



## In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

Alexandra Sewell, University of Worcester

### ABSTRACT

This paper presents a Self-Study of my quest for a personal pedagogy as an HE lecturer in my first year of teaching. I experimented with the application of Inquiry-Based Learning as a teaching method of active learning pedagogy. The influence of the experiences of choice and implementation of Inquiry-Based Learning on the development of my academic identity are explored. The paper is theoretically grounded in accounts of academic identity formation put forth by Jenkins (1996), Danielewicz & Yem (2014) and King, Garcia-Perez, Graham, Jones, Tickle, & Wilson (2014). Themes of identity, arising from experiences of pedagogical choice and teaching practice, were a need for conformity versus a desire for individualism, theoretical knowledge and paradigm adherence, pragmatic constraints and student – lecturer relationship and confidence. These themes are discussed in relation to existing Inquiry-Based Learning research literature. With the publication of the first Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in 2017, the paper makes a timely addition to the discourse of new lecturers' experiences and the often challenging process of initial academic identity formation. It also offers research into the effects of Inquiry-Based Learning for the lecturer, whereas the outcomes for students have been mostly examined by previous literature.

**Keywords:** self-study, inquiry-based learning, early career lecturer, academic identity, higher education

### Introduction

In this paper I present a Self-Study research account of myself as lecturer in my first year experimenting with teaching practice to develop a personal pedagogy. The purpose of the Self-Study is to further discourse on the relationship between new lecturers' experiences, specifically pedagogical choices, and their effect on academic identity formation.

A variety of academics have previously explored the relationship between pedagogy and academic identity. For example, McInnes (2013) analysed how academic identity is inexplicitly bound up in academic discourse within a traditional lecture framework, with lecturer discourse shifting from anecdotal to theoretical through the action of continual identity re-contextualisation. Ross, Sinclair, Knox, Bayne and Macleod (2014) investigated how Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) have influenced three emergent categories of academic identity; the charismatic celebrity professor, the facilitator and the automated response.

I constructed the development of a personal pedagogy as a choice between a traditional didactic lecture style or the adoption of active learning. For this reason, the *exploration* part of the Self-Study has two narrative foci - choice and implementation of pedagogical approach. The chosen pedagogy was an active learning approach with use of Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) to enact this. The Self-Study two foci narrative explores how the experience of choosing and implementing IBL was pivotal in the development of my academic identity.

In addition to advancing research into the relationship between academic identity and pedagogy, the paper also seeks to further the emerging discourse around new lecturers' experiences and the unique influence of this for identity formation. Existing research highlights themes of confidence, hope, alienation, inauthenticity and the need to develop a personal teaching 'style' (Morton, 2009; Gourlay, 2011; Wilkinson, 2018). My narrative relates to and furthers these themes, introducing motifs of a need for conformity versus a desire for individualism, theoretical knowledge and paradigm adherence, pragmatic constraints and student – lecturer mutual skill development and relationships.

### Pedagogy in Higher Education, Active Learning and Inquiry-Based Learning

The traditional lecture has been said to fall within a didactic pedagogy, where those with knowledge impart it to those without in a unidirectional discursive process (Schmidt, Wagener, Smeets, Keemink & van der Molen, 2015). This pedagogical practice of knowledge transmutation has previously dominated Higher Education (HE) (Schmidt et al., 2015; French & Kennedy, 2017). However, the dynamically changing educational environment has called forth a rationale for the adoption of alternative pedagogies, those described as 'active' (Cavanagh, 2011; Roberts, 2015; Freeman, Eddy, McDonough, Smith, Okoroafor, Jordt & Wenderoth, 2014).

In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

Active learning is defined as any learning experience where a student is required to participate in an engaged way, contrasted with the perceived passivity of traditional lectures (Prince, 2004). A range of active learning pedagogical practices have evolved in recent decades such as Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL), the flipped classroom, peer instruction, cooperative learning and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) (Roig & Stoyanova, 2018) Each of these holds the same tenet, that a more centralised, activated student role in the learning process facilitates a deeper, meaningful learning experience. This is achieved through core elements of activeness/activity, collaboration, cooperation and joint problem solving (Prince, 2004).

IBL is one method of active learning that has gained increasing popularity (Spronken-Smith & Walker, 2010). The general IBL method supports students to learn in a self-initiated manner, following their own direction by searching for new knowledge to answer a series of questions around a set topic, or topics. Instructors give various levels of support and learning is viewed as co-learning and knowledge as co-created. Spronken-Smith & Walker (2010) identify three levels of student independence and teacher support. Structured Inquiry offers the highest level of guidance, where the topic is given and step by step support offered for how to approach it. Open Inquiry offers the least guidance and students can choose their own topic. Guided Inquiry falls in between these two extremes, where students support themselves to understand a given topic. Levy (2009) identified potential outcomes to the IBL process, including consolidation of existing knowledge and new knowledge discovery.

