, university courses, and teaching practicums simultaneously compete to inform notions of what it means to be teacher. This study investigated how early career teachers grapple with becoming a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher. The specific research questions were:

- a) What types of knowledge do early career teachers encounter?
- b) What are the teachers' experiences of the tensions that are created when conflicting knowledge collides?
- c) In what ways do early career teachers experience and mitigate those tensions?
- d) In what ways do early career teachers understand their sense of teacher identity?
Specifically, in what ways do early career teachers experience and attempt to reconcile the idea that they are presumed expert but are in a state of "becoming" teacher?

As this study was positioned within a poststructural theoretical framework, utilizing a phenomenological methodology, the potential implications for the findings of this study will not seek to provide generalizations in regard to early career teachers. The findings of this study

continue to inform understandings of the hidden work of being teacher and may be useful for expanding and creating spaces for preservice and in-service teachers, as well as teacher educators, to surface that which is often silenced and misunderstood by the frenetic tempo of the education profession. In addition, this study has led to further questions as to the benefits, consequences, and complications of acknowledging the hidden work of teachers.

Summary of the Study

The study of early career teachers is a diverse field of educational research that seeks to investigate and examine multitudinous aspects and experiences for the purposes of seeking solutions and theorizing. Educational research, in relation to early career teachers, predominantly concentrates on the performative and technical qualities of teaching; that which is visible and often measurable. In the last few decades, research committed to the area of teacher identity has seen an increase in representation throughout the literature (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beijaard, Meijer, Verloop, 2004). Additionally, study of teacher identity often acknowledges the teacher as becoming (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Britzman, 2003; Gore & Bowe, 2015; Janzen, 2014; Trent, 2011; Walkington, 2005; Zembylas, 2003) and is commonly taken up and theorized using poststructuralism. Conversely, “professional identity” regularly appears in literature related to teacher identity but is often positioned in relation to the skills and knowledge of the teaching profession.

Poststructuralism provides openings to engage with the latent, yet authoritatively discursive ways in which the teaching subject is constituted and how teacher is enacted. Davies (2004) highlights that:

Poststructuralist theory, in its openness to meanings not yet thought of, and in its dedication to not getting stuck in old clichés and explanations, is often surprising, joyful

and energizing, bringing life to research and to teaching – breathing life into the educational institutions in which we are (always becoming) subjects. (p. 9)

Specifically, deconstruction allows one to recognize the plurality, disunity, fluidity, and contradictions in the ways of understanding teacher becoming. As Weedon (1997) states, “poststructuralism proposes a subjectivity which is precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak” (p. 32). Theorizing the lived experiences of early career teachers through a poststructural lens creates opportunities to acknowledge and destabilize the dichotomous foundations of dominant discourses and cultural myths while seeking out ways to rethink, reinterpret, renegotiate, reimagine, and reconstruct understandings of becoming teacher.

This qualitative phenomenological study used semi-structured interviews to engage with the lived experiences of the early career teachers. The semi-structured interviews provided flexibility for the interviewees to have space to explore lived experiences of their choosing that were a part of, or tangential to, their early career teacher experiences. The interviews with the six early career teachers, ranging in experience from about three to five years, provided text by way of verbatim transcripts, which were analyzed from a poststructuralist stance using deconstruction. The analysis provided fleeting glimpses of becoming that briefly and tentatively recognized the complexities of learning to teach. The design of this study considered perceived positions of power in regard to the methods of recruitment and the insider-outsider status of the researcher in relation to the participants.

Entering into a profession where early career teachers have pre-determined perceptions of what it means to be teacher, populated by their numerous experiences observing teachers and teaching as a student and teacher candidate, establishes expectations that are constituted by and

through dominant discourses that position teacher as the expert and as a finished product (Britzman, 2003). The rift between expected and experienced realities, referred to as “praxis shock” (Ballantyne & Zhukov, 2017), results in ruptures in identity and conflicts of myriad knowledge because of the dissonant experiences from being a presumed expert by a profession that also simultaneously acknowledges an early career teacher as a novice. In attempting to navigate the discord felt in the destabilization of identity and knowledge, the early career teachers, would isolate themselves in order to preserve their identity that is presumed by others or seek external validation for their identity as teacher. Abandonment, by self and others, is raised as an issue by the participants through the admissions of disappointment and letdown from perceived ideas of being teacher, assumed expectations of teacher education programs, and lack of awareness for the hidden work of becoming teacher. Rather than conceiving of the interruptions to identity and knowledge as undesirable or adverse, the early career teachers may find new spaces to negotiate their identity(ies) and ways of reconstructing their understanding of teacher so that interferences are realized as “little gifts” (Britzman, 2003).

