“If I’m here to teach means I’m really good”: an IPA study into International Academic Staff lived experiences – challenges, coping strategies, investment, and identity

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Abstract

In the UK, the recruitment of international students and staff forms part of the internationalisation agenda, with the influx of international academic staff (IAS) to the UK being crucial to the economy, environment, and society; and the "presence of international faculty" (Rumbley and de Wit 2016, p.267) is key aspect of higher education especially in today's global knowledge society. Current literature and research on IAS mobility and experience are limited, with evidence from policy and strategy documents at governmental and institutional level suggesting a similar trend. There remains much to be explored in understanding IAS' experiences and adjustments, especially with regards to their identity/ies and sense of resilience, coping strategies, and/or initiatives taken in bettering themselves; all of which this research addresses through the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology.

Life as IAS can be multidimensional and challenging, with language barriers and accent associated issues causing IAS to question their position and cast doubt on their abilities and sense of adequacy as legitimate members in the academic field. In 2015, Darvin and Norton proposed the Model of Investment, with "ideology", "capital", and "identity" centred around **Investment**. In this research, the notion of "investment" is further understood in the form of an online self-directed Development Toolkit within the UK Higher Education Institution (HEI) setting, with IAS as the target group; and the interplay between their self-directed development initiatives in relation to the positive reconstruction of identity is framed within the Model of Investment.

A deeper understanding and appreciation of IAS and their personal lived experiences, including their psychological establishments of sense of self, their motivation as well as their sense of confidence are fulfilled, through the IPA lens. Despite having to navigate through tough challenges, IAS have robust sense of self-esteem and assurance, strong sense of pride, positive sense of belonging, with high levels of confidence established through their subject expertise and global experience, professional role, and use of the target language with ease through time and reinforcements. Most notably, IAS are resilient, persistent, enterprising, and adaptable, employing coping strategies to adjust and thrive in their new environment. In minority cases, IAS also dedicate time, money, and efforts in professional development initiatives to further improve.

The Development Toolkit (DT) exposes time as the biggest external barrier in professional development initiatives for IAS, even when clear benefits are noted. Professional development initiatives offered to IAS should be suited to their context, given time is limited with IAS juggling multiple workloads. They should be easily accessible, with clear overview and structure, and are embedded into their work timetable; and with self-directed but collaborative learning elements incorporated to encourage sustained engagement. They should also be tailored to individual learning needs and goals – when perceived value-added experience cannot be detected, participants' engagement with the programmes also stops.

Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment also contributes to the understanding of IAS' experience and engagement with the DT – their willingness to engage with the DT based on their position and identity; the barriers and the potential impact from dedicating time and efforts in the DT, and how some of the governing ideologies, systemic patterns of control and attainment to capitals shape their sense of agency, especially with regards to their learning in the target language and identity reconstruction.

The use of Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015) as an analytical and important construct in understanding the interplay between IAS' development initiatives and the positive reconstruction of identity has never been done before, making this research a new academic contribution to knowledge. The findings and the new angles of research discovered through this novel application of the Model of Investment offer new possibilities of its application in other new areas of focus.

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Glossary

ARWU	Academic Ranking of World Universities
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CoP	Community of Practice
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DT	Development Toolkit
EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
IAS	International Academic Staff
IoHE	Internationalisation of Higher Education
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
MUSE	Mid-Unit Student Evaluation
NSS	National Student Survey
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RRL	Researcher Reflection Log
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
SDL	Self-directed learning
THE	Times Higher Education
TEF	Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework

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To my parents, this would not have been possible without you…
感谢父母无私的奉献与关爱

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Chapter 1 Introduction to the thesis

Introduction to chapter

This chapter sets out the background and rationale for this thesis. First, a definition of the terminology is provided surrounding the understanding of who “international academic staff” (IAS) are. This is followed by an explanation of my motivation for the research, and the setting of the background and problem statement. The overall aims and objectives and the significance of the research will be presented next, followed by the proposed research methodology. The chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of the potential limitations to the research.

1.1 Defining terminology

Due to the complexity surrounding its understanding, it is crucial to establish that within the context of this research **international academic staff** (IAS) are understood as foreign-born staff in overseas higher education institutions (HEIs), and who hold established teaching and/or research related appointments within various faculties across institutions; they did not receive their primary and secondary education in the UK although some of them started off as UK undergraduates. In the wider literature, this community has been referred to by various other terminologies; and the characteristics that are used to define them also differ. Jiang et al. (2010) used the term “international academic staff” in their article but their research only specifically recruited Chinese academic staff; as did Hsieh (2012). Nevertheless, both articles did distinguish the ethnicity of their participant groups in the article titles. Luxon and Peelo (2009) used “non-UK staff”, “academic sojourners”, “international staff”, “international researchers and scholars” and “international teaching staff” interchangeably to refer to their 32 non-UK participants. As the authors did not divulge the makeup of this group, we assume no specific ethnicity or geographical group was targeted. Walker (2015, p.61) defined “International Academic Staff” as “academic staff educated and encultured in one system of education and currently teaching and researching in another” and similar to Luxon and Peelo (2009), she did not specify where her IAS originated from.

Pherali (2012) used “transnational academics”, “non-English speaking academics” and also “international academics” and the participants came from Iraq, Germany, Nepal and Greece. Kreber and Hounsell (2014) referred to their participants as "non-UK nationals", "academic migrants" or "international academics", their research involved participants from all over the world – Germany, United States, Australia, New Zealand, EU, Canada, so on and so forth. Shaikh (2009) in his research to understand the impact of migration of academics to the US, UK and Australia referred to his participants as "nomadic intellectuals". In the US, Collins (2008) used the term "foreign-born faculty" and Alberts (2008, p.191) observed these "foreign-born instructors" were regarded and labelled as "international faculty" or "international teaching assistants" in the academic context; but when in a public debate, they became "foreign professors". In Australia, Green and Myatt (2011) used the term "international academic staff" who they "defined loosely as those who were foreign born and had completed most of their education outside Australia" (p.35) and their participants came from the US, Singapore, Poland, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Indonesia.

Rao et al. (2018, p.2) noted that IAS have been referred to by several names including "migrant academics, immigrant academics, foreign academics and transnational academics". Quoting Trahar (2018), they defined international academics as having distinctive characteristics created through international exposure. Rao et al. (2018) quoted from Kim (2009b, p.2) who referred to IAS as "transnational academics…who move 'between' and 'above' territorial boundaries, due in part to their job/academic mobility." Rao et al. (2018) explained that the rationale for choosing to use the term "international academic" was it suited their purpose of "understanding the teaching journey by which international academics transition and submerge themselves in a different cultural and HE environment such as one developed through the HE policies that are enforced within a country's borders" which closely aligned with the foundation of this research. In their book, they gave authors the opportunity to label themselves when sharing their personal narratives; regardless of their countries of origin, most preferred to use "migrant" or "international academic".

Altbach and Yudkevich (2017) defined "international faculty" as "academics who hold appointments in countries where they were not born and/or where they did not receive their first post-secondary degree" and they were seen as "drivers of international consciousness at universities, [and] they are often top researchers." This was true in the case of the UK. The authors labelled the "small but highly visible group" to the UK, where

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some of the top research universities around the world could be found, as the "global superstars" with some potentially holding "Nobel and other important prizes". In short, international faculty arriving in the UK were the *crème de la crème* and great things were expected of them.

However, the use of terminology in this area can be muddled and unclear. Mihut et al. (2016) confirmed that "the task of defining international faculty is complicated" owing to the fact that "there is no generally agreed-upon answer to" what "international" (p.18) actually means. Kim and Ng (2019) cautioned, "there remains a paucity of knowledge on the interface and possible disparity between 'international' and 'minority ethnic' academic identities, and their respective or entwined experience", which I am fully aware of. For example, Bhopal and Jackson's (2013) research investigated the experiences of academics who were from the Black and Ethnic Minority group, regardless of where they were born. Shaikh (2009) also disclosed one of the difficulties encountered in their research was defining who "an immigrant academic" (p.17) was.

In the Knowledge and Methodology chapter, the sampling and recruitment strategy section will provide clarity to the nuanced characteristics, distinctions, and qualities of the IAS group this research investigates and seeks to understand. However, within the general context of this research and for consistency, the term to be used is "international academic staff" (IAS); regardless of their nationality or countries of origin, this refers to "academic staff educated and encultured in one system of education and currently teaching and researching in another" (Walker 2015, p.61).

1.2 My personal interest and motivation for the research

At the University, I work closely with academics across the institution in a professional support capacity. Based in a centralised office, my job entails providing academic advice and support especially in relation to research outputs and research assessment, among other things. The premise for this research is underpinned by my own background and experiences in the UK, particularly in the HEI environment and this is also linked to my work environment and experience. I am a second-generation Chinese immigrant born in Malaysia; English was my second language and a subject learnt in school, surrounded predominantly by 99.99% of other Chinese speaking students. As a result, I hardly spoke English until I went to university to pursue my tertiary education. After obtaining my

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undergraduate degree, I taught as an English teacher for four years in a secondary school in Malaysia.

I arrived in the UK 17 years ago to pursue a master's degree in applied linguistics for language teaching, before finding employment at the University. From arriving as a student in the UK to taking up full time employment at the University and now having established myself in my role, I went through an interesting adjustment period. This was challenging and thought-provoking at times.

With a vested interest in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, combined with my own experience of adjusting to life in the UK and the supportive nature of my work, I started developing a keen interest in the experiences and coping strategies of IAS employed at universities in the UK, particularly those of Asian heritage. Some academics I worked closely with spoke very good English, but some spoke with very heavy accents that I could only assume to be challenging to the listener; this made me ponder the way they conducted their teaching in class and themselves in their work environment; how they viewed themselves and were perceived by others. Influenced by my own experience, I was curious as to the coping strategies developed as IAS in UK HEI settings to help them overcome challenges and navigate through their work environment.

The core vision of the University is to inspire learning, advance knowledge and enrich the society, and this is done through bringing together research, education, and practice. This vision transpires to an overarching approach in which all academic staff members are expected to be rounded academics engaged in research, educational, and practice with any recognition and progression requiring high standards in the combination of the three core elements. In practical terms, all academic staff with an employment contract at the University are expected to assume responsibilities for both teaching and research, as well as engaging with external stakeholders such as industry partners, businesses, and healthcare providers, in activities such as research collaborations, knowledge exchanges, publications and public engagement, among other things.

1.3 Background to the research

1.3.1 Globalisation, Internationalisation of Higher Education (IoHE) and academic identity

Bernd Wächter (cited in Crowther et al. 2000) described **globalisation** as the "'forceful changes in the economic, social, political and cultural environment, brought about by global competition, the integration of markets, increasingly dense communication networks, information flows and mobility'" (p.10); and **internationalisation** is "a response to the challenges brought about by globalisation" (ibid).

With globalisation as the driving force, the HE sector has become a "commodity" (Tilak 2005; Connell 2013; Matthews 2014; Naidoo 2017; Robson and Wihlborg 2019), heavily and competitively marketised. Debates surrounding the IoHE often situated around "neoliberalism" and "marketisation" (Bovill et al. 2014; Pashby and de Oliveira Andreotti 2016; Bamberger et al. 2019; Robson and Wihlborg 2019; Dumanig and Symaco 2020). Quoting Ward (2012, p.19), Cannizzo (2017) suggested the "'neoliberalization of knowledge'" (p.93) movement that started in the 1970s had led to a shift in university governance where "university operations were increasingly judged against performance criteria" (ibid, p.93). Observed by Djerasimovic (2021) and scholars studying academic identities and roles (Henkel 2005; Henkel 2009; Kehm and Teichler 2012; Teichler et al. 2013), at the turn of the millennium, the focus of such studies has shifted to the volatile and changing nature of what constituted "academic work and identity within the context of a transformed – massified, marketized, neoliberalised, internationalised, externally evaluated – university" (p.506). Under constant changes and reforms, academic staff were subjected to "new demands and expectations…in terms of their roles and work" [Billot (2010); McNaughton and Billot (2016) cited by Arvaja (2018)]. The "traditional academic values" (Arvaja 2018) of "collegiality, collaborative management, academic freedom and pursuit of truth" (ibid, p.291) have been replaced by new values and emphases such as "accountability, control, productive and efficiency", brought by "new managerialism" (ibid, p.291) in the changing HE landscape and context.

Universities and academic life and practices have become complex and challenging (Henkel 2005; Archer 2008; Clegg 2008; Billot 2010; Lea and Stierer 2011; Hughes 2013); in such a competitive and performance-based world, "the university field [has become] the locus of a struggle" and "a contested territory that entails constant struggles" to "determine the conditions and the criteria of legitimate membership" [Bourdieu (2001, p.11) cited by Archer (2008, p.386)]. The once homogenous academic roles of teaching, research and administration (Henkel 2010) have been replaced by roles involving "managerial, external partnership building, institutional and policy research, [and] digital innovation in teaching learning" (Djerasimovic 2021, p.507) within this complex UK HE environment and landscape. The present-day academics find themselves juggling the tension between their own academic interests and the interests of the organisation; steered by the wider economic, political, and social pull and priorities, the pressures to deliver the best put academics in very vulnerable positions and "identity is perceived as in crisis" (Delanty 2008, p.126).

Previous literature has revealed reflection to be key skill in the construction of professional identity (Trede et al. 2012; Körkkö et al. 2016; Engelbertink et al. 2021; Protassova et al. 2021). In the context of this research, Hughes's (2013) personal journey in making sense of her professional identity through critical reflection was pertinent. The author explained how she had navigated and considered her professional identity through the "broad historical, socio-political and [changing] educational landscapes"; she drew on models of "reflective thought" especially that of Schon (1971; 1983) and Dewey (1910), and elaborated on how each has contributed to her construction of a "robust professional identity" in overcoming "significant stress" and in regaining "a sense of value" in her practice within "a context of chaotic transformation and flux" (p.341).

1.3.2 International Academic Staff (IAS) experiences and adjustments

Rumbley and de Wit (2016) were amongst scholars who have stressed the "presence of international faculty" (p.267) as key aspect of HE especially in today's global knowledge society. On the macro level, the increasing "global competition for talent, research, funding, and reputation/profile/branding" (Rumbley and de Wit 2016, p.267) drives institutions to push recruitment for the best researchers and teaching academics, on a global scale; this is crucial for institutions focusing on boosting their international ranking. On a local level, the recruitment of IAS can boost research productivity, and

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importantly, to “fill gaps in teaching and research at a university” (Altbach and Yudkevich 2016, p.2).

In the UK, the recruitment of international students and staff forms part of the internationalisation agenda, and the influx of international staff to the UK has “strategic importance to the economy, environment and society” (Minocha et al. 2019, p.5) especially in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects. Whilst most of the government’s focus was on increasing the international student population, in the background, the IAS population had grown exponentially over the years. In the last 5 years, the proportion of non-UK academic staff working in UK HEIs has remained consistently over 20%, in line with the non-UK student proportion at UK HEIs (Universities UK 2018, 2019, 2021b, 2021a). Unlike the experience of the international student community, the academic staff mobility phenomenon remained under-studied and had not been given as much attention as it should have been, even to present day (Rumbley and de Wit 2016; Rao et al. 2018; Minocha et al. 2019; Bailey et al. 2021). There is currently no evidence of policy at the national level that spells out relevant strategies or concrete plans in supporting IAS, with much of the government’s International Education Strategy (GOV.UK 2019, 2021) document concentrating mainly on supporting and creating a welcoming environment for international students. This was understandable, given how crucial the financial contribution from international student tuition fees was to the UK economy with its importance described as “incontestable” (Walker 2013, p.328) in the eyes of the government.

Current literature though limited, has recognised the value and contributions by IAS to the UK HE sectors and beyond. IAS were valued in supporting teaching and research in key areas where “UK nationals are found in declining numbers” (UK Universities 2007, p.2). Nicola Dandridge, the Chief Executive of Universities UK in 2010 stressed that a significant proportion of these “highly skilled staff” were IAS working in key subject areas in STEM (Dandridge 2010). These IAS not only increased “opportunities for UK students wanting to study those subjects”, they also directly contributed to the UK’s world class quality research (Dandridge 2010, p.2). It was purported “foreign-born academics” contributed 40% more international engagement activities in areas beyond academia compared to their native-born colleagues with many making vital contributions to the “UK’s public sector, policy, industry and non-governmental organisations” (University of

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Bath 2018). Altbach and Yudkevich (2017) described international staff to the UK as the “global superstars”.

> *“According to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), I am one of 198,335 ‘non- UK’ academics employed in HE in the UK (HESA 2015). In such statistical summaries, I am just a number. However, if I am counted as a person, a woman who crossed cultural professional borders to study and work in the UK, I am a meaningful story.”*
>
> *-Thushari Welikala, King’s College London, UK (2018)*

Welikala reminds us that behind the statistical summaries representing the “non-UK” academic mobility to the UK HEI, there are myriad different stories to be told; stories and experiences that are influenced by “a complex set of additional dimensions, namely the academic cultures and communities in which the international faculty members find themselves, the practical matters that characterize international faculty mobility and integration, and the political realities that can exert an enormous influence over a range of policies and practices” (Rumbley and de Wit 2016, p.267).

Previous research and literature on IAS experience have predominantly pointed to a single, common conclusion – life as an international academic in a foreign institution can be multidimensional and challenging. This was thought to be more so, for non-English speaking academics who have relocated to an English speaking environment (Alberts 2008).

Jiang et al. (2010), Collins (2008) and Willis and Hammond (2014) found that IAS were unfamiliar with the education system and practices in the host university. Alberts (2008, p.189) highlighted difficulties for IAS adjusting to “academic standards, grading systems and student behaviour”. Even in the case of IAS with extensive expertise and experience, “the lack of shared history and cultural knowledge was felt acutely as a significant factor in initial feelings of isolation and, for some, in an ongoing sense of cultural dislocation” (Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010, p.295). Thomas and Malau-Aduli (2013) highlighted the difficulty for new IAS in penetrating the local network. Clifford and Henderson (2011, p.109) noted the “lack of recognition of the previous experiences of international academic…staff” was commonplace globally with Kreber and Hounsell (2014) reporting universities having no interest in tapping into the prior experience of international staff members.

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The culture shock, stresses and challenges brought about by transition and migration could lead to academics questioning and doubting their “sense of belonging and personal significance” and their “professional and personal identities” (Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010, p.297-298). Many female academics, not just IAS, reported having their authority and capabilities undermined due to their gender (Li et al. 2005; Archer 2008; Bhopal and Jackson 2013; Johansson and Sliwa 2014; Kreber and Hounsell 2014). Casad et al. (2021, p.14) pointed out that despite the proliferation of research on this area and despite the “continued enthusiasm for this research and [the] wealth of evidence demonstrating the consequences of gender disparities”, the problem of gender inequalities, especially in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) remained largely the same.

Hazelkorn (2008) and many others confirmed that students were now treated as “consumers” (Woodall et al. 2014; Morgan 2016; Bunce et al. 2017; Brooks 2021). The National Student Survey (NSS) has a profound impact on professional and academic staff, with universities and colleges expected to be more “responsive to student needs” and to place importance on “high quality teaching and pedagogy” (Office for Students 2020b, p.8). Its practice is not without controversies (Office for Students 2020b), with the government’s own review in 2020 highlighting that the NSS was “open to gaming” (Murray 2020, para. 7) and “generate[d] costly and time-consuming bureaucracy” (ibid, para.7); with an “anonymous academic” (2017) lamenting on the “Guardian” newspaper of its unfairness as “managers are holding academics account for NSS scores” even though they were beyond their control.

Most importantly, Jiang et al. (2010) and Luxon and Peelo (2009) contested that language barriers and limitations faced by international staff in some instances, were so acute they impacted negatively on IAS’ level and quality of teaching. Sliwa and Johansson (2013, p.86) reported IAS being acutely aware of their accent, which they regarded as the “most obvious distinguishing feature” with the authors concluding that “accent” being used as a determinant of the effectiveness of a faculty member was noteworthy and concerning. The authors (Sliwa and Johansson 2013, p.79) suggested “a high level of linguistic competence constitutes a key aspect of academic habitus” and greater language proficiency was seen as being in a more powerful position, and “there is recognition of the performative power of language in terms of its consequences

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beyond the surface meaning of utterances" (p.86). The conclusion drawn from key literature was language and accent associated issues caused IAS to question their position and cast doubt on their abilities and sense of adequacy as legitimate members in the academic field (Liang 2005; Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010; Pherali 2012; Sliwa and Johansson 2013).