Recent research into the effectiveness of IBL has consistently shown it to be more effective than traditional didactic lectures, but only when a high level of guidance is given by teaching staff to support learning (Furtak, Seidel, Iverson, & Briggs, 2012; Carolan, Hutchins, Wickens, & Cumming, 2014). Lazonder & Harmsen (2016) conducted a meta-analysis to understand the relationship between level of guidance and effectiveness. They also sought to understand if age of learner was a significant variable for responsiveness to IBL and guidance level. Consistent with previous research, they found that a higher degree of guidance supported better learning outcomes; more specific guidance such as explanations and scaffolding were more effective. The results indicated that older learners benefited from more specific forms of guidance.

Buchanan, Harlan, Bruce & Edwards (2016) reviewed the IBL research literature and concluded similarly in favour of its effectiveness and the crucial role of guidance. They highlighted the need for further qualitative research exploring the intricacies of growing a student-centered model, which the current paper seeks to address. In addition, existing research has predominantly explored the outcomes of IBL for students. My study provides a novel perspective; the effect of IBL on lecturers through the exploration of its impact on the formation of academic identity.

*Self-study as Research Method for Teaching Experience*

Self-study is a research methodology that has gained traction for the evaluation and enhancement of teaching practice (Feldman, 2003). An educator adopting the methodology positions themselves at the node of being a teacher and a researcher to explore teaching practice from their own subjective perspective (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). Subjectivity is advanced as a valid stance for knowledge generation and for fronting individual experience (Greene, 2000). Hamilton & Pinnegar (2014) term this 'intimate scholarship' due to the resulting personal vulnerability that arises from the methodology.

Teachers-as-researchers examine and reflect on their own behaviours, strategies and educational philosophy (Whitehead, 1993). The purpose of this is to go beyond self-reflection to knowledge generation to enable a better understanding of successful teaching practice (Loughran, 2007). This is applied to develop the teacher's own effective instruction (Shulman, 1986). Summarising this research process, LaBosky (2007) states that self-study is 'improvement aimed' at teachers' 'wish to transform themselves first so that we may be better situated to help transform our students' (LaBosky, 2007, p. 820). Self-study is also argued to be related to wider pedagogical questions because it is through the exploration of localised teaching practice that deeper awareness is gained (Putnam, 2004).

Self-study has a loose perspective towards what constitutes useful and valid data and method. Arnold (2011) describes the 'self-as-data' whereby, typically qualitative data, emerging from self-experience is the primary data for the research inquiry. This positioning leaves the teacher-as-researcher open to a wide array of inquiry method options (Hutchings, 2000; Louie, Drevdhal, Purdy, & Stackman, 2003). Hamilton and Pinnegar (2014) describe key methodological aspects of *provocation*, an important research puzzle or issue, *exploration*, use of personal experience to respond to the provocation and *refinement*, conclusions as to what is useful for teaching practice. Building on this, Louie et al. (2003) outline three types of self-study:

- Identity oriented: Which seeks to answer questions such as, who am I as a teacher? Especially, in relation to institutional norms and pressures.
- Relationship between beliefs about teaching and teaching practice: Which explores how personal beliefs about teaching and learning affect practice.
- Collegial interaction: Which examines how relationships between educators influence educational practice.

Given that personal experience and perspective is privileged, voice plays a significant role in a self-study. Putnam (2004) discusses how teacher-researcher voice is integral as each practitioner will have developed their own 'truth' regarding successful educational practice. This is a direct challenge to conventional, Western-scientific assumptions of 'truth' and 'validity' in teaching practices (Arnold, 2011). Self-study is therefore a breaking away from the traditional 'academic voice', which is developed at the expense of self-voice through a loss of individuality (Eljah, 2007). As such, the adoption of

In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

'personal voice' in a Self-Study about HE teaching practices is an act that inherently recognises the dissonance between individual voice and wider hermeneutical structures implicit in the academy (Elijah, 2007).

This is evident in Han, Vomvoridi-Ivanović, Jacobs, Karanxha, Lypka, Topdemir & Feldman's (2014) collective Self-Study of seven HE teacher educators' attempts to develop a culturally responsive pedagogy. The range of voices continually brought about different perspectives which highlighted the need to consider the relationship between an HE educator's personal view of curriculum in relation to those of students and key others. It was argued that prioritising personal voice in this way allowed for continual personal evolution on behalf of the academics with regard to culturally sensitive curriculum development. Likewise, Sandretto, Lang, Schon & Whyte (2003) utilised self-study to develop teacher education practices that promoted social justice. They too reflected that the research method's unique research approach of favouring personal perspective enabled taken for granted institutional narratives to be challenged.

In summary, Self-Study is a subjective research methodology that privileges a teacher's personal perspective to respond to pedagogic questions and develop practice. Within HE the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (2017) has resulted in academics placing renewed effort on developing their own teaching practice. Self-Study offers a suitable methodological vehicle for research and reflection from an individualised perspective (Samaras, Guðjónsdóttir, McMurrer, & Dalmau, 2012). For example, Williams & Ritter (2010) found a limited literature on professional development processes in academia so employed Self-Study to explore the transition from teacher to teacher educator in the academy. They reported that key experiences that influenced professional development were a tension between being viewed as an 'expert' in teaching but feeling novice and the difficulties encountered in developing connections with new colleagues.