From the analysis, excerpts from the interviews of participants suggested that early career teachers encounter multitudes of knowledge from numerous sources. Participants characterized knowledge in a way that compartmentalized and pitted ways of knowing within dichotomous relationships. Similar to identity, knowledge is understood to be multifaceted, shifting, layered, and responsive to social, historical, and ideological contexts. Attempts to confine knowledge to “domains” (Adoniou, 2015), partitions that which cannot be fragmented; compromising the inherent dynamism of knowledge. Creating theoretical boundaries between knowledge establishes potential dichotomies and binary ways of positioning knowledge which in turn will privilege one over the other, according certain knowledge with power. Compartmentalized

knowledge tends to become self-affirming, reifying, rigid, and authoritative. Knowledge construction and negotiation is rife with complexities, contradictions, and confusions. The early career teachers in this study illustrated that fluctuating engagements with the obscured difficulties of knowledge endeavors to uncomplicate their understandings of teaching and teacher while also attempting to refrain from destabilizing their fragile identity(ies). The analysis suggested that maintaining practice and theory in a relationship at odds with one another supports the belief that experience makes the teacher, privileging experience as the preeminent means for learning to be a teacher and relegating theory to the periphery.

Contributions of the Study

The review of the literature related to early career teachers and teacher identity reaffirms the understanding that teaching and becoming teacher is rife with uncertainties and contradictions while being, “*unforgivingly complex*” (Cochran-Smith as cited in Mayer et al., 2017, p. 16). This complexity was echoed in this study, as we see the early career teachers confronted with the expectations of being expert and the subsequent ramifications that influence their identity. The analysis illustrates the ways in which dominant discourses and cultural myths constitute the participants’ identities and the way teacher is enacted. A myriad of uncertainty, confusions, and emotions cause these early career teachers to isolate themselves as a way to maintain an illusion of teacher as expert or in efforts to stabilize their sense of identity which speaks to the pervasive cultural myth of teacher as self-made, an individual project—and struggle. Practice and theory are understood by the participants as a binary relation, placing practice hierarchically over theory, whereby experience is positioned as the primary source for accumulating knowledge and learning about teaching. Through deconstruction and critical engagement, experience is rendered problematic when it is expected to be a linear, pre-

established path that will ensure answers. Experience is inadequate when it is left to speak for itself, without the interference of critical engagement. When experience is perceived as the sole means to learning, how to be teacher, then development is expected to be linear and continually progressive when really it is uneven, recursive, and disordered. Enacting teacher with an understanding of development as successive steps, predetermined by the ever elusive “how-to” teacher tips, results in frustration when experience does not provide the answers and knowledge is not there for the picking. This study demonstrates the ways in which early career teachers require the opportunity, and language, to directly and critically (re)engage with their teacher identities, knowledge construction, and becoming. This is important because critical engagement will disrupt assumptions about the work of teachers and becoming teacher, as well as upset the pervasive and powerful dominant discourses.

Implications

Early career teachers may find relief in conceptualizing their development as uneven and uncertain while recognizing their becoming. In order to do this, early career teachers require the opportunities and language to take up such notions as teacher becoming and begin to unpack what that means for how they are learning to teach. As Britzman (2003) cautions, “the immediacy of classroom life threatens to unravel efforts to be thoughtful” (p. 6) as the day-to-day life of teachers in schools beckons for instantaneous resolutions and effective strategies, a focus on the doing of teacher. The (sometimes subtle) moments of confusion, disruption, and uncertainty risk being seen as insignificant when left to linger unprovoked and not engaged with critically—the times when teachers are uncertain of their choice of instruction, or their decision with a student, or finding conflict with a colleague. Left to fester, these seemingly inconsequential moments may further fuel an early career teachers’ belief that they are

representative of their inadequacies. Discussion and deconstruction might help to reveal assumptions or fallible knowledge upon which notions of teacher may reside. Early career teachers require support to engage with the conceptual tensions that may cause frictional discord as they shape their identity(ies) while becoming teacher. Opportunities to engage with “difficult knowledge,” knowledge that interacts, interferes, or creates barriers, may also relinquish early career teachers from attempting to ascribe to the fixed notions of teacher perpetuated by society when they understand their unfixed becoming. How might educational leaders and teacher educators better support early career teachers as they navigate and (re)negotiate the tensions that arise from the dissonance of the polyphony of knowledge and identity negotiations? In what follows, I will explore implications of identity and knowledge for teacher education programs and in-service teachers.

