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Reimagining ‘becomings’: Disrupting notions of ‘ought’ selves among doctoral and early career researchers who teach

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Research
practice



Position of doctoral and early career researchers in HE

- Casualised, precarious, pressured
- Responsibilities often held in tension with each other (Fitzmaurice, 2013; Jawitz, 2009, Clegg, 2008)
 - Research and teaching
 - Discipline and institution
 - Home and university
- Liminal position (Winstone and Moore, 2016)



Identity construction

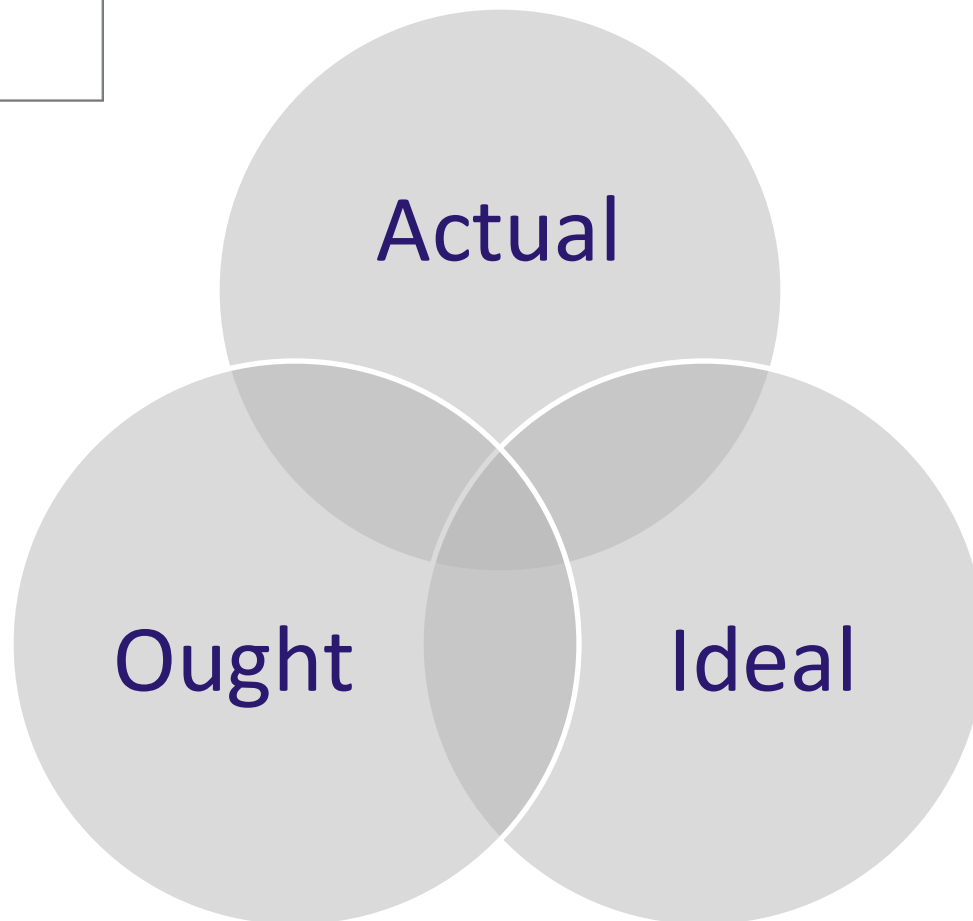
- Conceptualised ‘not as a fixed property, but as part of the lived complexity of a person’s project’ (Clegg, 2008, p.329)
- Fluid, dynamic, non-linear, ongoing, incomplete, active (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009)
- Not only individual introspection, but also through dialogue with others and broader institutional discourses and expectations (Watson, 2006; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009)
- Emotional, and often uncomfortable (Akinbode, 2013; Jones, 2011)
- Messiness offers opportunity, **if allowed to flourish**

“Becoming” (Todd, 2001)

“On the one hand, [pedagogy] touches on the hope that people can think differently, can change the way they relate to each other, and can form new understandings of themselves and the world that makes possible the very act of teaching and learning.”

“On the other hand...if pedagogy is about the becoming of the subject, then it can become a tool for the most oppressive ends.”

(Todd, 2001, p.435)



Adapted from Lauriala and
Kukkonen (2005)

Academics create 'spaces for the exercise of principled personal autonomy and agency' (Clegg, 2008, p.340) – Winstone and Moore (2016) suggest early career researchers who teach do this too

Reimagining “becomings”



- Fictionalised accounts (Ball, 1984)
- Graphic novels (Bjartveit and Panayotidis, 2014)
- Concept maps (McMillan and Gordon, 2017)
- Cartoons (Fashanu, 2017)
- Video/photography (Taylor et al, 2011)
- Stimulated recall (Baker and Lee, 2011; Rowe, 2009)

Disrupting “ought” narratives: a work in progress

Title: A critical exploration of if, and if so, how, GTAs’ perceptions of their role as teachers in Higher Education influence their classroom practice.

Draft research questions:

- How do GTAs perceive their role as teachers in UK higher education?
- What influences these perceptions?
- What is the relationship between these perceptions and the decisions that GTAs make in the classroom?
- How far do GTAs feel they have agency over what they do in their day-to-day practice?

Disrupting “ought” narratives: a work in progress

Data creation:

- Initial concept mapping of the role of the teacher (by participants)
- Recording of 3x teaching sessions and reflective discussion on recording and mapping (researcher and individual participants)

Data analysis and (re)presentation:

- Narrative analysis of concept maps and reflective discussions, and co-production of individual fictional narratives



What does this mean for professional development?

- How far do we focus on the affective, not just cognitive and skills-based development
- How far do we as professionals embrace and model messiness?
- What values, experiences, assumptions are we bringing to our interactions with doctoral and early career researchers?
- How do we honour the diverse voices of doctoral and early career researchers in professional development activity?
- What spaces can we provide for early career researchers to enact Clegg's (2008, p.340) 'principled personal autonomy and agency'?
- What methods of "imagining" could we use?

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