Given the relevance of Self-Study to reflective practice and personal development in HE teaching, I chose it as an appropriate methodology for my research exploring professional development. Placing the locus of exploration and knowledge generation onto the self was suitable to the task of exploring how pedagogical choices in my first year of teaching influenced development of academic identity and personal pedagogy, as well as the interface between these. As such, the structure of the proceeding paper will follow Hamilton & Pinnegar's (2014) key methodological features of *provocation*, *exploration* and *refinement* as this formed the process for my Self-Study enquiry.

## Method

### Methodological positioning

I position my Self-Study research within an 'illuminative-exploratory framework' which states a social constructionist approach to 'reality' (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1995). 'Reality' is constructed via the process of the individual searching for and making meaning through repeated discursive processes (Burr, 2006). This maps onto the self-study type of Identity Orientation where the purpose of the exploration is to explore and develop personal teacher identity (Louie et al., 2003).

### Subject

It is important to explicate the link between subject and context in a self-study due to the self being the focus of investigation as a means to gain insight into the wider culture or group of interest (Ellis & Bochner, 1996). As such, I position myself as a female who entered HE lecturing from an applied psychology practice background, although I do possess two postgraduate degrees which have afforded me the research knowledge and experience required for an academic career. At the time of writing I was two years post-completion of my doctorate and in my first year as a lecturer in the School of Education at my institution. I was 31 years of age.

### Provocation

The research puzzle that led to the initiation of my Self-Study professional development research was the experience of transitioning from work as an applied psychologist to academia. Early on, it was clear to me that the radical shift in work demands and duties, as well as moving into a new institutional setting ('the Academy'), was to have a significant effect on my professional identity. Intuitively, this research puzzle seemed important for the focus of a Self-Study as coming from a family of educators, my father having been a Primary School Headteacher, my mother a Secondary School English teacher and my Brother a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) teacher, I had imbibed the idea that teaching is highly personal and that an educator brings their whole self to the job.

However, my career as an applied psychologist and postgraduate education had taught me the importance of also drawing on existing literature to establish the relevance and need for a research study, even though I was familiar with positivist 'research questions' rather than interpretivist 'research puzzles'. An early review of the 'academic identity' literature yielded a mass of results, too many to practically read and absorb given the time pressures of starting my first year of lecturing. As I was interested in exploring different types of pedagogical practice as a new lecturer, particularly Active Learning, it made sense to tailor my search and subsequent reading to accounts of academic identity development by early career academics and those concerned with my chosen 'experimental' teaching strategy of IBL.

As such, the provocation of my Self-Study draws influence from several key studies. Most notable, is the work of Wilkinson (2018) who reported on the identity work undertaken as a new lecturer in human geography. Wilkinson (2018) meaningfully explored how, as a new lecturer, she experienced a need to establish her identity as a 'competent teacher'

### In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

through regular performance. This was coupled with reflection that the pressures of such a performance led her to give a 'personal front' where she played the role of a confident lecturer, raising questions of authenticity. The research led to practice recommendations but also encouragement for other early career lecturers to conduct research into their own teaching practice to develop 'an evidence base from which beginning lecturers can gain insight into the profession' (Wilkinson, 2018, pg, 11).

Another illuminative account of HE teaching practice I found to be informative was Woolf's (2017) use of IBL for a research methods course at postgraduate level. Woolf (2017) combined analysis of personal experience with data from additional sources, in this case student accounts. The research enabled the nuances of the IBL teaching method to be reported, intricacies and insights potentially missed by alternative research methods. Woolf's (2017) research revealed challenges such as students having initial low motivation to engage with IBL, deeming it to require additional work, students being overwhelmed, leading to the scaffolding of learning, and benefits, such as students developing competent research skills.

In addition to these applicable papers, academics have utilised self-focus research to explore and reflect on a wider array of HE practices and their influence on academic identity. Duarte (2007) presents a reflection on participation in a professional development project and how it led to changes in personal pedagogical choices. For example, it enabled him to discover blended learning which led to identity changes such as a feeling of confidence in pedagogical decisions and a 'strong feeling of accomplishment' (Duarte, 2007, pg 6.) Similarly, Henning (2012) reported an autoethnography into their experience of taking an online professional development course. The need for lecturers to draw on their own identity to direct individual learning experiences was highlighted.

Latz (2012) focused on the experiential concept of 'flow'. A lecturer will be in 'flow' when they feel a lack of self-consciousness and confidence in their skills directed towards achieving a teaching related goal (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Latz (2012) reflected that his teaching practice abounded with 'flow' and that this was a central part of his lecturer identity. Conversely, MacDonald (2018) couched the lecturer identity by indicating a negative effect, such as 'anxiety' and 'depression'.

These authors each attest that researching from their own experience revealed unique details of lecturing work and how this influences and relates to academic identity. Especially, they highlight how pedagogical alignment can shape academic identity and in turn influence teaching practice. When this personally tailored reading of the literature was coupled with my reflections on joining the academy, I judged my *provocation* part to the self-study to be complete. I felt confident that I had arrived at a valid research puzzle (Loughran, 2007; Hamilton and Pinnegar, 2014).