Teacher Education Programs: Some Provocations for Consideration

This study concentrated on the experiences of early career teachers but it is essential to consider the experiences of the teacher education programs. Perhaps the challenge of supporting early career teachers reaches further back to the teacher education programs and the need to consider how normative discourses authorize the knowledge and work that is being done at the university level. Might there be opportunities for teacher candidates to be introduced to concepts of school biography, the normative discourses of “teacher,” and the cultural myths of teaching as a way to critically engage with their own becoming teacher? For example, the commonly used assignment of writing a teaching philosophy could incorporate a secondary task of analyzing it for cultural myths and dominant discourses by using discourse analysis. Teacher candidates may find benefit from opportunities in their teacher education programs to discuss the plurality of their teacher identity(ies) and to have attention brought to the pervasive discourses that impede

and deny opportunities to recognize teacher as becoming rather than presumed to be a finished product. The “identity work” (Clarke, 2009) has a place in teacher education programs as the identity(ies) of teachers and pre-service teachers are already shaped and being shaped before and during their teacher education program and so need to be critically considered by candidates.

Additionally, the continued privileging of practice over theory requests a space where theory and practice can be demonstrated as inextricable. Phompun, Thongthew, and Zeichner (2013) suggest a model that creates a “third space” to bridge theory and practice through direct means where professors and co-operating teachers collaborate. Alsup (2006) argues that, “teacher education, or the much mechanized phrase “teacher training”—is usually focused on the future students of the preservice teacher, not on the development of the teacher him- or herself” (p. xiv). In attempting to not place blame on the universities or teacher education programs, the implications presented in this study aim to provoke a reimagining of a space that already is, rather than label it is a problem that is in need of a solution. Thus, consideration of possible third spaces might be worthy places of re-imagining in teacher education programs and providing teacher candidates with opportunities to engage with their identity(ies) and becoming.

Supporting Early Career Teachers: Boundary Spaces

The initial years of a teacher’s entry into the profession occupies a liminal space where a teacher is inundated with destabilizing experiences that require constant (re)negotiation of identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). This transitional space, often reduced to a period of induction and presumptions of early career teachers being self-actualized (Alsup, 2006), provides opportunity for identity work to continue. Leaving early career teachers to struggle with their destabilized/ing identities in isolation, sets up possibilities to reproduce the familiar and traditional enactments of being teacher. Recognizing the initial years of teaching as a “boundary

space” positions early career teachers, “for potential discovery and learning” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011, p. 8). Preliminary experiences have a significant impact on early career teachers, the shaping of their identity(ies) and knowledge, as well as their conceptualizations of teaching (Gore & Bowe, 2015). Recognizing how impactful preliminary experiences are to the subsequent work of early career teachers, creates a sense of urgency to find ways to critically engage with the discourses that shape the identities and knowledge of teachers as they are becoming.

Rendering experience as problematic. As previously raised in the literature on early career teachers, experience is rendered problematic because of the assumption that learning comes from experience when in fact, “the difference between mere circumstance and lived experience is our capacity to bestow experience with meanings, be reflective, and take action” (Britzman, 2003, p. 51). Dependent on the discourses that constitute a subject’s knowledge of teaching and being teacher, early career teachers can create divergent meanings for seemingly innocuous experiences that are intended to create a similar set of skills or knowledge. It is critical that early career teachers, ideally during their teacher education programs but also as they enter the profession, be exposed to the idea of experience as being problematic in order to maintain a critical lens when encountering their understandings of experience. Continuing to regard experience as the means to learn maintains the cultural myth that teacher is self-made by experience. Creating disruption in this line of thinking will not only allow for deconstruction of the aforementioned cultural myth but it would also work to collapse the binary relation of theory and practice to demonstrate the interdependency. Theory and practice are indivisible and integral to one another despite their frequent fracturing. The accumulation and collection of experiences left unexamined, will continually disappoint and frustrate early career teachers when no further understanding or insight appears.

Rendering *becoming* as uneven. Through critical engagement, early career teachers can interrogate the perceptions of their experiences in order to embrace the power of acknowledging that teachers are in a continual state of becoming and learning to teach is an uneven development rather than a mapped out linear lock step progression. Clarke (2009) argues that, “engaging in ‘identity work’ is indispensable for teachers if they wish to exercise professional agency, and thereby maximize their potential for development and growth” (p. 187). Gore and Bowe (2015) offer a framework for impacting teacher development for early career teachers in their initial years of the profession. Precursors to this model, such as Franzak’s (2002) “Critical Friends Group,” maintains a hierarchy of mentor/mentee whereas Gore and Bowe’s (2015) “Quality Teaching Rounds (QT)” functions with, “the intent to position all PLC members as learners, to flatten the power hierarchy and to avoid the adoption of a mentor/coach/expert role by any individual” (p. 79). The analysis and work within the QT includes reflection, “on how specific practices, such as rounds, affect our lives and to reflect on where these practices come from” (p. 81). Rather than accepting experiences at face value, QT takes up discourse, subjectivity, and lived experiences with the intention of supporting the transition from teacher candidate to teacher and the ongoing process of learning to teach. QT also seeks to reveal, deconstruct, and interrupt the discursive ways that teaching and teacher are constituted while providing early career teachers with the language to articulate their engagements with and conceptualizations of becoming teacher. Gore and Bowe (2015) provide one example of a framework that provides opportunity to engage with many of the issues taken up in this study of early career teachers and the formation of their identity while acknowledging the relatively limited amount of research available on the effects of QT.