The challenges outlined above, coupled with the immense pressures felt by the modern-day academics attempting to thrive and survive in a competitive environment whilst juggling multiple roles and workload, as well as ensuring that their student feedback through the NSS exercise was positive, is assumed to be exhausting and debilitating for IAS to deal with in the UK HEI environment. Issues related to language seemed to be consistently and profoundly highlighted by key literature (Alberts 2008; Luxon and Peelo 2009; Jiang et al. 2010; Hsieh 2012; Pherali 2012; Sliwa and Johansson 2013; Kreber and Hounsell 2014) and can create high levels of anxiety and cause IAS to develop a strong sense of inadequacy and insecurity. Green and Myatt (2011), citing other sources, concluded that difficulties with language was one of the most significant sources of stress that could damage new staff's ability to work efficiently and affect their progress in adjusting their teaching with the local pedagogic practices. Citing Sliwa and Johansson (2013), Minocha et al. (2019) drew attention to the fact that for IAS in the UK HE, "gaining acceptance and recognition in the UK academic field is influenced by language" and "linguistic capital possessed" (p.4).

Related literature explored experiences, challenges, and hardships faced by IAS but very few had acknowledged or celebrated their perseverance, resilience and/or their coping strategies, development initiatives or even sense of achievements. Green and Myatt (2011) highlighted this obvious lack of focus and attention on the "resilience, adaptation and highly developed coping strategies" born out of the international experience [Zhou et al. (2008) in Green and Myatt (2011)]. This was supported by Foote et al. (2008) who pointed out foreign-born academics in the US were an "invisible minority" whose "needs, accomplishments or problems" (p.168) were rarely explored or publicised.

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1.3.3 Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015)

Based on Weedon's theories of subjectivity (1987) and Bourdieu's concepts of "habitus", "field" and "capital" (1991), and incorporating Lave and Wenger's (1991) "community of practice" concept, Norton (then Peirce 1995) proposed the notion of "investment" which saw the "language learner…as having a complex social history and multiple desires" (p.9). Norton explained, "it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to – or is denied access to – powerful social networks" [Norton (then Peirce 1995), p.13].

Two decades after the notion was first introduced, Darvin and Norton (2015, p.37) proposed the Model of Investment which incorporated three main intersections – ideology, capital, and identity, with **INVESTMENT** located in the centre of the intersections.

Transferring Norton's (then Peirce 1995) notion of investment into the context of this study, this research recognises that IAS have complex, multiple identities, changing across "time and space" (Norton 1997, p.411) and these are reproduced in social and professional interactions with colleagues and students in the target language. Sliwa and Johansson (2013) suggested the effective use of the dominant language by a "non-native English speaking academic", would not only impact positively on the person's capacity and capabilities to carry out their professional duties, but also help construct their identity to allow the enactment of the desirable habitus. This was closely connected to being part of an "imagined community" (Kanno and Norton 2003). When IAS dedicate time and effort in improving their competence and teaching practices in the target language with a view to help them acquire the desired symbolic and material resources, it will help to increase their "capital and power" (ibid), in the classroom and at work; and the positive reconstruction of identity and the repositioning of themselves as a result. This "commitment" to "invest" is propelled by the individual's "intentional choice and desire" (Kramsch 2013, p.195) to feel "at home", belonging to a habitus (Darvin and Norton 2016, p.25); it is this "desire" that inspires new "possibilities for the future" through the learners' imagination (ibid). As IAS work to fit into their host environment and through their desire to be an effective and successful academic as part of these (imagined) community/ies of practice, this imagination for the future inspires them to dedicate time and effort in improving their teaching practices and communication through the target language.

Norton's idea of "imagined community" was built on Lave and Wenger's (1991; 1998) community of practice framework (Kanno and Norton 2003). A defining attribute of academics' identities was their sense of "membership of, and allegiance to, their discipline and disciplinary communities – by which is meant strong, stable and separate epistemological and methodological assemblages" (Lea and Stierer 2011, p.608). In the context of this research, the Model of Investment proposed by Darvin and Norton (2015) sees academics inspired by their "desire" (ibid, p.45) to become strong and legitimate members of a highly revered and admired group, spend their time and effort to gain entry; and this "investment" is centred around "identity", "capital" and "ideology" (ibid, p.45).

1.4 Statement of problem

There is an obvious gap in the research and literature on the complexity surrounding the circumstances and experiences of IAS in their host institutions, especially from the perspective of their lived experiences. Other similar studies to date though valuable, were small-scaled and limited in scope, with various research groups urging for more research to be conducted on this subject to better understand the constantly changing and evolving nature of the academic profession (Luxon and Peelo 2009; Jiang et al. 2010; Walker 2015; Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020; Bailey et al. 2021).

The adaptation and assimilation processes of IAS have been overwhelmingly under-studied (Jeannin 2017), not to mention any attempts in understanding or exploring IAS' sense of self, identity, coping strategies, resilience or initiatives taken in further improving and growing themselves professionally. As urged by Bailey et al. (2021), there is a "unanimous call for these barriers" encountered and conquered by IAS to be acknowledged.

In her past research, Professor Bonny Norton, or in collaboration with others has researched into various demographic groups. No similar research has been done to understand "investment" in the context of IAS especially in relation to the

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reconstruction of identity, through the lens of the Model of Investment (Darvin and Norton 2015). Very few research based on the Model of Investment has actually been conducted in a non-classroom-based setting (Bonder 2017).

In this research, the notion of "investment" will be further understood within the context of UK HEI, with IAS as the target group. No study has yet used this notion in practice and in the context of analysing the social experiences of IAS. After understanding the sense of self, challenges and experiences surrounding IAS and the negative impact these could have in their teaching and work environments, this research proposes the implementation of an online Development Toolkit (DT) as self-directed learning resources for IAS and through the analytical construct of the notion of "investment" to further understand the interplay between IAS' development initiatives and the positive reconstruction of their identity, framed within Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015).

No similar or relevant research on IAS has linked sense of self, experience and challenges with the reconstruction of identity; and/or has proposed an intervention through online self-directed learning resources for the professional development of IAS.

1.5 Research aims and objectives

The premise for this research is simple – it is to give voice to IAS to share their meaningful stories and their lived experiences in the UK HEI environment, as it has been widely recognised such stories have remained critically under-explored and understudied (Rao et al. 2018; Minocha et al. 2019; Bailey et al. 2021). Especially pertinent in the context of this research will be the record of their sense of self, sense of resilience, identity/ies, perseverance, and the coping strategies developed and employed as revealed through their stories of them navigating through their potentially turbulent and unpredictable new landscapes. In addition, their initiatives in further developing themselves will be explored.

The notion of "investment" proposed by Professor Norton (then Peirce 1995) will be conceptualised and understood within the context of this study. The conceptualisation of "investment" will first result in the application of an online Development Toolkit designed based on the concepts of self-directed learning where IAS as participants

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engage in “reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action” (Schon 1983) with the learning materials, so that the Model of Investment (Darvin and Norton 2015) can then be used to critically explore and uncover how IAS’ central ideologies, patterns of control, disproportionate access to capital and stationing influence and frame their sense of agency and validity, with the possible reconstruction of identity to be observed.

In essence, the lived experiences of IAS in their teaching and work environments will be explored; and the notion of “investment” in relation to the participants’ positive reconstruction of “identity” through “time and space” (Norton 1997) will be framed within Darvin and Norton’s Model of Investment (2015). The following research questions are proposed:

1. *What are the experiences of IAS in their teaching and work environments in the UK, and how do they define their sense of self and identity/ies in these environments?*

2. *What are the coping strategies developed to overcome negative encounters and challenges; to what extent do IAS dedicate time and effort or seek additional support in further developing themselves?*

3. *How do academics make sense of a proposed online Development Toolkit (DT) as resources for self-directed learning to improve their teaching practices? To what extent can the interplay between IAS’ development initiatives in the DT and/or development initiatives in general be framed around Darvin and Norton’s (2015) Model of Investment with regards to the positive reconstruction of identity?*

I have also considered that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic would have brought whole new perspectives and dimensions on other potential challenges that IAS may have encountered including effective teaching and learning through remote means, student engagement and satisfaction, the feeling of disconnect and the lack of networking and bonding opportunities, to name a few; however, as the data for the research was collected during the pre-pandemic period, I have decided for consistency, the research will not involve discussions or resources around COVID-19 to ensure the issues discussed will remain in focus.

1.6 Significance

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on understanding IAS’ lived experiences in the UK HEI environment, especially their sense of self and identity/ies

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and/or coping strategies which, so far have remained under-studied. This understanding will help HEIs and indeed the whole of the HE sectors to fully understand and embrace the presence and the individual characteristics, values, and the rich and diverse cultural background that the IAS community brings to the sector. It will address the lack of understanding and appreciation of IAS as active agents working to improve their circumstances and hopefully disprove the common misconceptions of IAS suffering the anxiety and challenges encountered in their new environment in a "passive state" (Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020, p.80).

The use of Norton's (then Peirce 1995) notion of "investment" in the context of the HEI environment to examine the social phenomena of IAS, including the understanding of the interplay between IAS' development initiatives in relation to the positive reconstruction of their identity through the lens of the Model of Investment will add a new dimension to the study of the notion of "investment"; it will also aid further understanding of the potential factors, motivation and barriers behind initiatives taken by IAS in further improving and developing themselves.

1.7 Research methodology

The Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA) proposed by Smith (1996) is the most suitable methodological approach for this research because IPA is committed to examine, enhance the understanding of and interpret peoples' major life experiences and how they make sense of them (Smith et al. 2009). IPA research seeks to "give voice" to its participants in telling their stories which is what I intend to do in this research; and to enable me as the researcher to make sense of that world from the perspective of an insider of those experiences (Smith and Osborn 2003).

Before the main study is conducted, a small-scaled pilot study emulating the first phase of the main study is deployed with the purpose of testing the feasibility of the planned research methodology and instruments. It has largely been successful, with lessons learnt from it used to better refine and inform the planning and execution of the main study.

For the main study, a set of inclusion criteria is developed as the purposive sampling method, alongside the recruitment strategy; it also helps control and restrict the “homogeneity” (p.49) of the sample as illustrated by Smith et al. (2009).

All ethical considerations are carefully weighed and observed during every step of the research methodology process to maximise research integrity and to protect the privacy and dignity of research participants. In the subsequent chapters, readers will also find the descriptions of participants are kept to a minimum, and the name of the institution is kept deliberately vague so as to protect the anonymity of the participants.

There are three phrases to the data collection methodology.

In **Phase 1**, semi-structured in-depth interviews are conducted with participants to understand their lived experiences as IAS; and their sense of self, identity, coping strategies and initiatives to further improve themselves in their teaching and work environments.

In **Phase 2**, guided loosely by the action research principles, willing participants go through the Development Toolkit (DT) which requires them to engage through “reflection-in action/reflection-on-action” (Schon 1983) with the activities. The aim of the intervention process is to provide a platform or space to allow participants the opportunity to create their unique lived experiences from engagement with the DT, so that the experiences and impact from the engagement can be revealed and shared during the semi-structured in-depth interview in the following phase.

In **Phase Three**, shorter semi-structured interviews are conducted with research participants who have engaged in the DT, with the aim that any suggestion or evidence of positive reconstruction of identity (Darvin and Norton 2015) as a direct or indirect experience from engagement with the DT, explored and captured through the lens of Darvin and Norton’s Model of Investment (2015).

1.8 Potential limitations

One possible limitation to the research would be due to the small scope and scale of this study. There is no doubt to the significance of this research in contributing new knowledge and insights to the relevant fields and in addressing obvious gaps in the

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existing literature and research; however, the scope and focus of the research in exploring just IAS and their lived experiences also means that it would be limited in its variability and adaptability in the much wider literature.

Due to it being an IPA doctoral study, this research naturally and inevitably lands itself with a small sample size. This is compounded by the limited target population that I have access to for the recruitment process. Smith et al. (2009, p.49) highlighted, the sample chosen for an IPA research study is usually "homogenous" so that the research inquiries are meaningful and that they make sense to the research participants. The degree of this "homogeneity" (ibid) changes from study to study and the decision-making process to achieve this "homogeneity" (ibid) is often driven by issues of practicality and feasibility. Juggling between contending with the limited target population and in keeping with the IPA methodology principles, the sample chosen for the study is small and specific. Given that IPA research focuses on the idiographic nature of the experience, the transferability of the knowledge and findings may be called into question.

The role of language and the impact that this might have on the research process could potentially pose limitations. Noon (2018) concluded that language can become a barrier in IPA research when respondents have weak language skills. Smith et al. (2009) conceded that the interpretation of experiences as researchers, is quite often "shaped, limited and enabled, by language" (p.194). Due to the participants being non-English speakers and language barrier being the biggest challenge that IAS have to deal with, it is anticipated that language related issues would have an impact on this research.

This doctoral study follows a set of prescribed timelines, including the data collection processes. This means that flexibility of timing is limited, especially with regards to the execution of the DT. Consequently, there is little room or manoeuvrability in dealing with any hiccups or unexpected problems that may be encountered during the data collection phases. This would inevitably impact slightly on the outcomes of the data collection processes and the overall study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Introduction to chapter

The background to the current HE landscape is presented to contextualise the thesis, especially with regards to the internationalisation of HE (IoHE). Pertinent literature and research surrounding International Academic Staff (IAS) experiences will be critically reviewed, followed by an exploration of academic and professional roles, identity, and professional development. This is followed by an understanding and discussion of Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015). The chapter concludes with a synthesis of the gaps highlighted from critical review of the research areas.

2.1 Context and Background

2.1.1 Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education (IoHE)

It has been widely recognised that the Internationalisation of HE (IoHE hereafter) movement was driven in response to globalisation and its demands (de Wit 1999; Crowther et al. 2000; Yang 2002; Qiang 2003; Altbach 2004; Huang 2007; Caruana 2008; Gokturk et al. 2018; Wihlborg and Robson 2018; Bamberger 2020; Dumanig and Symaco 2020). Viv Caruana, commissioned by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in 2006 to review literature around the IoHE confirmed this to be the case in the UK (Caruana 2008).

The relationship between "internationalisation" and "globalisation" is messy, complex and multi-faceted (de Wit 2011) with scholars like Ulrich Teichler (2004), Peter Scott (2006), and Philip Altbach (2007) attempting to clarify this complex relationship. Tight (2021, p.53), quoting Kehm and Teichler (2007), claimed the "linked ideas" between them "were amongst the most discussed and researched aspects of higher education in the last two decades."

To comprehend and digest these multifarious connections, I find Bernd Wächter's approach (cited by Crowther et al. 2000) comprehensive and easy to understand.

> *"…it is important to stress that internationalisation and globalisation are not synonymous, and it is worthwhile to differentiate clearly between them.* ***Globalisation*** *refers to "forceful changes in the economic, social, political and cultural environment, brought about by global competition, the integration of markets, increasingly dense communication networks, information flows and mobility" (Reichert and Wächter 2000). It is a relatively uncontrolled process,*

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> *determined mainly by fierce economic competition on a global scale, and by rapid advances in information and communication technology.* ***Internationalisation****, on the other hand, is based on conscious action. Today, and this is important, it is mostly also a response to the challenges brought about by globalisation.*
>
> -cited by Crowther et al. (2000, p.10)

This definition will serve to guide subsequent sections of literature review on key topics.

2.1.2 Marketisation of HE

Debates around IoHE often situated around concepts of "neoliberalism" and "marketisation" (Bovill et al. 2014; Pashby and de Oliveira Andreotti 2016; Bamberger et al. 2019; Robson and Wihlborg 2019; Dumanig and Symaco 2020). Bamberger et al. (2019) stressed neoliberalism was increasingly becoming "hegemonic" (p.203) in the study and conceptualisation of internationalisation, with "economic rationales" and "commercial manifestations" (p.203) being dominant features; with De Vita and Case (2003, p.383) lamenting that opportunities for a much needed critical reflection on practices brought about by the movement being cast aside due to the "marketisation discourse" dominating the internationalisation agenda, resulting in the IoHE being refined "narrowly in commercially expedient terms".

With globalisation as the driving force, the HE sector has become a "commodity" (Tilak 2005; Connell 2013; Matthews 2014; Naidoo 2017; Robson and Wihlborg 2019), heavily and competitively marketised with institutions, particularly in the West positioning themselves against one another. Bovill et al. (2014) noted, "calls for internationalisation are often responding to national and global pressures to maximise knowledge transfer, where knowledge is viewed as a global commodity" (p.13); Lee and Stensaker (2021, p.161) established that though economic perspectives on internationalisation and globalisation were varied, the focus still tended to be on increasing competition between "countries" and "higher education institutions where knowledge and innovation is the driver for continuous economic growth and societal development."

Closely linked to the internationalisation, globalisation and marketisation discourse is the emergence of "global university rankings" (Hazelkorn 2008; Chan et al. 2016; Hauptman Komotar 2019, p.299), such as the Academic Ranking of World Universities

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(ARWU), Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE), or national league tables (Goglio 2016), which are used by governments to measure the performance of HEIs, and for "profit-oriented media" to identify HEIs' potential for "commercial opportunities" (Hauptman Komotar 2019, p.300). Dumanig and Symaco (2020, p.3) observed the emphasis given to university world rankings has pushed HEIs to concentrate on improving major indicators such as foreign staff and students and research publications while concurrently "driving the ranking's market-based approach through students wishing to gain entry in highly-ranked HEIs."

2.1.3 Student recruitment

Prospective students, especially international students who Hazelkern (2008, p.9) had described as "savvy consumers" used these rankings to choose the best university to attend (Hazelkorn 2008; Goglio 2016; Vidal and Ferreira 2020); universities do their best to compete with each other and to develop into "world-class universities" to stay high on the ranking table (de Wit and Altbach 2021) to 1. demonstrate their talent-catching capacity (Hazelkorn 2008); 2. to generate the much needed income from students, especially international students (De Vita and Case 2003; Altbach and Knight 2007; Robson and Turner 2007; Adnett 2010; Robertson 2011; Warwick and Moogan 2013; British Future and Universities UK 2014; De Wit et al. 2015; Chankseliani and Wells 2019).

Explained by Hazelkorn (2008, p.9) and scholars in the field, students were treated and regarded as "consumers" (Woodall et al. 2014; Morgan 2016; Bunce et al. 2017; Brooks 2021) with Woodall et al. (2014) highlighting students "now [demand] even more 'value' from institutions" (p.48). The NSS, introduced in the mid-2000s to gauge students' satisfaction with their degree courses in the UK, has a profound impact on professional and academic staff in HEIs. With the results being published and compiled to become the university league tables, which then feeds into the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) to determine a Gold, Silver or Bronze award for universities or colleges, it is no wonder the NSS has propelled universities and colleges to be more "responsive to student needs" and to place importance on "high quality teaching and pedagogy" (Office for Students 2020b, p.8). The NSS is not without its controversies (Office for Students 2020b), with the government's own review in 2020 exposing the NSS was "open to gaming" and "generates costly and time-consuming bureaucracy"

(Murray 2020); with an “anonymous academic” (Anonymous academic 2017) lamenting on the *Guardian* newspaper of its unfairness because “managers are holding academics account for NSS scores” (ibid, headline) even though they were beyond their control.

Due to its tangible economic and reputational benefits, “international student mobility” was regarded as a substantial form of IoHE especially with international students being perceived as sources of income (Qiang 2003; Robson and Turner 2007; Warwick and Moogan 2013; Chankseliani and Wells 2019, p.640-641; Soler and Gallego-Balsà 2019).

Although Buckner (2020, p.1) has indicated that “much of the professional literature frames internationalisation as a natural and worthwhile pursuit for HEIs”, the implementation and realisation and even the understanding of IoHE on the ground level is often laden with misunderstandings, mismatched expectations between inspiration and reality (Hughes‐Warrington 2012), tensions (Robson and Turner 2007) and ambiguity (Soler and Gallego-Balsà 2019).

In the next section, common key approaches, dimensions, and issues with regard to the IoHE movement in the UK will be explored as it is the most relevant context to this research.