#### Course context and Inquiry-Based Learning process

It is also important to provide relevant information about the module and course which IBL was implemented within and to describe the IBL process as self-study methodology is concerned with the specific context within which an inquiry takes place (Hamilton and Pinnegar, 2014). IBL was implemented for a level four undergraduate module titled 'The History of Special Educational Needs, Disability and Inclusion: Legislation and Policy'. The module was 30 credits and ran across two semesters. It was a core module that all 32 students enrolled on the BA (Hons) in Special Educational Needs, Disability and Inclusion were required to take. The content focused on exploring legislation and policy for Special Educational Needs and Disability from a historical perspective.

IBL sessions took place once a week for two hours during the scheduled seminar. The accompanying lecture would didactically introduce a time period and review key changes in legislation and policy during this period. This was designed to give students an 'overview' of the period and basic knowledge required to engage in further group learning via IBL. Students were given access to two key policies or legislation via the online learning platform prior to the IBL session, and advised to read them. During the IBL session students worked in groups of 4-6 following this process:

- (1) Students chose one policy/legislation to focus on
- (2) Students shared what they already knew and their initial impressions of the policy/legislation and time period
- (3) Students then developed 4-5 research questions about what they would like to know further about the chosen policy/legislation.
- (4) Students then had in excess of an hour to engage in research and further reading to answer their research questions about the focus topic. Students were provided with tablets to facilitate this and had full access to the online university library collection. As information was gathered, they worked with their group to present written answers to their questions on portable whiteboards.
- (5) Once this process was complete students had an extra 30 minutes to develop a presentation to feed back their research questions and associated learning to the rest of the group.
- (6) The rest of the seminar was dedicated to groups delivering their presentations in turn to the whole group.
- (7) Photographs of the whiteboards were taken and then uploaded to a timeline which was shared on the virtual learning environment. This meant that all students participated in creating their own timeline for the historical content studied in the module.



In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

*Data collection and analysis method*

To support the reflection aspect of the Self-Study I systematically collected discursive data. I recorded my experiences of implementing IBL by keeping a diary. The method of a diary was chosen as the primary form of data collection as it most closely aligned with actioning an Identity Oriented self-study (Louie et al., 2003; Elijah, 2007). I wrote one diary entry per week for 14 weeks (12 weeks during the semester, one week prior and one week after) recording my experiences and thoughts. Diary entries ranged from one to two pages of A4 paper in length, typed in Calibri font 11.

Diary entry data was analysed in accordance with steps outlined by Miles & Huberman's (1994) three-stage model. This was chosen as it had been modelled as an effective process by Wilkinson (2018) in her autoethnography. This process included data reduction, selecting and focusing on key moments from the diaries, data display, placing all extracts on a table to perceive thematic links and concluding what the data meant with regard to the research focus.

## Exploration

After the *provocation* stage I progressed to my *exploration*. This occurred over the course of my first academic year in post. It involved keeping the diary previously mentioned, analyzing extracts and then responding to initial analysis to develop practice. In sharing my *exploration* I present a personal narrative in two parts, each detailing its own significance: Part one, 'The selection of Inquiry-Based Learning' and part two 'The implementation of Inquiry-Based Learning'.

### *The selection of Inquiry-Based Learning*

The most cogent place for my narrative to begin is with an examination of factors that influenced IBL to be adopted as a teaching method for developing active learning experiences. This provides an analysis of how my initial rationales for adopting IBL influenced the development of my lecturer identity. Through the analysis of diary entries three key influential factors emerged; the need to belong to a group identity as a new academic in the School of Education, the influence of preference for educational theory (paradigm adherence) and pragmatic considerations.

I experienced multiple tensions as my identity as an HE lecturer developed. In the early stages of the first semester, these tensions influenced identity formation and security, which subsequently shaped the type of pedagogy chosen for the module. One tension which consistently presented itself was that of wishing to understand and conform to institutional norms and expectations, whilst also attempting to develop individuality with regard to pedagogy. Jenkin's (1996) theory pinpoints two key dimensions of identity; individual versus collective identity. An understanding of the collective group identity, and how we belong to it, occurs via 'a generic interactional process' whereby we define group categorisations and our membership to them through relationship with others (Jenkins, 1996, pg. 105). It is evident within the following diary extract that I was seeking cues for group membership via social interactions with colleagues, in order to belong to the collective identity of the School of Education.

*The voice of a colleague pipes up, repeatedly, when I consider implementing IBL for the module. I had used IBL during my practical task whilst interviewing for the position I now hold. The colleague had been on the interview panel and had openly challenged me on this. 'How would this work with level four students? What would you do if all the nineteen-year-old boys in your group turned up without having done any of the reading?' I had not felt that I had given a comprehensive answer to this.*

I noted that I was self-monitoring my opinions regarding pedagogy when forming relationships with my new colleagues. I regulated my discursive expressions, as I wanted to be '*in the right camp*' and '*on the right side*'. Clegg (2008) found that academics wish to develop an identity rooted in personal autonomy and agency. Despite this hesitancy during social interactions, I too had a strong emerging desire to take risks to form my individual teacher identity. The need to form a collective identity as a new member staff opposed this desire. The resultant tension caused me to initially hesitate and question my decision to implement IBL for the module.