Phenomenological Research Studies with Teachers

One of the implications of this study is to consider how teachers are used in and for educational research. If the, “analytical techniques of post-structuralism can help teachers, as subjects, identify the constitutive forces of particular discourse in the shaping of self” (Rich et al., 2017) then it would reason that a missing element from the design of many studies is the sharing of the meaning and insights that are made from the lived experiences shared by the teacher-participants. The analysis taken up by the researcher exists in isolation from the teacher-participants. Additionally, a secondary component to interviews would be to consider facilitating opportunities where teachers are able to give meaning to their experiences through deconstruction. It is a need for early career teachers, during their teacher education programs and the initial years in the profession, to critically engage with the complexity of discourses that create problematic foundations for becoming teacher. The interruptions in identity and knowledge are embedded with possibilities to engage with redefining and reconstructing what it means to be in a process of becoming teacher. By acknowledging the obscured discourses that permeate the commonly held beliefs of the work of teachers, so begins the work of transforming and reconfiguring notions of teacher and teaching. I argue that studies that recruit teachers as participants need to give consideration for how teachers may benefit other than just participating in the study.

Implications for Future Research

This study has resulted in more questions than answers. As van Manen (2016) states, “you open up a question which becomes bottomless” (p. 5). In doing so, the work of this study has led to questions that could be taken up in future research. This was a study that saw teachers participate in only one interview. A longitudinal study would provide teachers with multiple

opportunities to share and respond to prompts. A longer time frame would also provide the researcher and participants to engage with ideas together—co-construct understandings. This study also suggests the need for notions of judgement to be addressed in research. What does perceived judgment do to a teacher, their identity, and subsequent becoming? Additionally, I am interested in how professional learning communities may consider other ways of functioning (i.e. *Quality Teaching Rounds*) in order to support early career teachers and their colleagues. What are the alternatives to traditional mentorship programs? This study touched upon notions of betrayal and abandonment. How might these ideas play out in the becoming of teacher and what does it do to the imagined fantasy of teacher? Early career teachers are a subculture of teachers that requires additional consideration through research and study.

Concluding Thoughts and Questions Arising

This study recognized that early career teachers are not always provided with the conceptual space needed to acknowledge and engage with the tensions that arise from conflicting knowledge or ideological friction and the continual negotiations with the shaping of their identity(ies). Early career teachers construct an understanding of what it means to be teacher based on their first-hand experiences of being a student and witnessing only that which is visible and observable in teaching (Britzman, 2003). As early career teachers take on the role of teacher, disruptions in perceptions of knowledge and identity(ies) of teacher begin to accumulate, interact, and interfere. This study illustrated the ways in which early career teachers engage with these moments of instability and dissonance so that we, as educational leaders and colleagues, can better understand and make space for them as they are (re)negotiating their knowledge and identity(ies) of becoming teacher. In considering the contributions and limitations of this study, I am left wondering about the obligations of teacher education programs and the teaching

profession to early career teachers. What does it do to teachers to not be aware of the power of dominant discourses and school biography? Who has the responsibility to draw early career teachers' attention to the ways in which their identity(ies) are forming? How does recognizing teachers as becoming affect others that are part of the education system (i.e., stakeholders)? Future research may look to the ways early career teachers can have direct critical engagement with their identity(ies), rather than fleeting, obscure, and indirect glimpses.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Prior to the start of the interview, the PI and participant will review and sign the consent form.

The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher**Interview Protocol**

The interviewer will read the following to begin the interview.

Mistakes, misrepresentations, confusion, conflicts, and little gifts of error are all crucial to the stuff of understanding and constructing knowledge, as are the small and large adjustments and insights we make from these events.

-Deborah P. Britzman, Practice Makes Practice (2003)

One must struggle to comprehend the close connection between identity and the self, the role of emotion in shaping identity, the power of stories and discourse in understanding identity, the role of reflection in shaping identity, the link between identity and agency, the contextual factors that promote or hinder the construction of identity.

-Catherine Beauchamp & Lynn Thomas, Understanding Teacher Identity (2009)

Knowledge and the construction of knowledge can be thought of as a bulletin board. New ideas, thoughts, questions that are acquired are like attaching items to a bulletin board. Items on a bulletin board can be moved, taken down, or modified. Just like new knowledge interacts with prior knowledge, new items on a bulletin board may influence those that are already pinned. Much like knowledge, a bulletin board may appear very static and stationary, but it can easily be cleared off, painted over, and even removed from the wall to be placed in another location or even discarded. A bulletin board is open ended and has limitless possibilities. Knowledge too is open-ended and has the potential for limitless possibilities.