2.2 Internationalisation of HE in the UK

2.2.1 Rationale, approaches, and issues

The notable research in the study of the internationalisation agenda and strategies in the UK have been varied and included De Vita and Case (2003), Robson and Turner (2007), Caruana (2008), Carey (2009), Maringe (2009), Warwick and Moogan (2013), Bennett and Kane (2009), Humfrey (2011), Guion Akdag and Swanson (2018), Woodfield (2018), Trahar and Hyland (2011) and Chankseliani (2017).

Appendix A provides an overview and brief descriptions of the various studies on the internationalisation agenda and strategies in the UK.

Humfrey (2011, p.649) highlighted many practitioners in the UK believed “internationalisation” and the pursuit of “quality and status in HE” went hand-in-hand; however, “considerable emphasis” was placed on student experience. Quoting Clarke et al. (2018), Jekabsone (2020) claimed when it came to the various internationalisation foci, whilst most universities in Europe were focusing on the delivery of academic study programmes in English, and Scandinavian universities on mobility, UK universities were concentrating mainly on student recruitment. This was substantiated by Warwick and Moogan (2013, p.103) who, quoting HESA (2009), noted that in the first decade since the start of the new millennium, the UK had experienced a "substantial growth of the international student population…from 231,000 (11%) in 2000 to 369,000 (15%) in 2009." Robson and Turner (2007) stated the financial contribution of "international students to the UK" in general and specifically to HE institutions "has long been recognized" (p.41). As a result, many universities have emphasised internationalisation in their strategic plans, with specific and ambitious targets in the recruitment of overseas students (Robson and Turner 2007). Carey (2009, unknown) noted though the "economic rationale and motivation for institutional internationalisation had not been made explicit in UK higher education international strategy documents", it seemed to have been extensively adopted, resulting in many UK universities focusing mainly, and sometimes solely on "short-term mass recruitment" of students. Perhaps because of that, much of the research conducted on IoHE in the UK tended to be limited in scope, with concentration on "student recruitment and the student perspective" [Walker (1999) cited in Robson and Turner (2007, p.41)]. By 2014, the drive for international student recruitment was still high on the agenda. Walker (2013), quoting data from the department for Business Innovation and Skills (Business Innovation and Skills 2011) reported the financial contribution from the HE sector to the UK Education Exports through tuition fees and subsistence spending was estimated at approximately £7,873.5 million; "the importance of international HE to the UK economy" was "incontestable" (Walker 2013, p.328)".

It all started when the Thatcher government implemented the requirement for international students to pay full fees and "the main focus of British universities became international student recruitment for income generation" (de Wit and Altbach 2021, p.31). In 1999, the then Prime Minister Tony Blair, in acknowledging the importance of international student recruitment to the British Economy, launched the first phase of the Prime Minister's Initiative (PMI), which targeted at increasing the number of students in the UK by 50,000 by the year 2005 (Lewis 2017). When the second Prime

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Minister's Initiative (PMI2) was launched in 2006, the emphasis continued to be on increasing international student numbers but with an added dimension of enhancing the "pattern of collaboration, partnership, and mobility" (Humfrey 2011, p.655).

This shift in focus of PMI2 also saw the government commissioning Drummond Bone in reviewing the UK's internationalisation activity and making recommendations on the future strategy of IoHE (Lewis 2017). Bone (2008) concluded that "new approaches to internationalisation" were needed and "UK institutions needed to broaden their perspective on overseas work." Even with student recruitment as the main objective, the initiatives should take place in the context of "bi-lateral and multilateral internationalisation" with a view of creating "long-term programme of internationalisation" as a more sustainable approach. The British Council, agreed the student recruitment efforts at that time were "unsustainable" and UK institutions should shift towards an internationalisation agenda which balanced "overseas activity with recruitment, partnerships, research and capacity building" [Economist Intelligence Unit (2008) cited in Lewis (2017, p.80)]. Other policy documents of the time followed suit by recommending a shift of focus towards "longer term strategic partnerships" (p.80) in the internationalisation agenda (Lewis 2017).

Humfrey (2011) started witnessing that concurrent with the recognition of the financial, cultural, diplomatic and academic benefits gained from international recruitment by the government, UK universities were slowly shifting from a "recruitment-led" (p.656) approach to a more dynamic, holistic and embedded approach to internationalisation which ideally would incorporate improving the international experience and perspective of not just the international students, but the "entire student community who [would gain] full benefit from a developed and comprehensive international strategy" (p.657). This meant creating a "stage" where "all students, both home and international, and…members of the community have the opportunity to share the internationalisation experience" (Humfrey 2011, p.658), through acknowledging cross-cultural influences on campus brought by the increasing numbers of non-UK academic staff, researchers and visitors; in research collaboration and multi-national partnerships to broaden the knowledge base and diversity for learning and teaching; and in outward mobility of UK students through global partnerships through new opportunities to expand transnational activity.

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By 2014, Woodfield (2018), citing multiple sources (Walker 2013; Mellors-Bourne et al. 2014) noted that on top of "cross-border flows of human capital" (p.630) which remained the central focus, IoHE in the UK had developed strong emphasis on benefits from "increased engagement in international research and education programmes (such as Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020)" (p.630), which brought significant broader benefits such as "soft power, enhanced trade and global influence" (p.630).

However, Woodfield (2018, p.629) observed, "the UK's international HE space is fragmented with neither a coordinated national policy nor a central agency overseeing sector-wide activity." This was a fundamental issue which led to the inconsistent approach to the implementation and impact of the internationalisation agenda across different UK HEIs, which also contributed to the misalignment between "policies, resources and commitment of university staff" (Trahar and Hyland 2011, p.624). Carey (2009) established that the internationalisation discourse in the UK, in particular the international strategy, was rooted in "the language of economic theory". As a result, Carey (2009, unknown) pointed out that one issue with adopting an economically driven internationalisation approach for UK universities was that institutions ran the risk of losing their academic reputation and prestige in the "core areas of teaching, research and learning". De Vita and Case (2003, p.389), quoting Bailey (2000), highlighted the danger of the "students as customers" phenomenon in creating a "role distortions" issue between students and professors, leading to problems like the unwitting professors bowing to students' desires for programmes and becoming "subservient" to students' "inappropriate expectations".

Another issue highlighted by De Vita and Case (2003) was despite increased diversity of student populations in the HE sector which brought new and demanding challenges but at the same created valuable opportunities for re-evaluation and reflections, institutions had failed to make use of those prospects to reassess their purposes, priorities and processes. There was an urgent need for institutions to address "issues of cross-cultural pedagogy" (p.395) which required them to adopt a more reflective approach to teaching, to consider and make use of the "individual and cultural differences in learning" and to develop a more "flexible assessment framework that is culturally fair and inclusive" to better cater to the changing student population across UK HEIs. This was supported by Warwick and Moogan (2013, p.103), quoting Koutsantoni's (2006) survey, who pointed

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out that very few HEIs had given thought and focus to the "institutional change necessary to accommodate the newly recruited international students". Maringe (2009, p.553) found that though internationalisation was regarded by all six HEIs in her study as "key strategic goal", there were a range of barriers against the "full integration of…concept into the institutional cultures" and they included "conceptual and structural deficiencies in the organisation of institutional internationalisation" and "an over emphasis on human exchange initiatives over cultural integration efforts."

Quoting Bennett and Kane (2009), Warwick and Moogan (2013, p.104) pointed out that an initial reading of relevant literature suggested a prominent gap between "what is said about internationalisation and the reality of what is done" in most HEIs. Supported by multiple sources, Warwick and Moogan (2013, p.103) went on to claim that institutional level initiatives of internationalisation in many UK HEIs were down to pockets of small groups of staff, known as the "international enthusiasts" in setting up ad-hoc programmes which addressed and provided cross-cultural communication skills or language support and they tended to be "bottom-up" rather than top down from management. Without clear and direct support from senior management, these efforts were unlikely to bring any significant organisational change or impact. In 2011, Trahar and Hyland (2011, p.624) pointed out the mismatch between "rhetoric" and "engagement" due to the lack of "support, resources and recognition for innovative teaching and assessment practices" for academic staff navigating through these "environments that are culturally complex".

When HEA published an "international framework" in 2014 (Higher Education Academy 2014), it had failed to create strong impact in the HE sector where "an institutional rather than student-centred approach to international HE was firmly embedded, and where internationalisation of learning, teaching and the student experience is often of marginal concern" [Warwick and Moogan (2013) cited by Woodfield (2018)].

Although the internationalisation concepts and strategies within the UK HE sector have in recent years shifted away from concentration on international student recruitment to a more dynamic internationalisation approach and some good efforts have been observed (Fragouli 2021), it is evident that a more comprehensive framework by HEA was called for and a more holistic approach in response to the changing local, regional

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and national or even international climates was still needed heading into the future (Woodfield 2018; de Wit and Altbach 2021; Fragouli 2021).

2.2.2 Academic staff mobility in the UK

Along with increased international student population in the UK, the IAS population had grown exponentially over the years. According to HESA, IAS in UK HEIs in the year 2005/2006 were recorded at just over 20.5% but by 2009/2010, the number had increased to 24% (HESA 2011). A notable figure from the 2018 statistics showed that in 2016/17, in the engineering and technology sector alone, 43% of academic staff were non-UK. In 2017/2018, there was a record number of 30.8% non-UK academic staff with 17.7% from the EU and 13.1% from non-EU countries. Unfortunately, perhaps due to implications from Brexit (Marini 2018), by 2019/2020, this figure had decreased slightly to 22.2%. Nonetheless, the proportion of non-UK academic staff working in UK HEIs has remained consistently over 20% in the last 5 years, which was a considerable proportion and in line with the non-UK student proportion at UK HEIs (Universities UK 2018, 2019, 2021b, 2021a). Unlike the experience of the international student community, the academic staff mobility phenomenon remained an under-studied subject which had not been given as much attention as it should have been (Rao et al. 2018; Minocha et al. 2019).

In 2015, Walker stated that "the increasingly diverse nature of the higher education academic community in the United Kingdom is under researched and under-theorised." This was again highlighted by Minocha et al. (2019, p.943) who, quoting multiple sources (Clifford and Henderson 2011; Hsieh 2012) noted that being "a rich source of cultural, pedagogic and academic experience", the international academic experience was undoubtedly a theme which deserved much more attention, but had remained low on the research radar, despite its increasing number and proportion.

Globally, the importance of academic staff mobility in the internationalisation agenda had been widely acknowledged. De Wit and Altbach (2021) noted fierce competitions for IAS as "the presence of international faculty at [HEIs] and systems around the world" (p.40) was a crucial currency in the global knowledge economy. Philip Altbach and Maria Yudkevich (2017) highlighted that non-native academics were seen as a key part of internationalisation strategies in many countries and institutions around the world. The

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increase in international faculty number was a positive indicator on the internationalisation attainment by "the global rankings and often by ministries and other policy-makers within these countries" (ibid, para.8).

In the UK, the value, and contributions by IAS to the HE sectors and beyond have been highlighted. The Universities UK (2007) policy briefing highlighted the valuable contribution of international staff working in supporting teaching and research in key areas where "UK nationals are found in declining numbers" (p.2). Nicola Dandridge, the Chief Executive of Universities UK in 2010 stressed that a significant proportion of these "highly skilled staff" were IAS working in key subject areas such as science, technology, and engineering (Dandridge 2010, p.2). These IAS not only increased "opportunities for UK students wanting to study those subjects", they were directly contributing to the UK's world class quality research (Dandridge 2010, p.2). The Russell Group of Universities acknowledged the critical contribution of overseas academics towards the "highest quality research" and the role that these "highly qualified individuals" have in providing "a significant core of expertise and capacity for training future generations" (The Russell Group of Universities 2017, unknown). They urged the Government to continue to provide a welcoming environment to this "overseas talent" and to "recognise the value" that they bring to the UK HEI sector. According to a press release by the University of Bath in 2018 (University of Bath 2018), "foreign-born academics" contributed 40% more international engagement activities in areas beyond academia compared to their native-born colleagues with many making vital and significant contributions to the "UK's public sector, policy, industry and non-governmental organisations". These statistics came from a joint study by researchers in the University of Bath, University of Cambridge and Imperial College who published the findings in a journal article in Research Policy (Lawson et al. 2019). One crucial implication from the study was the recognition of the "critical role that immigrant academics play in our universities" in parallel with imperative considerations to be made on the need of support offered to these foreign-born academics to help them engage more effectively at the local, regional, and national level (University of Bath 2018).

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2.2.3 Lack of policy and strategy supporting academic staff mobility in UK HEIs

On the ground level, the fundamental issue facing UK HEIs in the internationalisation agenda was the lack of a coordinated national policy or a central agency in planning and implementing initiatives or activities at the sector-wide level (Woodfield 2018). Dina Lewis (2017, p.86) in her PhD thesis exploring IoHE between China and England pointed out that "in England, the State's right to intervene in the running of universities is constantly questioned by society and by higher education institutions."

In 2019, the HM Government Department for Education and the Department for International Trade in the UK jointly published an International Education Strategy (GOV.UK 2019), which was updated in 2021 (GOV.UK 2021) with the highlight of supporting recovery and driving growth. One key headline in the 2019 strategy was creating a welcoming environment for international students in supporting their employability prospects and creating an environment to make them feel welcome; this headline was sustained in 2021 but with an added focus on improving student application process as well as enhancing the academic experience of international students. There was no mention of enhancing the experience of international staff in both strategy documents.

In a UK HEA agency document, it was stated that "Internationalisation is a key feature of the UK HE agenda" (2015). The HEA however focused most of its approach and strategy on enhancing the student experience, with the pledge to "[support] HE providers achieve a high quality, equitable and global learning experience for **all students** enrolled on UK HE programmes" (The Higher Education Academy 2015). Unlike Finland's "Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions" (Ministry of Education Finland 2009, p.31) which stipulated measures in improving the quality of education by requiring teachers teaching in a foreign language to demonstrate their language skills through a language certificate, the UK HEA document had made no mention of strategies or approaches in supporting or enhancing IAS to achieve this high quality learning experience for students.

The QAA, the Quality Assurance Agency for HE, published two separate documents on supporting and enhancing the experience of international students; following a similar

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trend observed thus far, no attention has been paid on supporting or enhancing IAS teaching and/or experience.

The only national level document found was a research report published by the Equality Challenge Unit (Equality Challenge Unit 2013), a survey capturing experiences of international staff members in institutions across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland with a set of recommendations to institutions in supporting international staff in the conclusion section. It remained that no national level policy document has so far proposed strategies or measures in enhancing IAS experience or teaching and learning in UK HEIs.

This pointed to an obvious gap in many internationalisation strategies where the understanding of the importance in the provision of support and infrastructures for foreign academic teaching staff and the impact of this to the teaching and learning experiences, as well as to the host institutions, was clearly lacking. This issue was highlighted by Luxon and Peelo (2009), Foote et al. (2008), Clifford and Henderson (2011), Saltmarsh and Swirski (2010) and Maja and Maria (2014), at the institutional level. Luxon and Peelo (2009, p.649) warned the conceptualisation process of the internationalisation agenda would remain limited "as long as the implications for pedagogy of an increasingly international teaching staff remain unexamined" and that the issue of IoHE was in danger of "becoming simplified" due to the omission of a key aspect of teaching and learning in HE – the experience of international staff.

At the UK institutional level, a survey (Koutsantoni 2006) cited by The University of York (2011) revealed that out of 131 HEIs in the UK investigated, only 52% had an internationalisation strategy; and out of those, 28% referred to initiatives to support international students; and only 6% referred to staff development with a mere 0.5% addressing teaching and learning issues.

Looking across different internationalisation strategies of prominent UK universities such as The Edinburgh University, University of Southampton, University of Bath and Manchester Metropolitan University, there were emphases on initiatives and drives in increasing student mobility and attracting more talented IAS, but there was a lack of

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focus on improving the experience of the IAS employed; with many of the initiatives on enhancing opportunities and experience gearing towards students.

Dr. Wayne Bailey of University of Huddersfield noted through his encounters with various IAS across UK HEIs – it was not clear to many of those IAS if "the HEIs they were employed by were making concessions and changing their policies and practices to accommodate their international staff" (Bailey Unknown).

2.3 International Academic Staff (IAS)

2.3.1 Limited literature

Literature surrounding international academic mobility to date, had mostly concentrated on the international student experience with relevant research or literature on the experience of IAS being limited and under-explored (Yourn and Kirkness 2003; Lund et al. 2007; Byram and Dervin 2008; Foote et al. 2008; Luxon and Peelo 2009; Borg et al. 2010; Jiang et al. 2010; Kim and Locke 2010; Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010; Green and Myatt 2011; Hsieh 2011; Pherali 2012; Sliwa and Johansson 2013; Thomas and Malau-Aduli 2013; Johansson and Sliwa 2014; Kreber and Hounsell 2014; Walker 2015; Rao et al. 2018; Minocha et al. 2019; Bailey et al. 2021). Observed by Foote et al. (2008, p.168), this group of foreign-born academics were "an invisible minority on many US campuses and few statistics are compiled concerning their needs, accomplishments or problems". Kreber and Hounsell (2014) noted this was an area that was beginning to gain traction with studies by Hsieh (2012), Jiang et al. (2010) and Luxon and Peelo (2009) contributing knowledge and useful insights to the field; however, these remained small and limited in scope.

2.3.2 Similar research in the field

Relevant literature though limited, offered pertinent and insightful research outputs around key topics in this study. More applicable to this study were literature and research around the context of the UK setting; however, some of this valuable literature also concentrated on settings outside of the UK mainly Australia, New Zealand, and the US. The table in Appendix B charted some of this prominent literature, and their brief summaries to give a general overview.

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2.3.3 Challenges

The subsequent sections summarise some of the most salient challenges faced by IAS in relation to acculturation processes, language, and students.

2.3.3.1 Acculturation

According to Berry (2003) "acculturation" takes place through intercultural exchanges, with changes in attitudes, norms, behaviours, knowledge and identity as a result. Drawing from Berry (2005), Jiang et al. (2010) proposed the concept of "academic acculturation" to be –

> *"The processes by which one becomes a part of a group (for example, institution, department, etc.) and integrates with its members, while possibly influencing the host group with one's own life experience and academic expertise…"*
>
> -Jiang et al. (2010, p.157)

Antoniadou and Quinlan (2020, p.80) in investigating the acculturation processes of "immigrant academics" at a UK university found that participants experienced acculturation "like a roller coaster emotions occurring (and re-occurring) throughout various periods." The authors claimed their findings refuted the early descriptions of the U-curve adjustment by Lysgaard (1955) and Oberg (1960) for being over-generalised. It also found the "experience of expatriates" was not a "passive state" (Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020, p.80) as claimed; instead of submissively suffering from anxiety, newcomers to the environment "actively work to adjust to their new environments" (ibid). Antoniadou and Quinlan also supported Jiang et al.'s (2010) "academic acculturation" being a two-way process. However, citing Lai, Li and Gong (2016), Bailey et al. (2021) highlighted the difficulty in achieving this for some newcomers to an environment who felt being unfamiliar with "the cultural context and norms", they experienced powerlessness and the acute awareness of the "limited agency" they possessed to enable them to "positively influence things within their HEIs" (ibid, p.350).

Bailey et al. (2021, p.351) highlighted the experiences of IAS were not much different from that of international students. Both groups were often subjected to the host institutions' expectations "to adapt to the institution rather than institutions making changes and addressing the cultural differences" and this led to "anxiety and emotional

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instability" with regards to "teaching styles" and pedagogies, epistemologies and "philosophical paradigms" alien to them. Bailey et al. (2021, p.360) had exposed the negligence of HEI in assuming that IAS would automatically assimilate to their new cultural norms, without relevant support; and integration into the new environment and society would happen organically and automatically through "exposure to the same transition processes as domestic academic staff".

- ***Teaching and integration into local networks; adjustments to systems and local practices***

Saltmarsh and Swirski (2010) suggested one of the most important aspects in academic mobility, was the need for the newcomer to navigate through local systems new to them.