The development of teacher identity and its influence on personal pedagogical choices has been examined by Danielewicz & Yem (2014). They stated that favoured pedagogy should be rooted in theory. Emerging teacher identity is linked to theory preference through recognition of similarity and difference between paradigms categorised as in opposition to one another. My diary entries provide evidence of internal debate with regard to selection of educational theory to underpin emerging pedagogical decisions.

*I'm challenged by the teaching methods I have been drawn to whilst writing this module, such as IBL, as they do not align with my theoretical background. As a psychologist in applied educational practice I predominantly employed behaviourist theory, but now find this to be at odds with the direction my teaching practice is taking.*

Social constructivism has been argued to be the root theory for inquiry-based teaching methods as constructivist classrooms forefront group work and shared dialogue to support co-construction of knowledge (Smith, Maclin, Houghton & Hennessey, 2000; Walker & Shore, 2015). My exploration of IBL as a teaching method forced me to challenge my existing preference for behaviourist educational theory by drawing clear boundaries between the two theories, noting distinct similarities and differences. Through this internal dialogue, supported by the writing of the diary, my held identity as a 'behaviourist' was confronted. This evolved a willingness to be open to different theoretical perspectives which further formed my teacher

## In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

identity, influencing the choice of IBL for the module. I moved from a fixed identity, as a 'behaviourist', to an identity as a practitioner open to the influence of differing theoretical perspectives in my teaching practice.

This early aspect to academic identity formation, of rejection of adherence to one theory, later played a role in my effective experience of implementing IBL. As discussed further in 'The implementation of Inquiry Based Learning', I found that it enabled me to form good relationships with students. Whilst the role of the social environment and social praise plays a role in the application of behaviourism to teaching, social bonding is placed more centrally within approaches that take a social constructivist stance.

Another apparent variable at play in the decision to employ IBL was the influence of practical considerations which forced me to make pragmatic choices. The time constraints and multiple roles of an academic have been frequently commented on (Kraimer, Greco, Seibert & Sargent, 2018; Chapman & Kern, 2012; Hagedorn, 2012; Miller, Taylor & Bedeian, 2011; Robertson & Bond, 2001). Whilst using the summer before my first semester to develop my modules, I felt pressure to also dedicate time to research pursuits. As a result, I also viewed the implementation of IBL from a practical perspective. Whilst the initial procedure would take time to develop, once in place it would be implemented in the same way for each seminar. I viewed this as favourable as a time saver; a significant influence in my decision.

However, this assumption is at odds with the findings of Woolf (2017). As previously discussed, both Woolf (who was the lecturer) and students found that IBL required additional work and effort for implementation. This perhaps demonstrates the difference in appraisal of a teaching approach between an academic new to lecturing and one with prior experience. It is likely that I made a naïve evaluation of the practicalities of implementing an active learning-based pedagogy.

### *The implementation of Inquiry-Based Learning*

My narrative's natural progression is to move on to an analysis of the effects of implementing IBL for the development of my identity as a lecturer. Analysis of diary entries from the first seminar to the end of the semester identify two dominant experiences; reciprocal skill development of the students and I, and a strengthened relationship with students. These experiences were highly influential for identity development.

IBL was well received by students from the first seminar. My written reflection express surprise and gratitude for this:

*I walked into the seminar room with one question ever present: 'is this actually going to work?'. It was with shock more than delight that I watched them begin, in groups, to develop their research questions, after my explanation of IBL and the aims of the seminar were completed. This grew into relief as the session continued positively with most students engaged, on task and seemingly demonstrating enjoyment of the IBL activity.*

However, I did reflect that whilst they engaged extremely well with the procedure the initial quality of research questions was poor and research skills required development. This may well have been as a result of their level four status and potential lack of prior experience with active learning strategies. As the seminars progressed these became naturalised learning opportunities to give feedback and direct tuition where it was required. As the weeks progressed, I found that IBL offered multiple opportunities to provide direct instruction and demonstration of skills to scaffold learning, where and when they were required.

I observed that, seemingly as a result of this, session upon session I saw examples of students' IBL skills improving. Their research questions became more sophisticated, research methods more advanced and answers to their initial questions, and presentation of these to the whole group, more in depth with a developed level of criticality. This is demonstrated in a pivotal moment towards the end of the semester:

*...during the session a student became interested in the use of gendered language in education legislation and policy and how this may have changed over time. This interest in analysis of language is not something I have taught directly, and it was exciting to see it evolve within the student's skill set by virtue of them having such autonomy over how they approach the subject matter. I was able, as the facilitator, to provide some direct instruction to scaffold for them how they would organise their analysis of language and to explicate different theories of language in relation to their task.*

As students' research skills developed in this way, I felt that my teaching skills developed too, by virtue of the multiple 'in the moment' opportunities IBL gave me to demonstrate, explain and question. In this way, IBL offered an opportunity for reciprocal skill development between my students and myself. This experience was highly influential on identity development as it provided confidence which '*has permeated into all my academic activities, including writing and research*'.