Interviewer's introductory comments:

I would like to begin by thanking you for agreeing to participate. I would also like to remind you that if at any point during this interview, or any time after, you would like to withdraw from the research study you are free to do so.

Do I have your permission to audio-record our conversation and take notes?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

The purpose of this study is to document early career teachers' understandings of their own identity, specifically in relation to the various types of (often conflicting) knowledge that they encounter. In what ways are early career teachers experiencing and reconciling new knowledge that might challenge long held assumptions or beliefs. Please feel free to provide as much detail as possible.

The following prompts will be used to generate the conversation for this semi-structured interview. Please use the prompts to assist you in thinking about experiences, moments, and incidents that relate to the entanglements with knowledge; the hidden work in teaching. You may choose to speak to certain prompts more than others.

Please begin by telling me about your background in teaching. You may consider talking about how long you have taught for, grade levels, your experiences as a pre-service teacher, and your experiences as an early career teacher.

1. What types of things have you learned as an early career teacher that you did not already know?
 - How did you learn those things?
 - Where or from who did you learn those things?
 - Did these new learnings conflict with what you thought you already knew?
2. Since you have started teaching have there been instances when you have learned something new from:
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Colleagues
 - Principal
 - Others
3. When you think about the knowledge required to be a teacher, can you think of times when you:
 - felt confident or certain about what you knew
 - felt that what you knew was helpful to someone or to a particular situation
 - were asked to give your advice or opinion to a colleague or parent
4. Tell me about a time when:
 - you wished you knew more about something
 - you felt uncertain
 - what you were required to know or to learn seemed overwhelming
 - what you thought you knew seemed to be in question

5. Tell me about a time when you believed your knowledge conflicted with the knowledge of:
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Colleagues
 - Principal
 - Others

6. Sometimes teachers are expected to be experts, even when they are still learning about teaching. Tell me about a time when you felt you did not know or were unsure of what to do.
 - How did that make you feel?
 - What, if anything, could you or did you do about it?
 - Would you do anything differently if you were in that same situation again?

7. Although becoming a teacher is a life-long process, teachers are often considered to be “experts”. Think about times when you felt you were expected to be an expert (or had knowledge understood to be expertise) and how this might have led to:
 - Times of conflict
 - Times of confusion
 - Times of uncertainty
 - Times of inadequacy
 - Times of overconfidence

8. As teachers have more experiences over the course of their careers, they learn more about teaching and about being a teacher. Given that, as teachers, we are always developing (always in the process of becoming a teacher), how would you describe:
 - your current understanding of being a teacher?

- how has this changed since you first started teaching?
- how do you perceive this changing in the future as you proceed in teaching?

Is there anything you wish to add or any prompts you wish to revisit?

Thank you for your time today.

Appendix B

Letter of Invitation

(To be submitted on University of Manitoba letterhead)

April 2018

Dear Potential Participant,

My name is Christie Petersen and I am a graduate student in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba and a classroom teacher in School Division A. I am conducting this research study as part of the requirements for my master's thesis. The title of my study is: **The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher**. My thesis advisor is Dr. Melanie Janzen (Melanie.Janzen@umanitoba.ca). This study has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) at the University of Manitoba.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how early career teachers grapple with being a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher.

In order to conduct my research, I will be conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers who are early career teachers, specifically with about three to five years of teaching experience. I anticipate that the interview will take approximately 60 to 75 minutes.

The Superintendent of [REDACTED] School Division has approved the research. Pseudonyms will be used for participant names and school names. Only my thesis advisor and I will have access to the anonymized data.

This is your invitation to participate in an interview that will be held at a place and time convenient to you. The interview will be recorded with a digital audio recorder and then transcribed by myself. You will also have the opportunity to review the transcript of your interview and make any changes or deletions that you deem necessary. This should take an additional 20 to 30 minutes of your time. All of your responses will be kept confidential and you will be provided with a pseudonym. All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer and hard data will be stored in a locked drawer in my home office. All identifiable and non-identifiable data will be stored separately from each other. The data collected will be used to inform my master's thesis and for potential future publications or conference presentations. My thesis advisor will have access to the non-identifiable data from this study.

I am looking to recruit teachers to represent a range of experience (about three to five years) and that is why I will not necessarily be accepting the first six individuals who volunteer for the study. Ideally, I would have two participants with about three years of experience, two participants with four years of experience, and two participants with about five years of experience.

Once again, your participation is voluntary. There are minimal risks and no compensation associated with this study. You can withdraw at any time from this study without penalty.

Simply call [REDACTED] or send an email (peterse6@myumanitoba.ca) stating your request to withdraw. Upon notification, all your data will be destroyed and removed from the study.