Related to that was the challenge in IAS adjusting to different academic standards, education system and local practices in their new environment (Collins 2008; Jiang et al. 2010; Willis and Hammond 2014). Kreber and Hounsell (2014, p.19) recorded that "unclear expectations and not knowing the system" especially in the context of the education system and wider policy was the greatest challenge for participants in their study, probably due to the fact that these were often "implicitly embedded" (Maja and Maria 2014, p.1) in the local practices and rarely discussed or explained. Thomas and Malau-Aduli (2013, p.36) observed newly arrived international academics often found it challenging in "acquiring tacit knowledge and recognising the hidden expectations" within their new environment. The ability to "understand nuanced cultural patterns in order to achieve smoother (academic) acculturation" was highlighted as important in Jiang et al. (2010, p.164). Luxon and Peelo (2009, p.653) elaborated that often, IAS were faced with the challenge of "knowing the right questions to ask" in attempts to "deconstruct [these] tacit knowledge".

Research showed difficulties for IAS in adjusting to the local academic standards and system of grading (Alberts 2008; Kreber and Hounsell 2014) and in some cases, students being accustomed to different teaching methods. In Hsieh (2012, p.379), participants faced conflict over striking the balance between "their own traditional teaching beliefs and UK educations expectations" – participants tried adopting the UK pedagogies in content delivery, but at the same time inevitably influenced by their own belief systems when managing and setting expectations for and of students. In Kreber and Hounsell

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(2014) and Pherali (2012, p.325), participants found their insufficient understanding of the British schooling system and curriculum posed severe challenge and affected their capacity to “understand and conceptualize the prior curricular knowledge of their students” (Pherali 2012, p.325).

Green and Myatt (2011) warned that being disorientated upon “entering a new cultural environment” (p.38), newcomers feel “patronised, unable to express oneself fully, unable to predict and mimic culturally appropriate behaviour” (p.38) and these could lead to them suffering a low self-esteem.

In Jiang et al. (2010), it was found that influences from their original academic culture (Chinese) was perceived both negatively and positively by participants – negative in limiting creativity and imagination as well as exhibiting a tendency to be more reserved; and positive being consistent and disciplined, which all impacted on their acculturation processes in the new environment.

- ***Isolation and loneliness***

Saltmarsh and Swirski (2010, p.295) related even in the case of international academics with extensive expertise and experience, “the lack of shared history and cultural knowledge was felt acutely as a significant factor in initial feelings of isolation and, for some, in an ongoing sense of cultural dislocation.”

Thomas and Malau-Aduli (2013) observed difficulty for new IAS in penetrating the local network. The degree of informal support received correlated with how easy it was for new IAS to acculturate to their new environments. There was a sense of not being welcome and not being acknowledged which severely affected their adjustment process.

Kreber and Hounsell (2014) found their participants struggled with feelings of isolation and “being alone”, having limited socialising opportunities with colleagues and not having firm friends. For many “the connections at work were not as close as they would like them to be” (ibid, p.20).

Most participants in Pherali (2012, p.326) found the UK working culture to be an “isolating” one. Academics were expected to be independent, individualistic, and working independently from one another. Nonetheless, it was also discovered that even though there was a lack of institutionally instigated efforts and support in helping IAS to integrate better, participants noted it was the personal relationships built with friendly colleagues at a local level which made them feel welcomed and had contributed to a smooth adjustment period (ibid). The same phenomenon was observed by Bailey et al. (2021) where participants admitted to relying on “willing colleagues” (p.360) to provide them with the much needed informal support that which should have been delivered formally from the HEI. Pherali (2012, p.328) stressed that this however was conditioned upon an individual’s “personality and ability to make friends”. Quoting Haigh (2005), Luxon and Peelo (2009) suggested that “everyday conversation is a great source of informal teacher development” (p.653) – however, this became unattainable in Kreber and Hounsell (2014) where IAS found themselves lacking social networking with local colleagues. Bailey et al. (2021, p.350), citing Maadad (2014) blamed the lack of appropriate institutional support and training which created the barrier that prevented “healthy interactions between students and staff, and staff and staff”.

Smith (2010) in exploring the identities and experience of probationary lecturers in the UK noted participants in a “supportive, collegial department” had identity which was “untroubled”. Citing Knight, Tait and Yorke (2006), Smith argued the importance and value of “informal learning” to academics new to their environment as she found research participants who were in departments that lacked “collegiality” experienced “a very stressful transition” (p.589).

Jiang et al. (2010) noticed Chinese participants in their study tended to socialise with other Chinese due to difficulties in penetrating local circles and making friends with British people in their workplace. Hsieh (2012, p.376) however, found her participants to “purposely avoid establishing close relationships with other Chinese academic staff”; but instead they had good relationships with other colleagues regardless of nationalities, especially those in the same research group or who were “next door” due to more time spent with them. This was perhaps due to being in the same “community of practice” (Lave and Wenger 1991) and sharing common interests. Hsieh (2012) suggested that informal social events organised for all colleagues maybe useful in helping these international academics to establish a familiar and relaxing network to enable “further situated learning” (p.380) to take place (as a form of support).

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- ***Workload***

Compounded by a lack of social networks, participants in Kreber and Hounsell (2014, p.20) found they ended up working more! “Research pressures” and “workload” were definitely known challenges to IAS with participants admitting finding themselves in a Catch-22 situation whereby due to their busy and demanding workload, they have had no time or energy for socialising (Kreber and Hounsell 2014). Some academics may be content that they enjoyed what they did; however, the situation did not represent a healthy culture (ibid). Thomas and Malau-Aduli (2013) reported similar challenges in workload for new IAS who described their first year as “an uphill struggle” (p.42). Being overwhelmed with preparations for lectures and teaching materials, there was no time to find out about staff development or social activities within the university (ibid, p.43).

Thomas and Malau-Aduli (2013, p.37) highlighted the “highly resilient nature” of some of the new IAS they investigated; but warned that the “capacity…to contribute productively to the learning and teaching and research outcomes of their respective universities is compromised as they manage these myriad challenges associated with cross-cultural transition” (citing Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010; Green and Myatt 2011).

Chung (2018, p.58) in relating her experience from the US to a post-1992 UK HEI lamented that the heavy teaching loads combined with large student numbers, marking, tutorials, pastoral care, and research, all were “tensions” which made it hard for “anyone in such a role” to excel in any of the fields.

2.3.3.2 Language

Research has shown “language use” to be a common instrument to measure the level of acculturation in different immigrant groups (Schwartz et al. 2006; An et al. 2008) and “linguistic acculturation is a key dimension…and it is commonly used as a marker for the larger process of acculturation” (Marsiglia et al. 2011, p272). With the steady proportion of IAS entering the UK each year, UK academia presents the best environment to investigate the use of English by “native speakers of other languages in workplaces based in English-speaking countries and where the majority of the employees are native English speakers” (Sliwa and Johansson 2013, p.78). However, this remains under-studied (ibid).

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Jiang et al. (2010) who agreed that the experience of IAS in the UK was under-explored, reported the (lack of) proficiency level in the English language to be a potential barrier to successful acculturation by IAS in their research.

- ***Teaching and effective communication***

Issues concerning language use in teaching and learning can create anxiety, especially for IAS teaching in English for the first time as this can directly impact on their pedagogy (Luxon and Peelo 2009). Jiang et al. (2010) and Luxon and Peelo (2009) highlighted that language barriers and limitations faced by IAS in some instances, were so acute they impacted negatively on their level of teaching. When faced with these issues, it caused the academics to develop the "desire to protect oneself against unpredictable interaction" (Luxon and Peelo 2009, p.655) by relying on PowerPoint slides, speaking in front of the class and discouraging interaction with and among the students. Jiang et al. (2010) discovered that the (lack of) proficiency in the English language could be seen as an obstacle in effective daily communication with colleagues and students, and in the delivery of quality teaching, to both home and international students with one of the participants stressing that "proper language" was needed to "deliver the knowledge" (p.163).

Drawing on Bourdieu's (1977b; 1987; 1991, 1993) concepts of field, habitus and capital, Sliwa and Johansson (2013) described the UK academic environment as a "social field" (p.80) – a "game". In order for the players (academics) to stay in the game and to progress, they must follow the rules of the game which were usually determined by the most powerful in the hierarchy of the players. Players also "accumulate the 'capital' that will enable them to maintain or strengthen their power in that field" (ibid, p.80), be it economic, social, or cultural. Language was an important component of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1987) and applying that in the context of academia, Sliwa and Johansson (2013, p.79) suggested "a high level of linguistic competence constitutes a key aspect of academic habitus." They asserted, "the use of language constitutes an important aspect of the academic's ability to conform to the rules of the game" (ibid, p.81); with the "symbolic capital" of the game gained through a player's practical linguistic abilities (p.81). For IAS in UK HEIs who were non-native, proficiency in English not only affected their ability to "carry out professional duties" (p.81), but also the "overall construction

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of [their] identity" (p.81) and therefore the ability to gain acceptance into the "habitus" shared by the UK HEI academic community.

The better their linguistic skills and prowess, the better IAS can establish their professional and academic standings within their environment in terms of their career success in teaching and publications (Sliwa and Johansson 2013). The authors concluded navigating through the "cultural nuances of language" was "a key barrier to integration" at both "professional and sociocultural levels" (ibid, p.82) for international academics working in the UK.

Green and Myatt (2011), citing other sources, asserted difficulties with language was one of the most significant sources of stress that could damage new staff's ability to work efficiently and affect their progress in adjusting their teaching with local pedagogic practices.

Kreber and Hounsell (2014) however found that for some non-native speakers, English ceased to be a foreign language after a while and they perceived no language-related difficulties either in work or socially. This was found by Hsieh (2012, p.373) in her Chinese academic staff who thought that though achieving "near native-speaker level" was difficult, they possessed sufficient English language ability to deliver the course content clearly. What Hsieh (2012, p.373) found to be a problem in communication and teaching for her participants, was their difficulty in "interpreting colloquial language and cultural connotations" and their "insufficient understanding of UK culture and traditions, even after being in the UK for more than six years". Quoting Gu et al. (2010, p.16), the author explained that this supported the idea that learning and understanding a language involved understanding "the hidden societal and cultural values and norms attached to the language".

Kreber and Hounsell (2014) found that there was "a desire [for their participants] to speak as eloquently as their native peers" and there was a sense of frustration that this was unattainable and this became a "barrier to more informal interactions with colleagues and students" (ibid, p.21). However, the authors did add that this could be due to the Scottish accent of local colleagues.

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- ***Accent and Pronunciation***

"*As soon as I open my mouth, it's clear*"

– Lena, a Lecturer in Sliwa and Johansson (2013)

IAS reported being acutely aware of their accent, which they regarded as the "most obvious distinguishing feature" (Sliwa and Johansson 2013, p.86). When an individual speaks with a "nonnative accent", this stigmatises they are not native born; and they potentially do not speak the native language fluently, regardless of how competent they are at using the language (Lindemann 2002; Derwing and Munro 2009; Kim et al. 2018). Quoting Bourdieu, Sliwa and Johansson (2013, p.79) noted the accent as expressed by different ethnic members of a group denoted a hierarchical distinction – the accent belonging to members of the majority group was the superior one. The authors however found this not to be the case in their research participants' perceived belief in their accent. One participant in Sliwa and Johansson (2013) argued that being aware of their strong accent, at least non-native English speakers made efforts to speak clearly and slowly to ensure student's comprehension. Another participant refused to believe students' complaints of being unhappy at not being able to understand his lessons, citing the fact that other (native) speakers had stronger accent than he did. He even claimed that students used his accent "as an excuse" to judge their "poor academic performance" (Sliwa and Johansson 2013, p.86). Regardless of the truth, Sliwa and Johansson (2013) noted with concern of the fact that accent was being used as a determinant of the effectiveness of a faculty member.

In the UK, Hsieh (2012) reported participants in her study experiencing negative feedback from students for talking too fast and with strong accents; Pherali's (2012) research showed that even for IAS who had lived in the UK for over a decade they struggled with people not understanding them due to their pronunciation and accent, which significantly hindered everyday conversations. Luxon and Peelo (2009), on the flipside, highlighted issues where IAS found it difficult to understand the accents of English speaking native students.

In the US, Alberts (2008) found "foreign accents" (p.193) was the biggest area of concern for students in their research sample, with some students reporting that others had warned them not to take classes taught by foreign-born professors because of their

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accents. Later however, students actually found that they had eventually adjusted, without even them realising it and it ceased to become an issue with some students even beginning to enjoy “having an instructor with a foreign accent” (p.193). Citing Rubin (1992), Alberts (2008) noted when tested by a linguist, students’ perceptions of their instructor’s strength of accent did not correlate significantly with the strength of accent as measured by the linguist. Hendriks et al. (2021) found native listeners did not evaluate non-native speakers any differently than native speakers – “although they recognize accentedness, they do not seem to be affected by it” (p.24). However, the overall implications from the study pointed to a negative perception towards “heavily accented speakers” and a possible approach to overcome this was to create awareness in students so that they could be more sensitive towards the issues and their “prejudiced reactions” (Hendriks et al. 2021, p.25).

- ***Preparation for lessons***

Luxon and Peelo (2009) pointed out, for IAS with low confidence and proficiency in their language use in the classroom, PowerPoint slides provided them with the added security needed and this in turn meant that “preparation for slides can assume marathon proportions” (p.655) not just on teaching and learning activities, but on deflecting student input. A participant in Jiang et al. (2010) admitted having to spend more time preparing for lessons due to English not being their native language, in attempts to alleviate any potentials communication issues with students. Comparing teaching in English and in their native language, three research participants in Kreber and Hounsell (2014) found the preparation time for teaching was definitely considerably longer in English.

In Li and Beckett’s (2005) book, Liang (2005, p.97) spoke to three Asian women Nina, Terry and Sue, who in efforts to establish themselves as credible professionals, collectively went through the experience of investing a “significant amount of time and energy preparing for classes”.

- ***Language and confidence***

Saltmarsh and Swirski (2010) found non-English speaking research participants even with very proficient level of expertise, extensive teaching and research experience in their respective “disciplinary fields” expressed great concerns about how they were being perceived by “others”, including students, colleagues and people in the broader community” in how well they were “fitting in” and in their ability to converse meaningfully and participate successfully in their social circles (p.295).

Pherali (2012) reported a participant’s stress caused by “potential communication errors” (p.324). Worrying about their tone, language and accuracy in written texts, the participant was constantly on guard; working even harder and yet still doubting themselves and fearing negative perceptions others might have on them, caused by their mistakes in language. Green and Myatt (2011) in the case of IAS in Australia found language proficiency and self-perceived inadequacy to be a major stress factor.

Referring to Bourdieu (1991), Sliwa and Johansson (2013, p.81) explained this –

> *“…the official language of a linguistic community constitutes the theoretical norm, imposed within the linguistic market as the only legitimate one, a benchmark for language usage… by individuals from various class or ethnic backgrounds, are measured”*

In the UK academia, Sliwa and Johansson (2013) concluded that to earn the “linguistic capital” to gain power within the field, the act of gaining the relevant capital lied not only on the speaker’s ability to “articulate grammatically correct sentences” (p.81), but also on their capacity to make [themselves] heard; to **create an impression of credibility and authority”** (p.81). Quoting Archer (2008), the authors reported how a junior academic felt professionally “inauthentic” having a self-perceived lack of competence in English. Greater language proficiency was definitely seen as being in a more powerful position, and “there is recognition of the performative power of language in terms of its consequences beyond the surface meaning of utterances” (Sliwa and Johansson 2013, p.86).

When Liang (2005) spoke to three Asian female scholars of their experience in US higher institutions, they had strong inclinations that their perceived lack of credibility as instructors in their initial teaching period was strongly related to their language and accent. As they did not speak "like White American professors" (p.87), students were challenging their authority and questioning their expertise as lecturers in their subject fields.

2.3.3.3 Students – international academics' experience with and perception of students

Alberts (2008) and Bang (2015) highlighted difficulties for IAS adjusting to student behaviour whilst Luxon and Peelo (2009) observed the different perspective in relationships between teacher and student in the new environment, was a challenge for international faculty. Misinterpretation of student culture and behaviour due to a lack of "cultural competence" (ibid, 653) can lead to problem areas for international staff. Walker (2015) and Pherali (2012) highlighted the power struggle and power distance issues between international tutors and native students, often caused by a lack of understanding and mismatch of expectations on student behaviour. In some cases, IAS found their revered position and status as lecturer, challenged. This created anxiety for international academics, especially when they felt "intimidated by students" and that students were being impolite in email exchanges (Luxon and Peelo 2009, p.655).

Walker (2015, p.67) suggested in UK universities, it was standard practice for academics to regard themselves as "both experts and fellow members of a learning community" and thus putting themselves on equal ground with students; and it was the norm for students to behave informally towards academics. IAS in their research saw this as inappropriate and disrespectful. Apart from feeling uncomfortable with the lack of proper salutation, they regarded students' questioning behaviour as disrespectful and they felt their "positions of leadership and power", their sense of authority and competence level challenged and threatened (Walker 2015, p.67). The author found students who "often speak freely in seminars on personal matter or controversial topics" and who "disagree openly with lecturers" had also caused some IAS to doubt themselves and their self-esteem (Walker, p.69).

Jiang et al. (2010, p.160) observed similar threat and reactions in their Chinese participants to issues concerning student behaviours resulting from different "pedagogical practices and power relations"; teaching was not as easy compared to their home country due to European students being "more active" and asking more

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questions; and students did not respect their teachers as much as those in their home nation.

Hsieh (2012) noted frustration in her participants who commented that course materials had to be presented clearly or they ran the risk of having "home students" (p.375) blaming their English, rather than the fact that they could not understand the content, especially in subjects like physics, mathematics and computer software.

For Henry Asei Kum (2018), "seeing students marching into lectures with iPads and laptops" (p.29) made him nervous, as he imagined his students evaluating and questioning the content of the lesson through internet search engines. Henry admitted that those experiences had left him with self-doubt and anxiety. The feeling was especially acute when he was allotted lectures in a different discipline and having to prepare teaching materials for them. In his nervousness, Henry found himself censoring what he was saying, carefully monitoring the pace of his lectures and continually self-evaluating his utterances and actions.

2.3.4 Gender and Intersectionality

Previous literature has highlighted how women were underrepresented in the academic community and that gender gap was a major issue for concern (Knights and Richards 2003; Lin et al. 2005; Samimy 2005; Barry et al. 2006; Johansson and Sliwa 2014; Ferrero Unknown). In 2021, the proliferation of gender issues experienced by female academics were still widespread and a critical source for concern, with the latest reports indicating "inequalities and representation of women have worsened" (Zuccala and Derrick 2021, p.unknown).

Women academics, compared to their male counterparts, earn less salary (Knights and Richards 2003; Johansson and Sliwa 2014), take longer to get established contracts, occupy fewer top positions, especially professorships (Johansson and Sliwa 2014), and receive fewer research grants and scholarships; and yet women are expected to "work harder, produce more research, participate in multiple projects, take on more service and teaching hours…and outperform male academics!" (Ferrero Unknown). These circumstances persisted in the UK despite equal opportunities polices (Johansson and Sliwa 2014). Casad et al. (2021, p.14) noted despite the proliferation of research on this

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area and the “continued enthusiasm for this research and [the] wealth of evidence demonstrating the consequences of gender disparities”, the problem of gender inequalities, especially in STEM subjects remained largely the same to date.

As the experiences of non-native women academics was still an under-explored area, Johansson and Sliwa (2014) studied how gender and foreignness, either combined or as separate entities, affected female IAS and their experience in the workplace. The “meritocratic principles” that academic institutions adopted to “safeguard against discrimination”, ironically were the bedrock for systems of inequalities (Knights and Richards 2003; Johansson and Sliwa 2014, p.22). For example, the applied criteria of such a meritocratic system usually “assume an academic career path of uninterrupted progression, research activity and inclusion in the REF”, all of which were heavily based on a “masculinist norm” (Johansson and Sliwa 2014, p.23). There seemed to be a tacit and “standardized idea of what constitutes an academic career” [Bagilhole and Goode (2001) cited in Johansson and Sliwa (2014, p.23)], which women were considered unsuitable for, or “committed” enough to [Currie et al. (2000) cited in Johansson and Sliwa (2014, p.23)]. Johansson and Sliwa (2014, p.33) had exposed events and processes which put participants in disadvantageous positions in relation to “promotion, networking and collaboration”, implicated by issues of childcare responsibilities. Gender emerged as the “key explanatory process” as participants made sense of their experiences (ibid, p.33). In instances and incidents where clear and direct discrimination were experienced, female academics were reluctant and fearful to pursue further action (Bhopal 2016; Welikala 2018) to avoid “negative ramifications”, demonstrating “a sense of powerlessness, resignation or fear for one’s continued career” (Johansson and Sliwa 2014, p.33).