King et al. (2014) researched collective reflections of new lecturers to develop four expressions of academic identity: the multifaceted whole, the layered self, the interlinked self and the fragmented self. My reflections map onto the expression of an interlinked self. This is characterised by the experience of a 'fullness' to academic life with an integration of all work activities. Through the adoption of IBL and the confidence and enjoyment it gave me in teaching, all work actions began to be dynamically related. For example, I found that my research skills influenced my ability to teach, as I could offer demonstrations for students and my teaching experience was inspiring research activity, such as the writing of a Self-Study.

In summary, IBL supported reciprocal skills development for me and students. This built personal confidence through enjoyment which spread to other work activities, forging an interlinked academic identity. This reflection supports research which has proposed that IBL is a pedagogical method that may be employed to strengthen the relationship between teaching and research in HE (Brew, 2003; Spronken-Smith and Walker, 2010).

## In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

A subsidiary experience to this reciprocity was that it supported the development of positive relationships with students. This was shown in diary entries such as:

*One aspect of IBL that I did not expect is that it requires me to be speaking and interacting with students in a direct, intimate way for the whole session. It has given me many opportunities to speak with all students one on one and I feel I know them well for this and have formed positive relationships.*

Perhaps this arose from us both experiencing being a novice with regards to IBL, although this wasn't explicitly stated to students by myself. This reflection does have support from the IBL research literature which has purported that IBL improves relationships within the learning context (Nguyen, 2009; Derting & Ebert-May, 2010). As previously explored, this experience appeared to reinforce my shift away from an academic identity rooted in a single theoretical approach, this being behaviourism.

### Refinement

With my Self-Study I have presented a reflection of my quest for a personal pedagogy through experimentation with Inquiry-Based Learning as a form of active learning. I have sought to further discourse on the relationship between new lecturers' experiences, focusing on pedagogical choices and their influence on emerging academic identity. My narrative was structured by having two foci; the choice of IBL and the implementation of IBL as a pedagogical practice.

To achieve this, my reflection was grounded in Jenkins' (1996) identity theory where individual identity development conflicts with a desire to belong to a group identity. My choice of IBL was positioned as a deliberate act in the formation of an individualised teaching approach, personal pedagogical choices playing a central role in identity formation. The work of Danielewicz & Yem (2014) was also drawn upon to examine the influence of my existing theoretical leanings and how the experience of drawing on educational theory different to that previously favoured enabled me to adopt an 'openness' to new theory as part of my academic identity. Further to this, experiences of implementing IBL were analysed through King et al.'s (2014) academic identity framework. IBL created an opportunity for research and teaching duties to entwine, which led to the formation of an interlinked self, where all work actions are viewed as combined and mutually influential.

This experience of lecturer identity formation contrasts with the dominant narrative in HE in the UK. Researchers have consistently commented that academics wish to mostly engage in research and construct an identity as a 'researcher' foremost (Kraimer et al., 2018; Chapman & Kern, 2012). Teaching is often viewed as an intrusive activity upon their true academic identity (van Winkel, van der Rijst, Roeland, Poell & van Diel, 2018; Boyd & Smith, 2016; Waitere, Wright, Tremaine, Brown & Pause, 2011). However, recent research by Boyd & Smith (2016) challenged this discourse reporting that 39% of respondents to a questionnaire about work activities and academic identity 'subverted' the researcher identity. They attempted to overcome "a widely asserted principle of the primacy of research work" (Boyd & Smith, 2016, pg. 679). My identity formation aligns with these findings, as my experiences led me to hold all academic activities as important, enjoyable and related.

My Self-Study also builds on the existing research literature for IBL (Furtak et al., 2012; Carolan et al., 2014; Lazonder & Harmsen, 2016; Buchanan et al., 2016). Of interest, Woolf (2017) found IBL to be overwhelming to implement for both the lecturer and the students, however the opposite was experienced in the current Self-Study. This highlights the importance of qualitative ethnographic research into both IBL and active teaching methods as the reporting of unique experiences builds a wider collective account of the intricacies and nuances of the co-constructed 'reality' of lecturing culture.

Meta-analysis and literature reviews of the existing IBL research literature have stated that guidance, predominantly explanation and scaffolding, are important for learning effectiveness (Lazonder & Hannsen, 2016; Buchanan et al., 2016). A prominent reflection of mine was that IBL offered the opportunity to support student learning in this way. Both myself and students developed key skills and associated confidence as a result. The reflection responds to Buchanan et al.'s (2016) call for qualitative research for the development of a student-centered model. I echo this call, stating that further Self-Study research is required to explore the dynamics of the student-lecturer relationship resulting from IBL.

Lastly, the paper contributes to Wilkinson's (2018) call for early career academics to develop self-based research reports of their own lecturer experiences to develop 'an evidence base from which beginning lecturers can gain insight into the occupation' (Wilkinson, 2018, p. 11). As my reflections attest, the experience of establishing academic identity as a new lecturer is multifaceted and subject to tensions. Reports of differing perspectives shall continue to develop the collective discourse and understanding of the experience of transitioning from professional work or post-doctoral research to a lecturing post.

### Biography

*Alexandra Sewell* is an HCPC registered Educational Psychologist and lecturer and research in Special Educational Needs, Disability and Inclusion at the University of Worcester.