If you wish to participate, you will be provided with a consent form via email to be returned to me at your earliest convenience. If you would like to participate, or have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [REDACTED] or send an email to peterse6@myumanitoba.ca.

Once the study has been completed, all data will be destroyed (by January 2021 at the latest).

The anticipated date of completion is January 2019. At the completion of the study, you have the option to receive a copy of the final report via email or a hard copy by mail. The consent form contains a place to indicate whether or not you wish to receive the report and how you would like it sent to you.

This research has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB). If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator (HEC) at 204-474-7122 or humanethics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Sincerely,

Christie Petersen

Resource Teacher ([REDACTED] School Division)

Graduate Student

Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning

Faculty of Education

University of Manitoba

Appendix C

Informed Consent

(To be submitted on University of Manitoba letterhead)

Research Project Title: The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher

Researcher: Christie Petersen, Graduate Student, Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning, Faculty of Education, Email: peterse6@myumanitoba.ca, Phone: [REDACTED]

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Melanie Janzen, Phone: [REDACTED], Email: Melanie.Janzen@umanitoba.ca

Dear Teacher,

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to investigate how early career teachers grapple with being a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher. The specific research questions are:

- a) What types of knowledge do early career teachers encounter?
- b) What are the teachers' experiences of the tensions that are created when conflicting knowledge collides?
- c) In what ways do early career teachers experience and mitigate those tensions?

- d) In what ways do early career teachers understand their sense of teacher identity? Specifically, in what ways do early career teachers experience and attempt to reconcile the idea that they are presumed expert but are in a state of “becoming” teacher (Britzman, 2003)?

Research Procedures and Recording:

You have been provided with the *Letter of Invitation* because you are an elementary teacher in the [REDACTED] School Division. I intend to interview six teachers who have been teaching for about three to five years, to examine their perceptions and experiences of how early career teachers grapple with being a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher. If you provide consent, you will participate in a one-on-one semi-structured interview. Interviews will be approximately 60 to 75 minutes in length and will be held at a time and place that is mutually agreed upon. Interviews will be recorded with a digital audio recorder and I will transcribe the recordings. Notes may also be taken during the interview. You will be given the opportunity to read the transcript of the interview and edit or delete any information. This would take approximately 20 to 30 minutes of your time. The superintendent of the [REDACTED] School Division, Mr. [REDACTED], has provided permission for me to conduct this study.

Risks and Benefits:

I do not anticipate more than minimal risks as a result of participating in this study. Should you feel uncomfortable, you are free to end and leave the interview at any time. There is no penalty if you decide to end and leave the interview. You may find that reflecting on your experiences in teaching thus far can be an informative and positive experience.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

Qualitative data will be collected from you during a one-on-one interview. Interviews will be audio-taped using a digital recorder and later transcribed verbatim. Notes may also be taken during the interviews. These notes will help me to recall the discussion and also serve as back up in case the digital recording malfunctions or is inaudible in anyway. These data will be incorporated into my analysis if necessary. All identifying characteristics (including individual names, school names, and school division names) will be removed from the transcripts and replaced with pseudonyms. Notes will not contain any identifying information. Audio files will be removed from the digital recorder after the interview and transferred to a password-protected computer. The anonymized data will only be accessible to me and my thesis advisor. All identifiable and non-identifiable data will be stored separately from each other.

If you indicate that you agree to be contacted for future research possibilities or studies, please note that your contact information will be stored in a locked drawer and separate from any of the non-identifiable data.

My thesis advisor will have access to the non-identifiable data from this study.

Compensation and Participation:

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. You can withdraw by contacting me via email or by phone. Contact information is listed at the beginning of this form. If you withdraw from this study, all data collected from you will be destroyed and removed from use in the study. No compensation will be provided to participants who participate in this study.

Feedback and Debriefing:

I will include a member checking process. I will send you a transcript of your interview without observer comments and ask that if you have any changes, additions, or deletions to make. You will be sent the transcript via the email address that they may choose to provide on the consent form. I will ask that you respond within one week. This would take approximately 20 to 30 minutes of your time. If you choose not to respond, then I will assume that you no requests for changes. Once the study is complete, all participants who have indicated on the consent form that they would like to receive a copy of the final results will receive a summary. I anticipate sending the summaries by January 2019.

Dissemination of Results to Participants:

If you have indicated on the consent form that you would like to receive a copy of the final results, a summary will be sent to you at the completion of the study. The findings of the study will be used to inform my master's thesis and may also be disseminated in presentations, conferences, papers, or publications. When study results are shared, all findings will be presented in a way that does not identify any participants. The names of participants, schools, and the school division will be replaced by pseudonyms.