Johansson and Sliwa (2014) also found “foreignness” to be complex and dynamic, with varying types and degrees attributed to it, producing both positive and negative effects at the individual experience level. For example, “foreignness” was used for economic purposes and as an “institutional resource”, contributing to the accreditation process. Foreignness became negative at the micro-level when individuals failed to meet the perceived organisational or societal expectations or norm, or when they were “being stereotyped through images that are perpetuated through media and other public discourses” (Johansson and Sliwa 2014, p.33).

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The women in other literature on IAS experiences and challenges also had many personal stories to share. Three female who held professor and lecturer roles in Kreber and Hounsell (2014, p.19) found it difficult to succeed as women. They felt a lack of equal opportunity in the workplace between the sexes and the diversity training available did not adequately tackle the problem as it didn't "get to the heart of things which [was] unconscious discrimination, unconscious bias, unconscious under-estimation of women's capabilities." The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women in Bhopal and Jackson (2013) spoke about the stereotype and assumptions made about them in a predominantly male department on their inability to deal with or teach male students because they were "young, quietly spoken" and "female" (p.16).

Thushari Welikala (2018), a Sri Lankan female academic who moved to the UK as a student before becoming an academic, considered her identity as "fragile"(p.61) at the start of her story. Shifting roles from being an academic in Sri Lanka, to being a student in the UK and then to an academic within the same institution, Welikala found herself re-evaluating her position and role with her new colleagues (who used to be her mentors). She experienced a "role shock" which resulted in a "strange sense of insecurity and disempowerment" which she soon realised was a "self-constructed insecurity" (ibid, p.67). When she moved to different HEIs within the UK, upon reflection, she considered her experience a learning curve. Refuting the negative conclusion and findings in Hsieh (2012), Welikala thought her challenges had made her "resilient and persistent"(p.67); though she admitted that one major challenge she had had to overcome was understanding the accepted norms related to "professional performance within HE in the UK"(p.67) which were leaning towards the "celebration of power, competition and survival-of-the-fittest-culture" [Benschop and Brouns (2003) in Welikala (2018, p.67)]. Welikala (2018) observed that due to demands from the current HE climate, "academics are required to be thick-skinned and ruthlessly competitive and mainly men, or ***women who are able to act as men***, were respected as strong survivors of the system" (ibid, p.68). Upon arrival at a new UK HEI, Welikala suddenly became aware of her "colour, nationality and gender, as well as…accent" (p.68) and experienced various incidences of perceived discrimination which unfortunately were often "silenced in the academia" [Bhopal (2016) in Welikala (2018, p.68)]. On reflection, Welikala concluded that her identities were multiple and fluid, and that empowered her to

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"negotiate and sometimes resist the challenges encountered within her new context" [Welikala (2018, p.69) cited from Bennett (1993)].

Li and Beckett (2005, p.2) revealed that living in the shadow of the traditional stereotype of the "submissive and nonconfrontational" Asian women, Asian female scholars found themselves in the junior ranks, had the lower tenure rates in the academy, having to contend with "racial discrimination and stereotyping" as well as navigating through the "underattention and disrespect for their research, teaching, and leadership".

When Liang (2005) spoke to Nina, Terry and Sue, all female Asian academics in US universities regarding their experience, they admitted to being conscious and aware of their linguistic shortcomings; however, they refused to accept that their "linguistic disadvantage" was the only contributing factor to their negative experience. All three felt strongly that the "institutionalized racial and gender inequalities" was a significant source of their "professional peripheralization" (ibid, p.91).

In Archer (2008), gender issues were brought up by both male and female young academics in the research. The female participants voiced out the "dominance of masculinist values and practices" (p.394) in their workplace and they also pointed out that men were more inclined to gain promotion and success, compared to women. One participant said this –

> "*There has always been a bearded, middle class, white, middle aged man, as director of every research organisation I have ever worked in, despite the majority of the staff being female. And when those women do crack the glass ceiling they never quite make it to the top.*
>
> -Rose (Archer 2008, p.394)

The male participants in Archer (2008, p.395) however, felt that working in departments where there were high proportions of women, their masculinity posed issues and "women [were] more likely to appoint other women."

Bhopal and Jackson's (2013) research explored the experiences of BME academics in the UK, regardless of whether they were UK or non-UK nationals. Although covering a slightly wider scope than this research, it was still relevant here in discussing gender and intersectionality issues faced by IAS to the UK. The authors highlighted that the all-too-familiar “glass ceiling” (p.1) concept affecting women and their lack of progression to senior posts was a widely recognised issue across a range of sectors, not just in academia (Equality Challenge Unit 2012; Bhopal and Jackson 2013). One significant finding from the report was BME research respondents voicing out the work of “White academics, and White male academics in particular” was more profiled and celebrated in institutions, compared to that of BME staff. Some respondents highlighted the issue of feeling a lack of trust in them, compared to “the trust invested in White colleagues” and this resulted in “White staff questioning the credibility of a BME academic” (Bhopal and Jackson 2013, p.19).

Bhopal (2020) recently wrote an article in the *Guardian* newspaper which purported that opportunities for women, especially “white, middle-class women” (para.2) have improved vastly due to “pressure to address inequality” (para.2). Bhopal observed that in the UK, gender policies were prioritised more than race policies, with white women having gained “positions of senior managers, professors and vice chancellors” (para.6). Where 23.9% of professors were white women, only 2.1% were of Black and Asian minority ethnicity. Whenever conversations about racial equality surfaced, they were seen as secondary because “gender” was “an easier conversation to have than about race” (para.11). Bhopal made the bold claim that this phenomenon where precedence was given to gender over race has created a “hierarchy of oppression in which white women’s experiences are privileged above that of women – and men – of colour” (para.6). Bhopal observed that sadly, universities will continue to enact the “diversity card” (para.13) but the focus will continue to be primarily on gender.

Kim and Ng (2019, p.96) in discussing the positional identities of East Asian academics in the UK also pointed out that the East Asian academic community group were almost non-existent in the literature on racial equality.

2.3.5 Students’ expectations

With some universities in England and Wales charging up to £9,000 per year in fees (Top Universities 2013), “students are understandably, and rightly, demanding more from their university courses” (Papakosta 2014, p.unknown). According to Bunce et al. (2017, p.1158), since the introduction of student tuition fees for domestic students in England,

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the government has also started referring to these students as "customers". The strong focus on student recruitment over the last decade had turned student "election" to student "seduction" (Walker 2015, p.71). Academic staff, especially newly appointed ones were terrified of "offending or upsetting" students; and they struggled with the concept of "student centredness" and found it both "confusing" and "alarming" (ibid, p.71).

The NSS creates immense pressure on professional and academic staff in UK HEIs. In sharing his experience from being a tutor in Cameroon to being a university lecturer in the UK, Henry Asei Kum (2018) commented that his colleagues had questioned the genuineness to students' response in the NSS survey and had drawn the conclusion that perhaps some of the low scores given were based on "one bad experience or dissatisfaction with one tutor" (p.36) or perhaps the student concerned was just having a bad day. Although the NSS exercise was problematic, Henry was able to learn from it and to balance between "fairness and firmness" (p.36) with his students; however, he still questioned the "true reflection" (p.36) of such an exercise on his teaching excellence and blamed the lack of available research to be able to exercise objectivity towards the practice. One participant in Walker (2015, p.70) revealed their anxiety –

> *"When I refused to raise the grade on the assignment, she told her friend she would not give a good feedback in the National Student Survey. I am very worried because we have been told that we have to give student satisfaction"*

2.3.6 Coping strategies and resilience

Sanderson (2008) noted "self-awareness" and "acceptance" as two fundamental keys in the teaching and learning process for academics negotiating through a new culture (cited by Green and Myatt 2011, p.40).

Using Schon's (1983) and Dewey's (1910) theories on reflective practice, Blair (2018) explained how he learnt to be effective by adopting a "Reflective Conversation with the Situation" approach; in reflecting the value of his role and purpose in relation to them being "validated by others" (p.18), Blair stopped seeing himself as "a spectator" and started "conceptualizing [himself] as part of [his] environment" in reducing the tension he was experiencing in his new environment.

Henry, a Cameroonian lecturer to the UK found himself riddled with self-doubt when dealing with the fear that students were questioning his teaching content; having to prepare and teach lectures in a different discipline was a source of anxiety too. In learning to cope, Henry did peer observation in other disciplines; attended seminars and conferences; spent time reading publications; developed a collaborative approach by discussing the resources to be taught with colleagues before delivering the classes; set himself professional development targets in learning communicative teaching approaches; and sought out information on university web pages. In short, he invested time and effort in improving himself and in learning to cope. Henry stressed the importance of adopting and engaging in "reflective practice" (Kum 2018, p.40) in the process.

Welikala (2018) spoke proudly of her sense of resilience and persistence. Refusing to conform to the norm of the negative experience as felt by IAS to a new overseas institution, Welikala learnt from her "unpredicted challenges" (p.67) and developed her sense of resilience. Through reflection and situating her identity as a "constructive marginal" [Bennett (1993, p.128) in Welikala (2018, p.69)], she was able to "negotiate" and "resist the challenges" she had to encounter in her new environment.

Most relevant literature explored experiences and challenges faced by IAS but very few had acknowledged or celebrated their resilience and coping strategies. Green and Myatt (2011) highlighted this obvious lack of focus and attention on the "resilience, adaptation and highly developed coping strategies" born out of the international experience (cited from Zhou et al. 2008). Using data from their research findings, and confirmed by other sources of literature, Green and Myatt (2011) concluded "critical reflection" was fundamental to the process of "transformative practice in higher education". However, in the same vein, the authors also cautioned that "reflective practice is not necessarily accompanied by (effective) action" – implying that reflective practice is a subjective process, and its successes and outcomes depend on multiple variables.

2.3.7 Support

Pherali (2012) stressed it is the employing institution's responsibility "to ensure that high standards of teaching and learning are maintained and therefore have a duty to

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pay attention to these critical issues" (p.330) through implementation of different initiatives and programmes on staff development.

Previous literature has discussed and suggested the types of support that should be available to help IAS adapt to their new professional and social environment (Alberts 2008; Luxon and Peelo 2009; Green and Myatt 2011; Hsieh 2012; Pherali 2012; Guerin and Green 2016; Kum 2018; Bailey et al. 2021) and these were wide-ranging, from arrival settlement funds, to language courses, peer review and mentoring programmes, buddy systems, self-reflection, induction programmes, informal social activities and events.

Luxon and Peelo (2009, p.657) stated, what distinguished international academics from international students was the expectation that "competent academics…should not need the kind of support offered to students". Their research was evidence that language courses did not offer the best means of supporting newly arrived staff. However, issues with language negatively impacted on IAS' teaching and teaching styles. Luxon and Peelo (2009) therefore proposed "tutorial support tailored to individual language and teaching needs and timetable" (p.657) to be an effective form of support for international academics new to their teaching environment; with cultural practices learning opportunities integrated into existing professional development programmes so that new faculty members can ask questions about assessment and course organisation, or use them as framework for reflection on current practices and prior knowledge.

Hsieh (2012, p.372) stressed that in an "inclusive internationalised teaching and learning environment", and in the interest of "attract[ing] and retain[ing] talented professionals", HEIs should consider the best ways to support IAS. Citing Turner and Robson (2008), Hsieh concluded that to support international academics in improving their English-speaking skills, "learning techniques such as informal conversations, peer-pairing or buddying systems may prove helpful". There was a need for HEIs to provide cultural awareness training to the whole institutional community, including staff and students, of the different cultures and pedagogical expectations to help alleviate "misunderstandings and enhance intercultural relationships and communications (Hsieh 2012).

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Pherali (2012) cautioned – the idea that IAS needed support could point to "perceived professional deficiency"; and "the tensions around the conceptualization of support involve notions of sensitivity, hesitance, discrimination, and rejection" (ibid, p.329), highlighting the need and awareness to be extremely cautious and sensitive in dealing with the provision of support and development opportunities centrally by the institution.

2.4 Of teaching and learning excellence in the UK HEI

Introduced in 2016 just after this research has started, UK HEIs are subjected to the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF)(2020a) national exercise, a measure used by the government in England to assess 1. excellence in teaching at higher education providers and 2. initiatives in place to "ensure excellent outcomes for…students in terms of graduate level employment or further study". As the NSS survey results are used to inform some of the core metrics in the TEF assessment process including "Teaching Quality" and the "Learning Environment", this creates even more pressures from institutions on not just IAS but all academic staff to ensure quality in the teaching and learning processes that students engage in.

In the UK, the mission of the QAA (The Quality Assurance Agency) is to "safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education". Under the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, the QAA published a guidance document on "Learning and Teaching" (The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2018), to enable "providers to understand what is expected of them and what to expect from each other" (ibid). Some key principles for "Effective learning and teaching" include:

- *a focus on student achievement and outcomes*
- *[being] informed through reflective practice and providers enable staff to engage in relevant, timely and appropriate professional development that supports students' learning and high-quality teaching*
- *[consisting of] activities, facilities, and resources [that] make the learning environment accessible, relevant, and engaging to all students*

Although not mandated by the QAA, a logical step for UK HEIs to ensure consistency and quality in the provision of learning and teaching to students, is to incorporate these principles into local frameworks guiding the learning and teaching in individual institutions. For example, the University of Kent regarded the QAA Quality Code vital in "setting and maintaining academic standards and quality enhancement"; and the

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Quality Code is used to inform Kent's Code of Practice, highlighting the institution's expectations that "staff are aware of its existence and [recognise] that Kent's policies and procedures are informed by it" (The University of Kent 2021).

2.5 Academic staff negotiating identities

Within academia, Mula-Falcón (2022), quoting Bolívar (2014) assumed this for how "identity" should be understood –

> *"…the consequence of a process in which life and professional experiences interact with the political and economic context and with professional beliefs, values and motivations"*

Relevant to the context of this research is a definition by Henkel (2010, p.10) – "identity is conceptualized as a project or continuous process of construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction in the context of multiple and shifting collectivities and relationships. **Reflexivity** has become central to contemporary understandings of identity".

To date, much literature and research have been conducted globally on academics and their functions, roles and professional identities in HE, most notably Henkel (2000, 2002), Archer (2008), Clegg (2008), Kreber (2010), Billot (2010), Lea and Stierer (2011), Clarke et al. (2013), and most recently Cannizzo (2017), Arvaja (2018), McCune (2021), and Mula-Falcón (2022); with Henkel (2002), Clegg (2008) and Kreber (2010) being particularly relevant to the context of this study for being UK-based.

Ching (2021, p.5) explained what constituted "academic identity" –

> *"…besides being complex and unique, [it] is also closely related to self-development and achievement. As a development process, academic identity formation is said to be oriented toward attaining a sense of fulfilment, relevance, and respect, and even toward becoming accepted and appreciated."*

On a practical level, citing Deem (2006), Clarke et al. (2013, p.7) related academic identity to "teaching and research activities" that were "subject or disciplined based". Related to that were the academic practices which underpinned Jiang et al.'s (2010) definition of "academic acculturation" such as teaching, research, administration, pastoral duties, supervision and management.

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In 1988, Kuh and Whitt proposed a set of common academic values that could be applied "across disciplinary and institutional boundaries" (cited by Clarke et al. 2013, p.7) and they were "academic freedom, the community of scholars, scrutiny of accepted wisdom, truth seeking, collegial governance, individual autonomy, and service to society through the production of knowledge, the transmission of culture, and education of the young" (Kuh and Whitt 1988 cited in Clarke et al. 2013, p.7). The functions, values and role pertaining to an academic, and the definition of gaining membership to a group however, have since become more complex.

Since the new millennium, the elements that formed the concept of "academic identity" such as teaching, research, and administration have seen changes and renegotiation to their meanings due to changes brought about by massifications (Henkel 2010), bureaucratisation, and globalisation (Clifford and Henderson 2011). Universities and academic life and practices have become more complex and challenging (Henkel 2005; Archer 2008; Clegg 2008; Billot 2010; Lea and Stierer 2011; Hughes 2013). Archer (2008) quoting Bourdieu (2001) described "the university field [as] the locus of a struggle" and "a contested territory that entails constant struggles" to "determine the conditions and the criteria of legitimate membership" (p.386). Individuals and groups were constantly competing to ensure their interests, identities and characteristics were recognised and valued (Archer 2008). The stresses and strains felt by academics were well documented and these pressures came from "new public management…severe financial cut-backs, increasing student numbers, technological demands…research output, enhanced levels of managerial control" (Barry et al. 2006, p.291) and much more.

Drawing from multiple literature sources (Henkel 2000; Becher and Trowler 2001; Archer 2008; Lea and Stierer 2011; Clarke et al. 2013; Kim 2017; Arvaja 2018), academic identities could be summarised as being underpinned by four key assumptions – research being the "trademark activity"; discipline and disciplinary communities were "strong, stable and separate epistemological and methodological assemblages"; a reluctant engagement with marketised institutional practices; a significant loss of "autonomy and collegiality" aspects on which their identities have historically been built on.

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The competitive world of the “knowledge economy” (Kim 2017, p.982) in the international HE market meant the “value of knowledge production” (p.982) was increasingly being defined through their economic relevance and “closely tied to the creation of revenue” (p.982), resulting in academics being subject to scrutiny of their “contribution to economies” (p.982) and having their commitments shifted towards “a world defined by markets” (p.983). Lamont and Nordberg (2014) highlighted, this new concept of “corporate” university potentially disrupted what it fundamentally meant to be an academic and what counted as “academic work” (citing Archer 2008, p.386).

The rise of “academic capitalism” (Kim 2017, p.983) created a scenario where research has become uniformed; researchers have lost autonomy and; there was an over-dependency on performance-based measures such as allocation of research funds on determining researcher reputation (Kim 2017). Since then, very little has changed with Mula-Falcón (2022, p.119) observing recently following changes brought by neoliberalism and new forms of governance with emphasis on “performativity”, academics were subjected to different quality and productivity assessment and evaluation systems, meaning academics were under “continuous internal and external pressure to improve their scientific productivity” through publishing high impact publications. As a result, research became a priority among all academic duties and other professional activities such as management or teaching became secondary (ibid), a gap which has been widening since the emergence of “new managerialism” in the HE sectors (Arvaja 2018).

2.5.1 Understanding academic and professional identities

Since the expansion and diversification of workforces in HEIs , the “workforce identities” of an academic were “no longer defined exclusively in terms of academic identities” (Henkel 2010). Clarke et al. (2013) stressed that changes in the HE scenes had brought added complexities to the identity formation within the sectors and the professional identity of academics was not stable; it was a personal entity that was complex, influenced and moulded by various contextual factors. The authors warned that not enough studies had been conducted to “facilitate an understanding” and the concept of “professional identity” was made complicated by “competing definitions” (Clarke et al. 2013, p.8).

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Lamont and Nordberg's (2014) review of relevant literature in the subject area provided a concise picture of the tensions between contesting organisational, professional and academic agents; and the pressures these have on the identity construction of academics in HE in the UK. The authors first presented the HE landscapes; they then explored key aspects of identity theory, including social and organisational identities, drawing on Delanty (2008), Billot (2010), Henkel (2000), Watson (2008), Giddens (1998), among others; the competing organisational and professional pressures on identity were also presented; and lastly they offered academics' own account of what constituted academic identity.

Lamont and Nordberg (2014) brought to the surface the complexity in understanding the role and identity/ies of academics as these could be shaped by individual academic themselves in accordance with their own interest. It could also be subject to the interest of the organisation, steered by the wider economic, political, and social pull and priorities. The pressures to deliver the best had put academics in very vulnerable positions and "identity is perceived as in crisis" (Delanty 2008, p.126). Delanty (2008, p.133) added that academic identities, generated through "creative engagement with institutional roles" were constantly being reshaped and remodified due to "evolving institutional frameworks".

Though academics were at times questioning their own (multiple) roles and functions and expectations of them, it was at least generally agreed that academics were considered professionals as "their moral values are closely tied, their core values are stable and their commitment to the public good remains undiminished [McInnis (2010) in Lamont and Nordberg (2014, p.3)]. Hughes (2013, p.340) has confirmed from the perspective of an educator in HE, guided by Aristotle's "praxis", her sense of professional identity was formed on the "consistent and conscious consideration of practice for the good of individual students, others, society and humankind".