In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

References

- Arnold, J. (2011). The self as data: A qualitative methodology. *Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*, 1(1), 65.
- Banister, P., Burman, E., Parker, I., Taylor, M., & Tindall, C. (1995). *Qualitative methods in psychology: A research guide*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Boyd, P. & Smith, C. (2016). The contemporary academic: orientation towards research work and researcher identity of higher education lecturers in the health professions. *Studies in Higher Education*, 41 (4), 678-695.
- Brew A. (2003). Teaching and Research: New relationships and their implications for inquiry-based teaching and learning in higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 22 (1), 3-18.
- Buchanan, S., Harlan, M. A., Bruce, C. S., & Edwards, S. L. (2016). Inquiry based learning models, information literacy, and student engagement: A literature review. *School Libraries Worldwide*, 22 (2), 23-39.
- Bullough, Jr., R. V., & Pinnegar, S. (2001). Guidelines for quality in autobiographical forms of self-study research. *Educational Researcher*, 30(3), 13-21.
- Burr, V. (2006). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London: Routledge.
- Carolan, T.F., Hutchins, S.D., Wickens, C.D., & Cumming, J.M. (2014). Costs and benefits of more learner freedom: Meta-analyses of exploratory and learner control training methods. *Human Factors*, 56, 999-1014.
- Cavanagh, M., (2011). Students' experiences of active engagement through cooperative learning activities in lectures. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 12 (1), 23-33.
- Chapman, C.S. & Kern, A. (2012). What do academics do? Understanding the practical relevance of research. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, 9 (3),
- Clegg, S. (2008). Academic identities under threat? *British Educational Research Journal*, 34 (3), 329-345.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Danielewicz, J. & Yem P.H. (2014). *Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy, and teacher education*. New York: Suny Press.
- Derting, T.L. and Ebert-May, D. (2010). Learner-Centered Inquiry in Undergraduate Biology: Positive Relationships with Long-Term Student Achievement. *CBE-Life Sciences Education*, 9 (4), 462-472.
- Duarte, F.P. (2007). Using autoethnography in the scholarship of teaching and learning: Reflective practice from 'the other side of the mirror'. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 1(2), 21.
- Elijah, R. (2007). Voice in Self-Study. In Loughran, J., Hamilton, M. L., & LaBoskey, V. K. (Ed.) *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices*. The Netherlands: Springer.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (1996). *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Feldman, A. (2003). Validity and quality in self-study. *Educational researcher*, 32 (3), 26-28.
- Freeman, S., Eddy, S.L., McDonough, M., Smith, M.K., Okoroafor, N., Jordt, H. & Wenderoth, M.P. (2014). Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111 (23), 8410-8415.
- French, S. and Kennedy, G. (2017). Reassessing the value of university lectures. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 22 (6), 639-654.
- Furtak, E. M., Seidel, T., Iverson, H. & Briggs, D. C. (2012). Experimental and quasi-experimental studies of inquiry-based science teaching: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 82, 300-329.
- Gourlay, L. (2011). 'I'd landed on the moon': A new lecturer leaves the academy. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 16 (5), 591-601.
- Greene, E. (2000). Scholars share findings on innovations in teaching. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 13, 2000 [On-line serial]. Available: <http://chronicle.com/daily/2000/04/2000040306n.htm>.
- Hamilton, M. L., & Pinnegar, S. (2014). Intimate scholarship in research: An example from self-study of teaching and teacher education practices methodology. *LEARNing Landscapes*, 8 (1), 153-171.
- Han, H. S., Vomvoridi-Ivanović, E., Jacobs, J., Karanxha, Z., Lypka, A., Topdemir, C., & Feldman, A. (2014). Culturally responsive pedagogy in higher education: A collaborative self-study. *Studying Teacher Education*, 10 (3), 290-312.
- Henning, T.B. (2012). Writing Professor as Adult Learner: An Autoethnography of Online Professional Development. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 16 (2), 9-26.
- Hutchings, P. (2000). Approaching the scholarship of learning and teaching. In P. Hutchings (Ed.), *Opening lines: Approaches to the scholarship of teaching and learning*. Menlo Park, CA: Carnegie Publications.
- Jenkins, R. (1996). *Social Identity*. London: Routledge.
- King, V., Garcia-Perez, A., Graham R., Jones, C., Tickle, A. & Wilson, L. (2014). Collaborative reflections on using island maps to express new lecturers' academic identity. *Reflective Practice*, 15 (2), 252-267.
- Kraimer, M., Greco, L., Seibert, S. and Sargent, L. (2018). An Investigation of Academic Career Success: The New Tempo of Academic Life. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 18 (2), 0-8.
- LaBosky, V.K. (2007). The methodology of self-study and its theoretical underpinnings. In Loughran, J., Hamilton, M. L., & LaBoskey, V. K. (Ed.) *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices*. (pp. 817-871) The Netherlands: Springer.
- Latz, A. O. (2012). Flow in the Community College Classroom?: An Autoethnographic Exploration. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 6 (2), 1-13.