Destruction of the Data:

Raw data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the home office of the Principal Investigator until January 2021. The only person who will have access to the raw data with identifying information will be me and my thesis advisor. Once the study has been completed, all audio recordings, transcripts, and notes will be destroyed. Hard copies will be shredded and digital files will be deleted using "secure erase".

Please note that there is a possibility that allegations of child abuse may be shared during the one-on-one interview. If such allegations are shared, I am obligated to report them to the appropriate authorities.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Christie Petersen, Phone: [REDACTED], Email: peterse6@myumanitoba.ca

Resource Teacher ([REDACTED] School Division)

Graduate Student

Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning

Faculty of Education

University of Manitoba

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board

(ENREB). If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator (HEC) at 204-474-7122 or humanethics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Please indicate how you would like to receive the summary of findings.

Please provide an email address if you would like to receive it electronically.

_____ I prefer to receive the summary of findings in **electronic format**. Please send my summary to the following email address:

_____ I prefer to receive the summary of findings in **hard copy format**. Please send my summary to the following mailing address:

I agree to being contacted for future research possibilities by the principal investigator.

Yes _____ No _____

Appendix D

School Division Permission Form

(To be submitted on University of Manitoba letterhead)

Christie Petersen

Graduate Student

Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning

Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

To [REDACTED],

My name is Christie Petersen and I am a graduate student in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. I am writing to request your permission to engage in a research study within the [REDACTED] School Division as part of the requirements for my master's thesis. The study has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba.

The title of my study is: **The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher**

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Melanie Janzen, Phone: [REDACTED], Email:

Melanie.Janzen@umanitoba.ca

The purpose of this study is to investigate how early career teachers grapple with being a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher.

I am requesting permission to conduct this research based on the following parameters:

- Contact the principals of schools with k to 5 teachers and ask them to distribute recruitment letters and materials (with the exception of the school that I currently work in).
- An invitation letter would be distributed on my behalf by the school principal to the school's teachers in their school mailboxes.
- Teachers wishing to participate will contact me directly to ensure confidentiality.
- An interview of approximately one hour will be conducted at a time and a location that will be mutually agreed upon.
- Participants will have the opportunity to review the transcript of their interview and make any changes that they would like.
- Participants will be assured through the consent letter that their responses will remain anonymous and confidential, that they may withdraw from the study at any time, and that all identifiers will be removed from the analyses and dissemination of findings.
- I will be the only person to have access to participants' names, though my advisor may have access to anonymized data. Audio digital recordings and electronic data will be stored on a password protected computer. All hard data will be locked in a drawer. All data will be destroyed at the completion of this study and by January 2021 at the latest.
- All participants will be made aware that the findings of the study may be disseminated in presentations, conferences, papers, or publications, as well as informing my master's thesis.

- I will provide you with a research report upon completion of the study, by January 2019.

I have attached for your convenience:

- The *Letter of Invitation* that would be distributed by the school principal.
- The *Consent Form* for individuals who wish to be interviewed.

The support I am requesting from the division consists of:

- Superintendent permission to engage in the research.

Your signature on the *Superintendent's Consent Form* will authorize your approval for this research project. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me or my research supervisor should you have any questions.

Please note that I will not identify the participants, schools or school division in my data or in any subsequent publication. Pseudonyms will replace any the names in any identifiable data. I will maintain the confidentiality of the identities of the participants of this study.

Sincerely,

Christie Petersen

Email: peterse6@myumanitoba.ca

Resource Teacher, [REDACTED] School

Graduate Student, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

Research Project Title: **The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher**

To Christie Petersen,

I hereby give permission for the research study **The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher** to be conducted with teachers from the [REDACTED] School Division during the months of April 2018 to June 2018.

I understand that you will ask the elementary school principals to distribute letters of invitation to teacher mailboxes. I understand that you will be conducting one-on-one semi-structured interviews with six teachers. I understand that my signature on this form indicates that I have understood to my satisfaction the information regarding participation and supports in the request. In no way does this letter waive my legal rights nor release the researcher or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. I am free to withdraw my consent from the study at any time, and I am free to ask for clarification or new information throughout the study.

Superintendent's Signature

Date

If you would like to receive a summary of the results of this study, please provide the email or mailbox address indicating where you would like the final report sent.

Contact information:

Appendix E

Principal Information Letter

(To be submitted on University of Manitoba letterhead)

Christie Petersen

Graduate Student

Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning

Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

To _____,

My name is Christie Petersen and I am a graduate student in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. I am writing to request your help in distributing the recruitment materials (*Letter of Invitation*) for a study I am conducting for master's thesis. The study has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. The superintendent of [REDACTED] School Division, [REDACTED], has provided me with permission to conduct this research.

The title of my study is: **The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher.**

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Melanie Janzen, Phone: [REDACTED], Email:

Melanie.Janzen@umanitoba.ca

The purpose of this study is to investigate how early career teachers grapple with being a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher.