In exploring the relationship between academic and professional identities, Billot (2010, p.712) offered the following -

> *"An individual identifies themself as an academic, both in relation to the organisation itself and as a member of the academic profession. Academic identity then becomes intrinsically bound up with the values, beliefs and*

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> *practices held in common with others of that affiliation. Briggs (2007) explains that professional identity is underpinned by three concepts: 'professional values (What I profess); professional location (The profession to which I belong); and professional role (My role within the institution)' (p. 471). These three components are useful in examining how the academic identity is changing. It is axiomatic that as the sector and context alters, then so must the individual's identity… It follows then that professional identity develops where agency and structure (Briggs 2007), or the self and context, interact.*

Citing Whitchurch (2008), Billot (2010) observed the complexities of the identity formation and development of today's academics whose roles and responsibilities were often "more complex and multi-faceted than outlined in employment documentation" (p.713). As their roles and responsibilities changed, so did their duties and expectations, therefore they "retain a fluid identity" (p.713) as identity was situated in one's "sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness" (p.713). The extent to which an individual's professional identity was developed and maintained, had a significant impact on their "workplace positioning" (p.713).

2.5.2 Professional identity construction through critical self-reflection

van Lankveld et al.'s (2017) qualitative review of literature around "teacher identities" (p.325) of university educators offered an understanding of the development and construction of "teacher identity" (p.325). The authors acknowledged that being university teachers meant having a teaching role, which was also combined with other roles "such as that of research or practitioner" (p.326). They considered "identity" from a socio-cultural stance – identity wasn't developed "in a vacuum, but rather in a context that brings social and cultural forces to bear upon that development" (p.326). This qualitative review of 59 studies revealed that the teacher identity of university educators would only be developed after a few years of being a teacher and "contact with students" and "staff development programmes" (p.333) were seen as strengthening factors on teacher identity. "[T]he wider context of higher education", including the "neoliberal management culture" was regarded as "constraining" to their identity; whereas "direct work environment" could both strengthen or constrain teacher identity, subject to how much teaching was valued in the department. The review also exposed five psychological processes in the development and maintenance of a teacher identity – "a sense of appreciation, a sense of connectedness, a sense of competence, a sense of commitment, and imagining a future career trajectory" (p.333).

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van Lankveld et al.'s view was useful and gave an understanding of the external factors that influenced the development of teacher identity of university educators. However, the context of the university educators as active agents in their identity construction process had not been explored or investigated.

In related literature, reflection was regarded as a key skill in the construction of professional identity (Trede et al. 2012; Körkkö et al. 2016; Engelbertink et al. 2021; Protassova et al. 2021). In the context of this research, Hughes's (2013) personal journey in making sense of her professional identity through critical reflection was pertinent. The author explained how she had navigated and considered her professional identity through the "broad historical, socio-political and [changing] educational landscapes" (p.336); she then drew on models of "reflective thought" especially that of Schon (1971; 1983) and Dewey (1910), and elaborated on how each has contributed to her construction of a "robust professional identity" (p.336).

Describing the "new sets of institutional decision making and multiple expectations" (Hughes 2013, p.341) of her as "the background noise of the clamour for competing attentions", Hughes (2013) had found Schon's (1971; 1983) model of reflection useful in overcoming "significant stress" and in regaining "a sense of value" (p.341) in her practice.

Schon (1971) stated that "the loss of stable state means that our society and all of its institutions are in continuous processes of transformation. ***We cannot expect any new stable states that will endure for our own lifetimes***" (cited in Hughes 2013, p.341). In recognising these situations, Schon (1983, p.49-50) introduced the "artistic, intuitive processes…[of] reflection-in-action" – the idea that professional practitioners "often think about what they are doing, sometimes even while doing it" and reflecting on questions such as "What features do I notice when I recognize this thing? What are the criteria by which I make this judgment?" (ibid, p.50), meaning, as the professional practitioner tried to make sense of things, they also reflected on the "understandings which have been implicit in his action, understandings which he surfaces, criticizes, restructures, and embodies in further action" (ibid, p.50). It was the process of "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" which was central in how professional practitioners "deal well with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict" brought by the loss of stable state (Schon 1983, p.49-50/p.277). Especially

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relevant to the context of this research is the "reflection-on-action" (Schon 1987) skill which was highlighted by Zwozdiak-Myers (2012) as "an important process in learning about the professional activity of teaching" (p.39) as it "enables [the teaching professionals] to gain control of [their] teaching and develop 'artistry' as reflection on action encourages the questioning of principles and theories which underpin what [they] do" (p.39). This was also instrumental for Hughes (2013) in connecting dialogues between theory and her practice.

A second reflective model that Hughes (2013) elicited from was by John Dewey (1910). In explaining Dewey's work, Hughes drew from Rodgers (2002), who examined Dewey's work and its implications on reflective practice with a view "to provide a clear picture of Dewey's original ideas so that they might serve as we improvise, revise, and create new ways of deriving meaning from experience—thinking to learn" (p.844). Elaborating on one of the four main criteria that underpinned Dewey's concept, Rodgers (2002, p.846) explained –

> *"…because an experience means an interaction between oneself and the world, there is a change not only in the self but also in the environment as a result. The effect is dialectical with implications not just for the learner but for others and the world. Through interaction with the world we both change it and are changed by it"*

Hughes (2013) fully embraced this reflective thought along with Dewey's view of the purpose of education being "the intellectual, moral, and emotional growth of the individual and, consequently, the evolution of a democratic society" (Rodgers 2002, p.845). She started embodying "wholeheartedness, directness, open-mindedness and responsibility" (ibid, p.344) towards interactions with her students. It was within this context that Hughes was able to express "the deep sense of care and personal attachment" for her students; and to recognise that "one of the most satisfying aspects of practice" was to "show care, respect and compassion for students". Hughes (2013, p.345) acknowledged the role that her students played in her learning from professional experience and her development of "praxis".

Hughes (2013, p.340) concluded the following of her professional identity construction –

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*"…using dialogue, metaphor, listening, action and being to try to develop a deep and fulfilling sense of self. It is in the social, cultural, material architecture that my dispositions are formed. They are shaped through action, experience, learning and interaction. In this way, I acknowledge that praxis is situated – shaped by time and history. My development as a praxis oriented educator is dynamic, evolving, forming, reforming and transforming me within the world. The process will never be complete, but **critical reflection** is required to more fully understand my professional philosophy of practice, in order to construct a robust sense of identity. My understanding of my professional self continues to be a work in progress."*

2.5.3 IAS identity construction in a strange land

Following similar trends, research on exploring the identity/ies or the identity shift and transformation specifically in IAS remained limited and scarce (Clifford and Henderson 2011). Considering the added complexities and challenges faced by these sojourners, the lack of focus and attention on this subject was bewildering and frustrating.

One notable scholar in the areas of academic mobility and transnational identity is Terri Kim (Kim 2009b, 2010a; Kim and Locke 2010; Kim 2017; Kim and Ng 2019). Drawing on her previous work (Kim 2008; Kim 2009a), Kim (2010, p.578) described the effect of neoliberalism on academic mobility –

"…previously sporadic, thin, limited and inter-national academic links and mobility have become systematic, dense, multiple and trans-national"

The IAS in the context of this study would be most appropriately classified by Kim (2010a, p.579) as the "academic intellectuals" – "who have crossed the boundaries and those epistemic paradigms and positional identities have become transnational". Coining Simmel's (1971) conceptualisation of a "stranger", Kim described the transnational academic intellectual as assuming the position of a stranger.

"the man who comes today and stays tomorrow, the potential wanderer, so to speak, although he has gone no further, has not quite got over the freedom of coming and going. He is fixed within a certain spatial circle – or within a group whose boundaries are analogous to spatial boundaries – but his position within it is fundamentally affected by the fact that he does not belong in it initially and that he brings qualities into it that are not, and cannot, be indigenous to it"

-Simmel (1971, p.143)

In academic mobility, individual academics find their "embodied and encultured knowledge" (Kim 2010a, p.577) go through "transformation" (ibid) and thus,

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"transnational identity capital" (ibid) is created. Kim argued that these "transnational identity capital" (ibid) were acquired through active deployment of one's "personal skills" (ibid, p.583) in engaging with "otherness" (p.583) – "the quality that someone or something has, which is different from himself/herself or from the things that he/she has experienced" (p.583). In other words, to gain "transnational identity capital" (p.577), it involves "creative abilities that convert challenges and insights into innovation processes and into new forms of expression" (p.585). Kim admitted more needed to be done, to tease out detailed examples of the kinds of "transnational identity capital" (p.577) possessed by transnational academic intellectuals, through the stories that they tell.

One of the earliest works in exploring IAS' sense of self and identity in their new environment was by Clifford and Henderson in 2011. Their findings revealed that international staff went through an identity transitioning from "international" to "local". Clifford and Henderson (2011, p.114) presented their research participants as "confident, independent, adventurous, high achievers" who were actively and voluntarily seeking to move out of their comfort zone in pursue of further career opportunities overseas. Conversely, the authors also found that support was minimal for IAS navigating through unchartered and unfamiliar systems and territories. They found themselves negotiating and transitioning through multiple identities that were "not unidirectional or exclusive, being multi-layered and fluid" (Clifford and Henderson 2011, p.114)– and the formation of academic identity was closely linked and intertwined with reflection of their national, cultural and linguistic identities.

Kaur (2019) researched into Chinese students' perceptions of their study experiences in the context of their mobility and the use of English as the medium of instruction in their chosen place of HE study. Although the research was conducted on international students rather than staff, the conclusion drawn from the research was relevant to the context of this research. Participants were "complex global learners" (p.468) and "nuanced social beings whose identities are multi-dimensional, fluid and dynamic and who engage with Community of Practice in unanticipated ways, drawing on diverse types of social capital" (Kaur 2019, p.468). It also demonstrated how English was perceived as an important "source of linguistic capital" (p.468) which participants viewed with the potential of enabling them to "access global economic resources and

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opportunities" (p.468), rather than being a threat to their national identities. Their fluid and multiple set of identities created the "international identity" (p.468) self when the use of English was involved, which was not seen as a challenge to their "Chinese" identity (ibid, p.468).

Archer's (2008) research on younger academics' construction of identity was also relevant in the context of this research. The author saw younger academics as "new arrivals" (p.387) within the HE fields. Adopting Bourdieu's (1977a) definitions of "habitus" which was a "specific system of perception, thought, evaluation, feeling, speech and behaviour" in a given "field" (Sliwa and Johansson 2013, p.80), IAS to new higher educations of learning overseas were akin to new arrivals within the field. In fact, many IAS choosing to seek opportunities and employment overseas were likely to be new arrivals within the fields. Archer's (2008) position on "becoming" (p.387) an academic was that it was "not a smooth, straightforward, linear or automatic" (ibid) process which could be subject to "conflict and instances of inauthenticity, marginalisation and exclusion" (ibid). Archer (2008) confirmed the notion of an "authentic" and "successful" (p.387) academic was a "desired yet refused identity" (p.387) for many young academics new to the field and this was compounded by a "performative" culture which had strong emphasis on "producing the 'right' products" (p.387); with other factors like race, ethnicity, social class, gender and age also playing a role. Worse, the "legitimate peripheral participation to full membership of a community of practice" (p.387) could not be assumed to be a one-way process and the "permanence" of such professional status was ephemeral [Colley and James (2005) in Archer (2008)].

2.5.3.1 Sense of confidence, sense of value and sense of belonging

Sadler (2013) found "confidence was regularly described in relation to an individual's perceived content and pedagogical knowledge" (p.163). If academics felt that they had a "good level of content knowledge", their confidence level would be high. When the perceived level of content knowledge was low, subsequently this reduced the self-confidence level of the teacher too and they would resort to a "teacher-centred approach", avoiding "opportunities for interacting with students" for fear of "being asked a question that they would not know the answer to" (ibid). The overall findings revealed the following relationships – "confidence and content knowledge" – the higher

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the perceived level of content knowledge, the higher the confidence; "confidence and approach to teaching" – academic approach to teaching changed to a teacher-centred approach when confidence level was low; and "experience and confidence" – when more teaching experience was gained, the confidence level increased.

In Hativa's (2000) research on becoming a better teacher, the author discovered that "personality traits" (p.491) had a profound impact on the teachers' classroom behaviour, for example, having low self-confidence. Despite being well-prepared for each lesson and maintaining good relationships with students, her participants were perceived as poor teachers by students. At the pre-intervention stage, the participants had speech issues that affected their instructions – speaking too fast or too slowly or too monotonously; they lacked "proper pedagogical knowledge" (p.493); and they had poor and negative perceptions of their students and their negative behaviours. The intervention processes also known as "treatment" (p.497) spanned across four months, and included interviews with the research participants, student interviews and questionnaires, videotaping of lessons, "stimulated recall" (p.503) sessions after the lessons, and personal consultations by the researcher with participants. After the intervention, through "students' ratings, self-evaluation, and analysis of videotaped lessons" (p.518), the participants gradually and consequently improved their teaching practices for example by speaking slowly or improving the clarity of the lessons by changing the organisation, and even their perception of students, therefore increasing the interest level in their lessons. As a result, their level of confidence also increased significantly.

In current literature, various works have been conducted on students' sense of belonging, for example Osterman (2000), Ahn and Davis (2020), Garcia et al. (2019) and Glass and Westmont (2014). However, the sense of belonging specifically in the case of international students was under-explored (Cena et al. 2021); and in the case of international academics, it is currently non-existent.

Following literature on students' sense of belonging suggesting it is positively and intrinsically tied to academic success, achievement and motivation, and satisfaction (Wentzel 1998; Freeman et al. 2007; Ahn and Davis 2020), to look at IAS' sense of belonging, other than looking at how well they have adapted to their new environment, we will need to delve into their sense of achievements and/or contributions; and their sense of value in the workplace.

In Kreber and Hounsell (2014), it was enlightening to find almost all the participants indicated positivity in having given something back to the local society through their research and the teaching of students. However, the authors also observed local practices tended not to be influenced much by the valuable expertise and experience brought by IAS.

Universities UK (2007) forecasted the overall proportion of non-UK born, international academics employed in UK HEIs to rise to 50% by the year 2027. Kim and Ng (2019) pointed out that the high demographic forecast signified the important role occupied by international academics in ensuring the "continuing success of UK universities" (p.95).

Yet, research (Bhopal and Jackson 2013; Kim and Ng 2019) has indicated that their background, their "diverse ethnic identity and cultural capital", and knowledge and skills as IAS were not always acknowledged or recognised. This severely impacted on their self-esteem and self-worth. Bhopal and Jackson (2013) argued that the problem stemmed from HEIs themselves not recognising or even valuing these unique background, styles, expressions, diverse ethnic identities and different cultural capital offered by IAS.

Clifford and Henderson (2011, p.109) highlighted the "lack of recognition of the previous experiences of international academic…staff" to be commonplace globally. The idea for Clifford and Henderson's research stemmed from questions raised on the degree of interaction and sharing of ideas and best practice between "local" and "international staff"; at the same time concerns were being raised on the level of integration of "international staff" within their "new professional community" (ibid). One IAS in their research pointed out – "integration was seen as the job of the immigrants, not something that the 'majority' of staff needed to put effort into" (Clifford and Henderson 2011, p.112). Guerin and Green (2016), citing multiple sources, noted that even from the perspectives of the host universities, there was no strong evidence or interest in "embracing difference and mobilizing diversity as a positive element" (p.2), despite the gains and benefit that IAS contribute.

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Shaikh (2009) concluded that despite the UK having a large HE sector, very little was being done to track the clear positive impact that IAS bring; and there was very little effort by the government to "assess the teaching and pedagogic impact that such individuals stand to offer to the students in the country" (p.23).

In some instances, research showed IAS "forgo[ing] their prior experiences, cultural heritage, and identity" (p.351) in order to fit in [Trowler and Cooper (2002) in Bailey et al. (2021)]. However, Jiang et al. (2010, p.165) observed that when an original cultural background became less significant in the process of fitting in, it was due to the fact that the institution that the participants were working in was international and within that multicultural environment, "individual differences 'stand out' less profoundly".

The key to identity change was "emotional sense of belonging" (Kaur 2019, p.456). In Jiang et al. (2010), participants spoke of using their strong sense of "disciplinary identity" to "gain entry" and to achieve "common ground" (p.163) with the group they associated themselves with. According to Henry Asei Kum (2018), "international academics are…driven by a desire to become a successful 'insider' in their profession in the new setting" (p.40). To feel like they belong, they needed to feel that they were doing well. van Lanveld (2017) proclaimed the five psychological processes in the development and maintenance of a teacher identity were "a sense of appreciation, a sense of connectedness, a sense of competence, a sense of commitment, and imagining a future career trajectory" (p.333).

Many theorists have confirmed that "the need to belong" was part of an innate human tendency to form relationships and was crucial for survival (Lambert et al. 2013, p.1418). However, "it is possible to have positive relationships, therefore satisfying the need to belong in a general sense, yet still not feel that one is fully accepted" (ibid, p.1418).

Where academics were seen to be connected globally by research (Kim 2017) and their disciplinary community of practice (Jiang et al. 2010), the situation in the teaching and learning sector may not be the same. Luxon and Peelo (2009, p.649) confirmed that though "the international nature of academe is…rooted in disciplinary communities of practice…practices surrounding teaching are local". Trowler and Cooper (2002, p.226) suggested when IAS moved to a new university, their "underlying beliefs and values" may not change; however, their “thinking, practices, and sense of self” surrounding teaching and learning go through significant readjustments out of necessity in order to fit in and be accepted within the new culture. In some cases, some may be “willing to give up particular identities” to become a “novice” or a “learner”; and if there was resistance or rejection in doing so, there would be trouble to fit into the new regime (ibid). Citing Zhou et al. (2008), Green and Myatt (2011) spoke about the potential of IAS feeling like their identity was under threat in a new teaching and learning environment where pedagogy was deeply rooted within the culture. In many cases, IAS noted their experiences from “previous teaching, learning, and research” did not surmount to any currency for their academic capital within their new environment (Bailey et al. 2021, p.360). However, through their own research, Bailey et al. (2021, p.360) found IAS were willing “to integrate and adopt the basic values” of the group, but they were not always “looking to remove all traces of their own culture and values”, thereby preferring an assimilation approach rather than a “full integration” approach “as a method of finding belonging in their new institution”. For Green and Myatt (2011), they recorded their research participants forging a new identity, “in an emerging third space”, somewhere between “home and abroad” (p.40), through time.

At times, IAS find themselves suffering from low confidence in their own ability, negatively affecting their sense of worth.

Walker (2015, p.68) made the following claim -

> *“UK professionals, including academics, tend to tolerate ambiguity and doubt: uncertainty avoidance is not common. British students similarly tend to be comfortable with open-ended discussions, are prepared to swap roles with their tutors, answer questions from peers, lead discussions and present data. Tutors are their part are generally confident in saying ‘I don’t know, it’s a very good question, let me look into that and get back to you’”*

The author used that as a precursor in highlighting that some IAS in her study feared students’ questions and lacked confidence in telling students “Let me think about that” (Walker 2015, p.68). The case for IAS may be accurate since they were the subjects of her investigation; however, Walker (ibid) had not included UK academics in her research, nor substantiated her claims with literature on UK academic behaviours. Such stereotype and assumptions could be misleading. Shaikh (2009, p.26) argued, due to differences in the discipline areas, student abilities, level of teacher training or

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perception issues, any "attempts to analyse and compare professional performance for local and immigrant tutors…are simply not viable".

Kreber and Hounsell (2014) recorded participants did start to feel confident through time; Green and Myatt (2011) echoed the same findings, revealing that although it took time, their IAS eventually started developing a deepened sense of self-worth.

2.5.3.2 Professional, social, and cultural identity

Henkel (2000) viewed "identity" as dynamic, one that required continuity because of the role it played in "personal and working lives" (p.14). Lamont and Nordberg (2014, p.7) noted individuals working in a new place or starting a new role found themselves "negotiating a balance between their occupational and personal identities".