In search of a personal pedagogy: A Self-Study narrative on the use of Inquiry-Based Learning by an early career lecturer

- Lazonder, A.W., & Harmsen, R. (2016). Meta-analysis of inquiry-based learning: Effects of guidance. *Review of Educational Research*, 86 (3), 681-718.
- Levy, P. (2009). Inquiry-based learning: A conceptual framework. Centre for inquiry-based learning in the arts and social sciences, University of Sheffield. Retrieved from <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/content/1/c6/09/37/83/CILASS%20IBL%20Framework%20%28Version%204%29.doc>
- Loughran, J. (2007) A History and context of self-study of teaching and teaching education practices. In. Loughran, J., Hamilton, M. L., & LaBoskey, V. K. (Ed.) *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices*. (pp. 3-7) The Netherlands: Springer.
- Louie, B. Y., Drevdahl, D. J., Purdy, J. M., & Stackman, R. W. (2003). Advancing the scholarship of teaching through collaborative self-study. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 74 (2), 150-171.
- MacDonald, S.M. (2018). Composing an Autoethnographic Cartography of Blue: Becoming a Pharologist in and of the Academy. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 18(2), 149-162.
- McInnes, D. (2013). The performance of academic identity as pedagogical model and guide in/through lecture discourse. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 18 (1), 53-64.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (Second Edition). California: Sage Publications.
- Miller, A.N., Taylor, S.G. and Bedeian, A.G. (2011). Publish or perish: Academic life as management faculty live it. *Career development international*, 16 (5), 422- 445.
- Morton, J. P. (2009). Critical reflections from a neophyte lecturer in higher education: A self-narrative from an exercise 'physiologist'! *Reflective Practice*, 10(2), 233-243.
- Nguyen, H.T. (2009). An inquiry-based practicum model: What knowledge, practices, and relationships typify empowering teaching and learning experiences for student teachers, cooperating teachers and college supervisors?. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(5), 655-662.
- Prince, M. (2004). Does active learning work? A review of the research. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 93(3), 223-231.
- Putnam, H. (2004). *Ontology without ethics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Roberts, D. (2015). Higher education lectures: From passive to active learning via imagery?. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 20(1), 63-77.
- Robertson, J. & Bond, C.H. (2001). Experiences of the Relation between Teaching and Research: What do academics value? *Higher Education Research & Development*, 20(1), 5-19.
- Roig, G.A. & Stoyanova, A. (2018). Applying Active Learning Methods in Higher Education. *Revista d'Innovació i Recerca en Educació*, 11(2), 65 - 69.
- Ross, J., Sinclair, C., Knox, J., Bayne, S. & Macleod, H. (2014). Teacher experiences and academic identity: The missing components of MOOC pedagogy. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 10(1), 57-69.
- Samaras, A. P., Guðjónsdóttir, H., McMurrer, J. R., & Dalmau, M. C. (2012). Self-study of a professional organization in pursuit of a shared enterprise. *Studying Teacher Education*, 8 (3), 303-320.
- Sandretto, S., Lang, C., Schon, P., & Whyte, B. (2003). A collaborative self-study into teacher education and social justice. In *Joint Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Associations for Research in Education, Auckland*.
- Schmidt, H.G., Wagener, S.L., Smeets, G.A., Keemink, L.M. & van der Molen, H.T. (2015). On the use and misuse of lectures in higher education. *Health Professions Education*, 1(1), 12-18.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2),4-14.
- Smith, C.L., Maclin, D., Houghton, C. and Hennesey, M. G. (2000). Sixth-Grade Students' Epistemologies of Science: The Impact of School Science Experiences on Epistemological Development. *Cognition and Instruction*, 18(3), 349-422.
- Spronken-Smith, R. & Walker, R. (2010). Can inquiry-based learning strengthen the links between teaching and disciplinary research? *Studies in Higher Education*, 35(6), 723-740.
- van Winkel, M. A., van Der Rijst, R.M., Poell, R.F. & van Diel, J.H. (2018). Identities of research-active academics in new universities: towards a complete academic profession cross-cutting different worlds of practice. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 42(4), 539-555.
- Waitere, H.J., Wright, J., Tremaine, M., Brown, S. & Pause, C.J. (2011). Choosing whether to resist or reinforce the new managerialism: the impact of performance-based research funding on academic identity. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 30(2), 205-217.
- Walker, C.L. & Shore, B.M. (2015). Understanding Classroom Roles in Inquiry Education: Linking Role Theory and Social Constructivism to the Concept of Role Diversification. *SAGE Open*, 5(4), 1-13.
- Whitehead, J. (1993). *The growth of educational knowledge: creating your own living educational theories*. Bournemouth: Hyde Publications.
- Wilkinson, S. (2018). The story of Samantha: the teaching performances and inauthenticities of an early career human geography lecturer. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 38(2), 398-410.
- Williams, J., & Ritter, J. K. (2010). Constructing new professional identities through self-study: From teacher to teacher educator. *Professional development in education*, 36 (1-2), 77-92.
- Woolf, J. (2017). An Analytical Autoethnographical Account of using Inquiry-Based Learning in a Graduate Research Methods Course. *The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 8(1), 1-17.