I am requesting that you distribute the *Letter of Invitation* and *Consent Form* (recruitment materials) to any elementary teachers (kindergarten to grade 5) who are early career teachers with about three to five years of experience.

I have attached for your convenience:

- The *Letter of Invitation* and *Consent Form* that you would distribute to potential participants.
- The consent form for individuals who wish to be interviewed.

The support I am requesting from you consists of:

- Distribution of copies of the *Letter of Invitation* and *Consent Form* to all teachers who meet the criteria of teaching for about three to five years and have a teaching assignment in K to 5.

Please note that I will not identify the participants, schools or school division in my data or in any subsequent publication. Pseudonyms will replace any names in any identifiable data.

Please feel free to contact me or my thesis supervisor should you have any questions.

Thank you for your assistance with this study.

Sincerely,

Christie Petersen

Email: peterse6@myumanitoba.ca

Resource Teacher, [REDACTED] School

Graduate Student, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

Appendix F

Email Sent to Professional Network

Dear Colleague,

I am currently a graduate student in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. I am writing to request your help in distributing recruitment materials (*Letter of Invitation* and *Consent Form*) for a study I am conducting for my master's thesis. The study has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba.

The title of my study is **The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher**. My thesis advisor is Dr. Melanie Janzen ([REDACTED] or Melanie.Janzen@umanitoba.ca).

The purpose of this study is to investigate how early career teachers grapple with being a teacher through the entanglement of tensions created when knowledge collides and how this influences their identity(ies) of teacher.

I am asking for your help to forward this email (including the recruitment materials in the attachments - *Letter of Invitation* and *Consent Form*) to any kindergarten to grade 5 teachers who are early career teachers with **about** three to five years of experience (give or take a few months more or less).

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Thank you for your assistance in helping me to recruit participants.

Sincerely,

Christie Petersen

Email: peterse6@myumanitoba.ca

Resource Teacher, [REDACTED] School A

Graduate Student, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

Appendix G



Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
Email: humanethics@umanitoba.ca

PROTOCOL APPROVAL

TO: Christie Petersen (Advisor: Melanie Janzen)
Principal Investigator

FROM: Zana Lutfiyya, Chair
Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB)

Re: Protocol #E2018:012 (HS21532)
"The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming
Teacher"

Effective: March 13, 2018

Expiry: March 13, 2019

Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) has reviewed and approved the above research. ENREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted only for the research and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modification to the research must be submitted to ENREB for approval before implementation.
3. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to ENREB as soon as possible.
4. This approval is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and approved by the above expiry date.
5. A Study Closure form must be submitted to ENREB when the research is complete or terminated.
6. The University of Manitoba may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*.

Funded Protocols:

- Please mail/e-mail a copy of this Approval, identifying the related UM Project Number, to the Research Grants Officer in ORS.

Appendix H



Human Ethics
 208-194 Dafoe Road
 Winnipeg, MB
 Canada R3T 2N2
 Phone +204-474-7122
 Email: humanethics@umanitoba.ca

AMENDMENT APPROVAL

May 28, 2018

TO: **Christie Petersen** (Advisor: **Melanie Janzen**)
 Principal Investigator

FROM: **Zana Lutfiyya, Chair**
 Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB)

Re: **Protocol #E2018:012 (HS21532)**
The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of Becoming Teacher

Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) has reviewed and approved your Amendment Request received on **May 28, 2018** to the above-noted protocol. ENREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is given for this amendment only. Any further changes to the protocol must be reported to the Human Ethics Coordinator in advance of implementation.
2. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to ENREB as soon as possible.
3. Amendment Approvals do not change the protocol expiry date. Please refer to the original Protocol Approval or subsequent Renewal Approvals for the protocol expiry date.

Appendix I



Human Ethics
 208-194 Dafoe Road
 Winnipeg, MB
 Canada R3T 2N2
 Phone +204-474-7122
 Email: humanethics@umanitoba.ca

RENEWAL APPROVAL

Date: February 25, 2019 **New Expiry:** March 13, 2020

TO: Christie Petersen **(Advisor: Melanie Janzen)**
 Principal Investigator

FROM: Joseph Gordon, Chair
 Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB)

Re: Protocol #E2018:012 (HS21532)
 "The Hidden Work: Early Career Teachers' Experiences of
 Becoming Teacher"

Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) has reviewed and renewed the above research. ENREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Any modification to the research must be submitted to ENREB for approval before implementation.
2. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to ENREB as soon as possible.
3. This renewal is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and approved by the above expiry date.
4. A Study Closure form must be submitted to ENREB when the research is complete or terminated.

Funded Protocols:

- Please mail/e-mail a copy of this Renewal Approval, identifying the related UM Project Number, to the Research Grants Officer in ORS.