One Chinese participant in Jiang et al. (2010) saw his professional identity intertwined with social identity and "ability" (p.164). To be "academically successful", one needed the "ability to be socially one of them, to have fun" (ibid). Enhancing or gaining a social identity – "to have fun", was key to achieving the desired academic attainment. The participant was however careful to note that obtaining the new social identity did not signify losing one's cultural identity – "It's not that you give up your originality" (ibid) – suggesting the significance for the sojourner in retaining his "original" cultural identity in the new place. Kreber and Hounsell (2014) observed when speaking to research participants that their academic identity seemed connected to their national identity.

Foote et al. (2008) confirmed, regardless of their country of origin, most overseas IAS faced "culture shock" when arriving at the new host country, which led to them experiencing "transnational hybridized identity" and struggling with "cultivating and sustaining multiple professional and personal identities" (ibid, p.172). The stresses and challenges brought about by the transition and the "competing demands" from the migration process on their professional and social lives could cause academics to question and doubt their "sense of belonging and personal significance" and affect their sense of successful "professional and personal identities" (Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010, p.297-298).

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2.5.3.3 The importance of disciplinary identity

Contrary to Kim's (2017) negative view on "academic capitalism" causing researchers to lose autonomy and depend on allocation of research funds to boost reputation, Jiang et al. (2010) found that producing quality publications and being able to secure large research grants signalled a researcher's "solid grounding within the discipline" (p.162) which was necessary for IAS to "gain entry" (p.163) to their position and secure "an immediate common ground in the host group" (p.163). Jiang et al. (2010) found their participants had strong "disciplinary identity" based on 1. a solid grounding in the academic field, and 2. their own disciplinary reputation. Due to the uniformization of the research process described by Kim (2017), a sense of international disciplinary identity was born. This strong sense of disciplinary identity disposition also helped IAS in navigating through the different local academic practices (Jiang et al. 2010), and to inform them how tasks were to be performed; and provided the standards in measuring effective performance, including patterns of publication (Becher and Trowler 2001).

Kreber and Hounsell (2014) found that research participants they spoke to related their identity strongly to their subject area, and not to their country, with some specifically identifying with their workplace.

2.5.3.4 Identity and community of practice

Ashwin (2012) noted that "identities" were central to Wenger's (1998) communities of practice (CoP).

Lave and Wenger's (1991) "***communities of practice"*** represented a space where real participation and engagement took place; at the same time the "imagination is similarly engaged and 'new images of the world and ourselves' are created" (Wenger 1998; Rossetto 2006, p.45, 176). Wenger proposed three dimensions to community involvement and sense of belonging – engagement, imagination, and alignment (Wenger 1998; Norton 2001; Rossetto 2006).

The point about CoP which was relevant to this research was that "newcomers" to the communities were seen as learners and "the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the socio-cultural practices of a community…[a] person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is

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configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a socio-cultural practice [which] includes…the learning of knowledgeable skills" (Lave and Wenger 1991; Smith 2003, 2009, p.29).

Kaur (2019) noted, "as individuals transition from a peripheral member of a community to a more central position, their identities change and adapt as they negotiate their position within the new community and in relation to their other pre-existing identities" (p.455). In this process, language plays an important role, which was "complex and fluid".

Maunder et al. (2009) regarded academic practice as subsisting within "an intellectual community" where "disciplinary communities are relatively borderless" (para.6). The authors discovered that the strong disciplinary identity that their participants related themselves with had helped in their acculturation process. UK academics, especially in research-focused institutions tended to develop their profile within an "internationalised disciplinary field" – regarded as a "community of practice" (Luxon and Peelo 2009, p.650), through research, publications and conference presentations.

In Bhopal and Jackson's (2013) study, participants also reported that "networks" were regarded as crucial to gain access to academic jobs and to gain promotion and career progression.

2.6 Self-directed professional development

In teaching and learning, teacher quality is regarded as the single most influential aspect in ensuring maximum student achievement, and teachers' proficiency and efficacy can be developed through engagement in "high-quality professional development" (Porter and Freeman 2020, p.37). Cai and Hall (2015) who explored the expectations and motivations of expatriate academic staff called for "targeted, ongoing, and collective professional development"; and that such "inclusive and sustained professional development" will open up opportunities for these expatriates to "refine and contextualize strategic priorities and build corporate identity" (p.220). Citing Coldwell (2017, p.189), Wittmann and Olivier (2019) broadly defined teacher professional development as "formal and informal support and activities that are designed to help teachers develop as professionals" and these include "coaching, mentoring, self-study and action research" (p.125). Professional development in teachers is also associated with many other concepts including teacher development, staff development or Continuing Professional Development, also known as CPD (Adu and Okeke 2014). Adu and Okeke suggested a variety of definitions to what CPD meant although it generally referred to "on-going education and training for the professions" (cited from Earley and Bubbs 2004); it may involve relevant learning activities both formally or informally and self-directed. Lecturer's engagement and participation in CPD is crucial as such initiatives can help enhance their "beliefs in their power to make a difference" (Adu and Okeke 2014, p.271).

Quoting multiple sources (Hargreaves and M.G. 1992; Marczely 1996; Wilson and Berne 1999), Porter and Freeman (2020) claimed that "conventional professional activities" with typical "top-down planned, one-size-fits-all approaches" usually do not "result in the professional growth that the participating educators seek"; and these forms of development initiatives are often regarded to be "inadequate" and did not bring "significant change" (p.36). Previous research (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1999; Kwakman 2003) has shown where professional development initiatives for teachers are concerned, these "centrally directed professional development initiatives" can create the mismatch between "continuing professional development (CPD) inputs", which are the proposed teacher learning activities and the "outputs", which are the acquired knowledge followed by changed classroom practices by the learner (Mushayikwa and Lubben 2009, p.376).

The use of self-directed learning method can help to reduce such a mismatch (ibid). The role of self-direction in learning was found to be pivotal in influencing the likelihood for teachers to adopt new innovations in their teaching practice (Mushayikwa and Lubben 2009), and in sustaining continuing professional education (Brockett 2009; Porter and Freeman 2020). Highlighted within the field of adult learning theory, an important aspect of "adultness" (p.38) in relation to learning is their need and aptitude to be self-directing, which conventional professional development initiatives often fail to acknowledge in their designs (Porter and Freeman 2020).

According to Morris and Rohs (2021, p.1), in the 21st century where increasingly "change and uncertainty" feature more and more in "rapidly and constantly changing work

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conditions” (cited from Cranton 1992; Bolhuis and Voeten 2001; Abele and Wiese 2008), learning skills, in particular self-directed learning (SDL) is a “fundamental competence” in order for people to thrive. Having been researched since the 1970s (Knowles 1970; Tough 1971; Knowles 1975), the concept of “self-directed learning” is multifaceted and as Loeng (2020) advised, should not be understood from a single perspective. One definition of SDL offered by Morris and Rohs (2021, p.1) was “a meta-competence that affords a person to learn new knowledge, skills, and competences on a continual and lifelong basis” (in Morris and König 2021); and SDL competence (Morris and Rohs 2021, p.1) refers to one’s “ability to pursue SDL with success and efficiency: to proficiently direct one’s own learning means and objectives in order to meet definable personal goals” (cited from Morris 2019, p.302).

SDL can be interpretated in many ways and can take many forms (Wittmann and Olivier 2019). Some of the more notable self-directed learning models included Long’s (1989), Candy’s (1991), Brockett and Hiemstra’s (1991), Garrison’s (1997), and Oswalt’s (2003) which won’t be discussed in detail due to space constraints. However, one possible dimension of SDL that relates to this current research was Candy’s self-direct learning model (Candy 1991) where the content and presentation of content to a SDL was more situated and more controlled, rather than being determined by the learner (Loeng 2020); and the facilitator had control over the content and presentation of the content. On the other end of the spectrum on Candy’s model also consisted of the learner making their own decisions about the learning activities and outcomes, demonstrating its versatility.

Ultimately, what drives self-directed learning, is the learner’s embedded quality of “the will to learn”, which has been described by van Eekelen et al. (2006, p.408) as “having the ambition to discover new practices, being open to experiences and other people, being proactive, attribution of success and failure in terms of internal causes, question-asking after performance, undertaking action to learn, and recognition of learning processes and results” (Mushayikwa and Lubben 2009).

Drawing from a variety of sources including Knowles (1975), Guglielmino (1978), Patterson et al. (2002), Thornton (2010), and Warburton and Volet (2012), Wittmann and Olivier (2019) produced a compilation of the typical self-directed learner characteristics, skills, and attributes. Some of these key attributes included: “taking

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initiative in making use of their resources", "independence", "strong desire to learn or change", "tolerance of ambiguity", "positive orientation to the future", "reflection", "joy in learning", "creativity" (Wittmann and Olivier 2019, p.134-135), and etc. All these traits and attributes pointed to participants taking "responsibility for their own learning" (ibid, p.135). Citing various sources, van Woezik et al. (2021, p.591) summarised in the paragraph below some of the characteristics and behaviours that would affect the positive experience and outcome from engagement with a SDL project.

> *"Affect can have a positive influence on SDL when it involves interest or excitement, as well as negative influence in case of negative feelings such as anxiety (Brookfield 1995; Meyer and Turner 2002; Redwood et al. 2010). Second, openness in terms of being open to experience, having a growth mindset, and being creative is shown to be important to stimulate critical thinking and self-evaluation which are needed for SDL (Mercer 2011). Lastly, motivation in terms of intrinsic motivation is important for setting learning goals, which, as mentioned above, is key for SDL (Abd-El-Fattah 2010; Stockdale and Brockett 2011)"*

One key external driver to the successful execution and uptake of any SDL programme is being easily and conveniently accessible, especially for professionals who juggle multiple responsibilities, tasks and workload on an on-going basis, alongside the need to keep "up-to-date with knowledge, skills, and competence" (Morris and Rohs 2021, p.6). However, what the researchers found was that although easily accessible and available, some adult learners simply do not hold the "necessary inquiry skills to successfully undertake SLD" (p.7). Citing Cooper (2018), Morris and Rohs highlighted it is practical not to make the assumption that all adult learners would have "fostered the necessary competence to undertake a SDL project without the presence of an educator" (p.7). To successfully engage with a SDL project, Roberson et al. (2021) noted that the learner must have good management and control skills, which involved the reflection of process, and high motivation level.

Where the new environment expects and requires IAS to be tenacious and resilient, faced with multiple challenges as previously illustrated, such adversities could propel IAS to adopt self-directed professional development – as noted by Mushayikwa and Lubben (2009), "when teachers are fighting for professional survival, they tend to become tenacious in their bid to improve themselves" (p.381). Citing Steyn (2010, p.539), Abu and Okeke stressed that "there is wide-spread agreement that [continuing] professional development is the best possible answer to meet complex challenges and benefit the individual and the school system" (p.272).

Engagement in self-directed professional development for IAS was contingent on external factors like being in a positive and supportive environment, culture, and having manageable workload. As Chung (2018, p.58), a new lecturer to a post-1992 UK HEI had noted, heavy teaching loads, combined with large student numbers, marking, tutorials, pastoral care, and research, were all challenges and "tensions" which made it extremely difficult for "anyone in such a role" to excel in any of the fields, due to not having the time and energy to engage in forms of professional or personal development.

Wittmann and Olivier (2019) highlighted the study of professional development of teachers was an area which has not been intensively researched in the past; Adu and Okeke (2014) highlighted the lack of attention on the "examination of…lecturers' perspectives on factors affecting their active participation" (p.272) in CPD. Although the personal narratives of Yeh (2018) and Henry Asei Kum (2018) have uncovered personal efforts made in further improving themselves, to date, research exploring IAS' professional development initiatives, especially the role of self-direction in such initiatives has remained under-studied. Given the highly complex and unpredictable nature of the adjustment processes that some IAS go through, the role and implications and the processes involving international academics' professional development attempts and initiatives are worth exploring. This also echoes Yeh's (2018) view of the importance in understanding "foreign academics' professional development", considering the influx of non-UK academics to UK Universities each year.

2.7 Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015)

2.7.1 Norton's notion of "Investment", identity, and power (Bourdieu)

Norton's (then Peirce 1995) introduction of the "notion of investment" in the 1990s was a pivotal turning point in the study of second language acquisition (SLA) and its theories, which "was still beginning to emerge from its predominantly cognitive and psychological orientation to examine how social factors facilitated or inhibited language learning" [Firth and Wagner (1997) cited by Darvin (2019, p.245)]. The concept was introduced at a time when "issues of inequity and marginalization were emerging in multicultural societies transformed by rapid globalization and large-scale migration" (Darvin and Norton 2021, p.1). Most importantly, Norton felt the urgency in developing social theories which were "complementary to cognitive and psychology theories, which would capture the complexity of language learning, and respond to the issues of the emerging socio-political landscape" (Darvin 2019, p.245).

In theorising identity in the context of language, researchers were particularly interested in the poststructuralist theories (Norton and Toohey 2002, 2011; Jou 2013). Of interest to this study were the feminist poststructuralist theories. Norton and Pavlenko (2004, p.53), after reviewing various literature and approaches to feminist poststructuralism, defined the common parameters shared by this paradigm:

a. *to understand the relationship between power and knowledge;*
b. *to theorize the role of language production and reproduction of power, difference, and symbolic domination; and*
c. *to deconstruct master narratives that oppress certain groups – be it immigrants, women, or minority members – and devalue their linguistic practices.*

Weedon (1987), a feminist poststructuralist theorist believed in the "subjectivity" of language and identity, and its links to individual experience and social power. Weedon (1987, p.21) stated this – "Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organisation and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed". Norton (then Peirce 1995) argued that "social identity is multiple and contradictory" (p.15) and was structured by the individual's position and power within the "social sites" (ibid). The significance behind Weedon's (1987) theory was "it highlights the changing quality of a person's social identity…[and] that it opens up subjectivity to change" [(cited in Norton (then Peirce 1995, p.15)]. Weedon (1987) asserted that the individual could become the "subject of a set of relationships", therefore be in a position of power; or at the same time be "the subject to a set of relationships", which resulted in a position of reduced power (ibid).

This poststructuralist theory of "subjectivity" was based on these characteristics – "the multiple, nonunitary nature of the subject; subjectivity as a site of struggle; and subjectivity as changing over time" [Norton (then Peirce) 1995, p.15]. Putting these

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characteristics into context, the construction and reconstruction of identity, was seen as "always in process, a site of struggle between competing discourses in which the subject plays an active role" (McKinney and Norton 2008, p.194). Weedon's subjectivity theories placed greater importance on human agency (Norton 1997) and it proposed the multi-dimensional, inter-changeability and constant struggle for identity and sense of self through different contexts and discourse; in contrast with Bourdieu's notion where he saw the relationship between language and identity as robust and not easily intervened (Swenddal Unknown).

The contribution of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the scientific study of human society and social relationships has been significant (Sullivan 2002; Truong and Weill 2012; Walther 2014). Bourdieu's notion of "capital" and "symbolic power" were relevant in the study of language and identity (Bourdieu 1991; Norton 1997). Central to his work on educational sociology, was the idea that different forms of capital existed –

- *economic capital – i.e material wealth in the form of money, stocks, shares, property, etc*
- *cultural capital – i.e knowledge, skills and other cultural acquisitions, as exemplified by educational or technical qualifications*
- *symbolic capital – i.e. accumulated prestige or honour*

-Bourdieu (1991, p.14)

Bourdieu (1991) saw language as "symbolic capital" and also as the agent where social organisation and power took place (cited in Norton and Pavlenko 2004, p.54). Bourdieu (1977b, p.75) argued for linguistic competence to include "the right to speak" or "the power to impose reception" (in Norton 1997, p.411).

> *"… at the level of relations between groups, a language is worth what those who speak it are worth, so too, at the level of interactions between individuals, speech always owes a major part of its value to the value of the person who utters it."*

-[Bourdieu (1977b) cited in Norton (2000)]

Bourdieu saw the relationships between "interlocutors" as often being unequal and he stressed the "importance of power in structuring speech" (McKinney and Norton 2008, p.193).

Based on Weedon's (1987) theories of subjectivity and inspired by Bourdieu (1991), Norton (then Peirce 1995) introduced the idea of "investment" [in a target language] as having an effect on the process in which the language learner could construct and reconstruct her social identity, through "time and space" (Norton 1997, p.411). The notion of investment saw the "language learner…as having a complex social history and multiple desires" [Norton (then Peirce) 1995, p.9]. Norton explained that "it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to – or is denied access to – powerful social networks" [Norton (then Peirce) 1995, p.13]. Learners who invest in improving in a second language understood that through this investment, the possible return would include the acquisition of a wide range of "symbolic and material resources" (McKinney and Norton 2008, p.195), which will result in the increased value of their "cultural capital" (ibid), and subsequently, prompting learners to reassess their sense of self and desires for the future (ibid). This assumption could be made – "an investment in the target language is also an investment in the learners' own identity" (Ushioda and Dornyei 2009, p.4).

In collaboration with other researchers, Norton highlighted and demonstrated the importance of understanding the relationship between language, power, subjectivity, and identity, in relation to "investment". Since Norton first introduced the notion of investment (then Peirce 1995), a variety of literature had continuously been published either by Norton herself, or in conjunction with other researchers (Norton 2000, 2001; Norton and Toohey 2002; Kanno and Norton 2003; Norton and Pavlenko 2004; Norton and Toohey 2004; Pavlenko and Norton 2007; McKinney and Norton 2008; Norton and Gao 2008; Norton and McKinney 2011; Norton and Toohey 2011; Norton 2013a; Norton 2013b; Norton 2014; Darvin and Norton 2015).

Luxon and Peelo (2009) and Sliwa and Johansson (2013) were particularly relevant to this research as they based their discussions around Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus, capital and power, one of the founding concepts of Norton's (1997) notion. Sliwa and Johansson (2013, p.81) confirmed that "an important aspect of the academic's ability to conform to the rules of the game" was the use of language, specifically the English language, in this case.

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Luxon and Peelo (2009) stressed that IAS had developed their habitus "within another culture" (p.652) – the disposition formed may not necessarily "fit" the new field. In a context where "field" constituted the teaching and learning environment and the players included the international academic, their students and fellow colleagues, the assumption made was that this phenomenon rendered the students and fellow colleagues who might not necessarily be native but shared similar education background and experience, the dominant players who were familiar with the rules of the game and who might have even set some of the rules themselves. Sliwa and Johansson (2013, p.80) explained –

> *"Within each social field, the most valuable combination of these three basic types of capital [economic, social and cultural] will be recognised as socially legitimate symbolic capital. The positions of actors in the field are unequal: those who have attained the highest levels of symbolic capital…are advantaged and powerful."*

The effective use of the dominant language by a "non-native English speaking academic", not only impacted positively on the person's capacity and capabilities for their professional duties, but also helped construct his or her identity to allow the enactment of the desirable habitus (Sliwa and Johansson 2013).

Another study which relates to this research was by Bonder (2017) on examining language use, attitudes and investment in learning among low-income Latino Immigrant Entrepreneurs. It was one of the few studies based on Norton's notion of investment in a non-classroom-based setting. Bonder (2017) noted, Norton's notion of investment found in previous studies has so far been "connected to classrooms" (p.371) and involved "some level of participant investment in formal education"; similar to Bonder, what this current research is trying to achieve is to conceptualise Norton's notion of investment outside of formal language learning context where English was both a "conscious by-product" (Bonder 2017, p.384) or a "subconscious by-product" (ibid) of participants' professional and academic identities.

Bonder (2017) portrayed her target population as "societally disadvantaged and in need of assistance to overcome systemic discrimination" (p.372). Aligned with this research, Bonder's research "originated with the belief that personal agency, individual experience, sociocultural constraints, and relative power positions all play important

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roles in identity development" (p.372). Since people primarily express and construct their identities through language (cited from Bucholtz & Hall 2004), Bonder (2017) explained that "the study of language learning investment can provide insight into the links between language on the one hand and identity factors such as personal agency and societal power on the other" (p.372).

Norton's notion of investment though widely cited and used, was not without criticisms. Canagarajah (1996, p.328) criticised and called into question the effectiveness of the "construction of the research report in the traditional genre with an unobtrusive author". Canagarajah (1996) felt that Norton/Peirce had failed to demonstrate how the research and its notion had reflected or impacted on herself as the researcher due to the lack of (an account of the) interactions with the subjects. As "identity negotiations" was at the heart of Norton's research, Canagarajah (1996) felt that the research report would have benefited from more involvement of the researcher with the subjects and greater perspectives and reflections of these experiences from the researcher as part of the report.

Price (1996) acknowledged that Norton/Peirce had contributed new insights and knowledge into the effect that power relations had on language use and learning through her argument. However, Price (1996) was of the opinion that Peirce/Norton's research and account of the immigrant women in Canada had not accorded her with sufficient concrete and solid evidence, demonstrating a weak link between her argument and evidence of investment [in a target language] and subjectivity of identity.

Kim's (2010b, p.7) criticism echoed that of Price (1996) and she accused Norton's research of producing the "upward reductionism" syndrome by not fully capturing the "complex realities of L2 learners".

2.7.2 Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015), imagined community, and community of practice

Two decades after the notion was introduced, "in response to the demands of the new world order", Darvin and Norton (2015, p.36) proposed a comprehensive Model of Investment which incorporated three main intersections – ideology, capital, and identity, with **INVESTMENT** located in the centre of the intersections.

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Figure 1. Darvin and Norton's 2015 Model of Investment

To put the Model of Investment into practice, Darvin and Norton proposed a series of questions around investment and the most relevant to the context of this research are the following –

- What do learners perceive as benefits of investment, and how can the capital they possess serve as affordances for learning?
- What systemic patterns of control make it difficult to invest and acquire certain capital? How have prevailing ideologies structured learners' habitus and predisposed them to certain ways of thinking?

Most importantly, Darvin and Norton hoped to achieve the following –

> *"By raising questions about their own ways of thinking of the status quo, it seeks to enable more opportunities for reflexivity and dissent, so that learners may not only participate in but also transform the multiple spaces of their life worlds"*
>
> -Darvin and Norton (2015, p.47)

The key points drawn from Darvin and Norton's (2015) model proposed that through "desire and imagination" the subjects were willing and able to "invest in practices that can transform their lives". Further, "the desire to be part of an imagined community or

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to take on an imagined identity" pushed subjects to invest to gain better "positioning" (of identity) or to invest in their capital to resist the "systemic patterns of control" governed by their existing capital. "Recognising that they have the agency to assert their own identities, learners are able to negotiate symbolic capital, reframe relations of power and challenge normative ways to thinking, in order to claim the right to speak" (Darvin and Norton, p.47).

The "imagined communities" concept was first introduced by Benedict Anderson (Anderson 1991; Rossetto 2006). Anderson argued that "the nation is imagined because the members will never know most of their fellow members [and] yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1991, p.6; Rossetto 2006). At the same time, the nation is a "community because, regardless of the actual inequality…the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1991, p.7; Rossetto 2006). Norton's idea of "imagined community" was built on Lave and Wenger's (1991; 1998) communities of practice framework (Kanno and Norton 2003, p.242).

A defining attribute of academics' identities was their sense of "membership of, and allegiance to, their discipline and disciplinary communities – by which is meant strong, stable and separate epistemological and methodological assemblages" (Lea and Stierer 2011, p.608). In the context of this research, the "imagined community" concept proposed by Darvin and Norton (2015) may prove difficult due to the intense pressures, competitions and challenges faced by academics; on the other hand, it may serve as a drive factor, for IAS to become strong and legitimate members of a highly revered and desired group. Norton herself asserted – as identity is fluid, multiple and a site of struggle, how learners are able to invest in a target language is contingent of the dynamic negotiation of power in different fields, and thus "investment is complex, contradictory, and in a state of flux" [Norton (then Peirce) 1995 and 2013b cited in Darvin and Norton (2015, p.20)].

2.7.3 IAS psychological constructs of self, sense of agency and legitimacy and ideologies in the context of Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015)

Darvin and Norton (2021) highlighted that whilst motivation was a "psychological construct that focuses on conscious and unconscious factors, investment is primarily

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sociological and focuses on how histories, lived experiences and social practices shape language learning" (p.1).

As the premise of this research is to understand the experiences of IAS in their teaching and work environments in the UK, and the identity/ies they construct in these environments, there is a crucial need, within the context of this research, to first of all, understand the experiences of IAS in terms of the psychological constructs of their sense of self, motivation, self-esteem, personality and confidence.

Additionally, through the implementation of the Development Toolkit as intervention to capture IAS' initiatives and commitment to further develop and improve themselves and their practices in the target language, the use of the Model of Investment to critically examine how dominant ideologies, patterns of control, uneven access to capital and stationing influence and frame their sense of agency and legitimacy in these environments can then be possible.

The understanding of the relationship between these two distinctive lenses is crucial, as this demonstrates the correlation between how these psychological states, ie their identity, their sense of self, motivation, confidence etc., can be shaped or constructed based on existing dominant practices (*positioning*), institutional constraints and control by those in power (*systemic patterns of control*), as proposed by Darvin and Norton (2015) in the Model of Investment. As further clarified by Darvin and Norton (2021), "while identity categories of race, ethnicity, gender, social class and sexual orientation provide us with the language to think about the learner and the subject positions she or he occupies, investment is the means through which we can dissect the social world where the learner performs multiple identities" (p.3). Moreover, "investment as a sociological construct" also enables the recognition of "learner 'inequalities'" (ibid, p.7) through the exploration of the function of power "in contexts of language learning" (ibid, p.7) and that "it is through an interrogation of ideology that one can examine more closely how power manifests itself materially in the practices of a classroom, workplace, or community" (Darvin and Norton 2015, p.42).

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In this context, "ideology" can be best defined as "'systems of belief or thought which maintain asymmetrical power relations and inequalities between social groups'" [(Wetherall et al. (1987) cited in Sung (2022)].

It would be logical, to examine the broader ideology or ideologies that the IAS might find themselves operating within so that "the dynamics of power" (Darvin and Norton 2015, p.43) within the communicative events encountered by the IAS can be dissected; the "structures of power" that can prevent the entry of IAS into "specific spaces where these events occur" (Darvin and Norton 2015, p.43) can also be examined, as proposed in Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment.

2.7.3.1 Gender ideology, language learning and practices

Previous literature on examining the role of gender in second language learning, motivation and attainment found that female language learners tended to be highly motivated multilinguals due to "their perception of multilingualism as emancipatory given that multilingual abilities may be perceived by female learners as an asset which provides them with opportunities of multicultural interactions, travel and education." (Sung 2022, p.1). This view from the language learning motivation perspective was thought to have over-generalised gender differences in relation to "L2 learning motivations and attainments" (Sung 2022, p.1).

Through a sociocultural lens however, L2 learning becomes a "socio-historically situated process where male and female learners actively engage in 'constructing the terms and conditions of their own learning' [Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001, p.145) cited in Sung (2022, p.2), and simultaneously enacting their social identities through their L2 use, including gender identities" (Sung 2022, p.2), signalling the complex relationship between gender and L2 learning and practices. The sociocultural approach to studying gender and L2 learning allows for a "richer and more nuanced understanding" (ibid) of the relationship between the two elements, especially across "different communities and contexts" [Davis and Skilton-Sylvester (2004) cited in Sung (2022, p.2)].

The sociocultural perspective on looking at gender and L2 learning also led to questions such as "what conflicting gender ideologies and discourses are at work in a particular society?" (Sung 2022, p.2) or "how are they reflected in language ideologies and

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linguistic practices?" [Pavlenko (2001, p.142) cited in Sung (2022, p.2)] in examining the role that gender identities and gender ideologies play in influencing L2 learning practices.

Implications from recent broader gender studies suggest that this dichotomy is potentially fraud with inequality, discrimination and under-representation of the female gender, in the context of the gender ideology inherent in UK HEIs as illustrated in previous sections of this chapter.

Despite widespread efforts and awareness campaigns, especially in HEI context, "there is continued dominance of privileged white male voices, patriarchal frameworks and languages [Bhambra et al. (2018); Bhopal (2020b) cited in Morris et al. (2022)] and that women in HE environment often perceive themselves as being subordinately positioned to men (Woodfield 2019).

Morris et al. (2022, p.103) noted that in recent years, "expressions of hatred including racism, sexism, misogyny, transphobia and islamophobia are rife, with hate crime on the rise, including in university environments" [cited from Kayali and Walters (2019)] and that "emboldened expressions of racism and sexism" (Morris et al. (2022, p.104) were impacting directly and negatively on staff.

A survey conducted by Woodfield (2019) on 333 students studying for degrees in the UK HEIs revealed that "male participants were more likely to position women as having a weaker commitment to paid work, female participants' commentary made reference to anticipated unequal treatment within the occupational sphere" (p.28). The same perception seems to be mirrored at the academic level where there appears to be a pre-conceived and yet tacit set of understanding of "what constitutes an academic career" [Bagilhole and Goode (2001) in Johansson and Sliwa (2014, p.23)] which apparently women were purportedly "not suited for", or committed to [Currie et al. (2000) cited in Johansson and Sliwa (2014, p.23)]. Howson et al. (2018) also highlighted from other research (Maliniak et al. 2013; Mervis 2012; Lerback and Hanson 2017) the reality that women's work is constantly being downplayed and "downgraded" (p.545). Further, Bhopal and Jackson's (2013) report also exposed the opinion that the work of "White academics, and White male academics in particular" was more recognised and acknowledged in institutions.

It is no wonder that women in academia sometimes find themselves in such a position as explained by Dr Camille Kandiko Howson who wrote a blogpost for WonkHE (Howson 2016) – women academics especially of East Asian heritage "struggled with communicating their success" (ibid, para.3) and that they tended to under sell their achievements. Howson et al. (2018, p.544) explained that this resonated with other similar research who found that "a reluctance to engage in self-promotional activities can be cultural" (cited from Scharff 2015).

At this point, it is also prudent to highlight again the frustration voiced by Rose in Archer (2008) –

> "*There has always been a bearded, middle class, white, middle aged man, as director of every research organisation I have ever worked in, despite the majority of the staff being female. And when those women do crack the glass ceiling they never quite make it to the top.*
>
> -Rose (Archer 2008, p.394)

It is within this white, male-dominated gender ideology that the IAS in the UK HEI and in the current study will likely find themselves negotiating themselves in; one which confines them to a place of unequal position, where their sense of place in society and their position, their agency or affordances are shaped by this dominant ideology.

2.7.3.2 Native-speakerism and language ideology

Within the context of their research, Ferri and Magne (2021), inspired by Piller (2015), defined "language ideology" to be "a set of socially shared beliefs, notions, and feelings about language" (p.231).

Referring to Bourdieu (1991), Sliwa and Johanssen (2013) contested that "the official language of a linguistic community constitutes the theoretical norm" (p.81) and that it is a benchmark used to measure the language usage by individuals from "various class or ethnic backgrounds" (p.81). Converting this idea into the context of this study, we consider the ways in which IAS in UK HEIs conduct and convey themselves in the English language as constantly being compared to the standard norms and practices that are expected of the official language used in a UK HEI, which is English. Ferri and Magne (2021), in reference to Hodgson 2014, also noted how native speakers of “one of the variants of the inner circle”, for example US, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (cited from Kachru 1996) had the tendency to be “valorise[d]” for their “linguistic superiority” (p.229).

Kramsch (1997) described “native speakership” as including the “acceptance by the [dominant] group that created the distinction between native and nonnative speakers” [Kramsch (1997, p.363) cited by Kim (2017, p.82)], and that this “closed and self-delineated community” felt the sense of entitlement to “exclude speakers with nonnative accents” (ibid).

In the context of the UK HEI environment, the language ideology which the non-native English-speaking IAS in this current study may find themselves operating in, is one that assumes and adopts the “common-sense notion that L1 speakers are stakeholders of a language who have ‘special control’ and ‘insider knowledge about *their* language’” [Davies (2013, p.1) cited by Ferri and Magne (2021, p.232)]. Referring to Benzie (2010) and Lindemann (2017), Ferri and Magne (2021) put forth the “belief that L1 speakers embody a superior norm that represents an ideal model for language learners” and which also created a “standard and monolingual ideology which relegates Lx and nonstandard speech to a deficit model” (p.232).

Kim (2017), supported by various relevant literature (Amin 1997, 1999; Brutt-Griffler and Samimy 1999), argued that many non-native English-speaking teachers felt “disempowered by students and parents who regard only NESs [native English speakers] as *authentic* English teachers”, and that non-native English-speaking teachers were “constantly compared unfavorably with native English-speaking teachers (NESTs)” (p.82). Although this claim was made more specifically in the context of English language teaching, judging from the negative challenges and experiences IAS have encountered and the concerns and anxieties expressed with regards to their accents and pronunciation as highlighted in previous sections of this chapter, the same phenomenon can be inferred in the context of general classroom teaching in the UK HEI context, and that the IAS operating in the UK HEI environments may experience a similar sense of disempowerment as suggested by Kim (2017).

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2.7.3.3 Neoliberal ideology

Previous sections of this chapter have discussed extensively the internationalisation of HE movement in the UK and the neoliberal ideology and concepts which propelled and fuelled this movement not just in the UK but globally.

As the HE sector became a more and more heavily marketised "commodity" (Tilak 2005; Connell 2013; Matthews 2014; Naidoo 2017; Robson and Wihlborg 2019), the emergence of "global university rankings" (Hazelkorn 2008; Chan et al. 2016; Hauptman Komotar 2019, p.299), such as the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE), or national league tables (Goglio 2016) followed suit.

As Howson et al. (2018) contested, "what 'counts' in higher education in terms of academic career had become more and more tied to metrics and indicators (p.544). The "neoliberal governmentality of the university" (Skea 2021, p.399) moulded and defined "academic subjectivities" (ibid) with academics placed under intense pressure as they were propelled into the performative culture "to produce measurable outputs and demonstrate their impact" (ibid). Referencing Ball (2012), Howson et al. (2021) lamented the fact that academics were increasingly being turned into "entrepreneurs" and being expected to "measure and prove their progress against varying goals" (p.540).

In a blog post for WonkHE, Howson (2016) also described how in a heavily marketized discourse, academics now needed to "sell" themselves, their "brand" and their "work" (para.3) and that many female academics fundamentally struggled with broadcasting their success, especially women of East Asian heritage.

Mintz (2021) also contested that neoliberalism was the "dominant ideology" (para.2) which created the "student as consumer" phenomenon, an after-effect of the marketisation of HE.

In the neoliberal higher education landscape in the UK, prospective and current students seemingly hold the power with the National Student Survey (NSS) having a profound impact on staff in UK HEIs as results from the survey were published and compiled to become the university league tables, which then fed into the Teaching Excellence and

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Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) to determine the prestige of the institution. Out of necessity, this propelled universities and colleges in the UK to be more “responsive to student needs” and to place importance on “high quality teaching and pedagogy” (Office for Students 2020b, p.8).

In a UK HEI where neoliberal ideology is at play, one can expect not just IAS but all academic staff to find themselves unwittingly operating in an environment which places high importance on performative measures and metrics such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (Skea 2021, p.404); where publications and research collaborations and funding are key currencies (Skea 2021); and an environment where academics strive their best to keep their customers (students) happy as the result from student satisfaction survey is used to measure excellence in teaching. This kind of environment inevitably creates competitive, “neoliberal subjects” (Skea 2021, p.404) who are ultimately “reduced to competing against each other” (Skea 2021, p.407) in what Archer (2008) has described as a “contested territory that entails constant struggles” (p.386).

2.8 Research gap

I have demonstrated that under the changing context of the UK HE sectors due to globalisation, internationalisation and marketisation of HE, the life and professional role of an academic can be complex, pressurised, and demanding. The experience of IAS to new HEIs could be compounded by factors such as issues with acculturation; language; students’ behaviour; and/or gender and race. The academic and professional identities construction is multifaceted with “disciplinary identity” and “community of practice” at the core; critical self-reflection is regarded as one of the key skills in identity construction and transformation for an academic.

Previous literature has captured the challenges faced by the IAS community; however, their reconstruction of identity/ies, their resilience and coping strategies or any efforts made in seeking support or engaging in further professional development initiatives, remained under-explored.

Based on Bourdieu’s concepts of “habitus”, “field” and “capital” (1991), and incorporating Lave and Wenger’s (1991) “community of practice”, Darvin and Norton

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(2015) proposed the Model of Investment with “ideology”, “identity” and capital” centred around “investment” – with the positive reconstruction of identity through “time and space” made possible through investment by a subject, prompted by “desire and imagination”.

2.8.1 Lack of research

The literature review exposed the lack of research conducted on the experience of IAS. Other similar studies though valuable, were small-scaled and limited in scope, with various research groups urging for more research to be conducted on this subject to better understand the changing nature of the academic profession (Luxon and Peelo 2009; Jiang et al. 2010; Walker 2015; Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020; Bailey et al. 2021). So far, no literature has linked IAS challenges with the possible positive reconstruction of identity; or has suggested the use of a Development Toolkit as resources for self-directed learning for professional development.

2.8.2 Language and professional development

Issues with language could impact on pedagogy and teaching style. Luxon and Peelo (2009) and Hsieh (2012) discovered that the fundamental issue did not necessarily stem from linguistic incompetence but rather a lack of understanding of cultural difference surrounding “local teaching practices” (p.657) and background. Luxon and Peelo (2009) suggested that “language courses were not necessarily the best means of assisting newly arrived staff” and that “tutorial support tailored to individual language…needs” might be more effective instead (ibid). Hsieh (2012) commented, to help IAS improve, “on-going tailored language support and cultural courses “ (p.380) should be suggested. Apart from Luxon and Peelo’s proposed English course to non-UK staff as part of their study, no other research has so far attempted to explore or propose a form or forms of professional development initiatives to IAS, with an aim to help them improve in their target language.

On the other hand, academics are expected and regarded as competent professionals who do not need support (Luxon and Peelo 2009). Pherali (2012) cautioned, any recommendation of institutional support to IAS could be misconstrued as suggesting a level of professional incompetence, a strong indicator that such initiatives should be

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treated with sensitivity and care. This makes proposals and suggestions for professional development opportunities targeted at IAS more challenging and riskier.

2.8.3 Model of Investment

Norton, and in collaboration with others, has researched into immigrant women in Canada [Norton (then Peirce) 1995]; mainland Chinese research students in a Hong Kong university (Norton and Gao 2008); a Japanese teenager growing up in English speaking countries (Kanno and Norton 2003); secondary school students in Uganda (Norton and Williams 2012); and secondary school teachers of English from Uganda with direct and active involvement from herself as the researcher (Norton and Early 2011), and much more. So far, no similar research has been done in the context of IAS and in exploring the reconstruction of identity, using the Model of Investment.

To put this notion into the context of this research, it is proposed that IAS to foreign HEIs, through conscious efforts and practices in the use of the native language to enhance their teaching and learning pedagogies and approaches, inspired by their desires and possibilities for the future, are able to positively reconstruct and improve their identity/ies and positioning in their surroundings and subsequently, alter their experience as an IAS by enabling them to gain entry to their imagined CoP.

The notion of "investment" will be utilised in the context of this study. In an email correspondence with Professor Norton herself, she reiterated the heuristic nature of "investment" in her model. No study has yet used this notion in practice and in the context of analysing the social phenomena of IAS. Therefore, after understanding the experiences of IAS in their teaching and work environments and their psychological concepts of sense of self, motivation and confidence, the research then proposes an online Development Toolkit (DT) self-directed learning to be engaged by IAS within their practice. The use of critical self-reflection will be key in IAS gaining benefits from the DT. Through the implementation of the DT, the researcher is then able to use the analytical construct of the notion of "investment" to explore and uncover how IAS' dominant ideologies, patterns of control, unequal access to capital and positioning influence and shape their sense of agency and legitimacy, with suggestion or evidence of positive reconstruction of the participants' identity "through time and space" (Norton 1997, p.411) documented.

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Chapter 3 Knowledge and Methodology

Introduction to chapter

This chapter addresses the methodological principles underpinning the techniques and processes of inquiry for this research. It begins with the research questions being presented again to highlight the aims and objectives; then the ontological and epistemological position will be explored, and this will lead to examining the rationale and suitability of the research methodology; its limitation and considerations of other approaches. The role (and responsibility) of the researcher will be scrutinised; the significance of researcher reflexivity will be explored in relation to the processes of choosing the appropriate methodology to the actual stage of data collection.

Details of the data collection methodology and phases, its design and sampling, recruitment strategy, and ethics will be presented; this is then followed by the data analysis approach and rationale.

In this chapter, readers will come across short excerpts, thoughts and anecdotes extracted from the "Researcher Reflection Log" (RRL hereafter)(Please see Appendix C for a snapshot of the RRL). The RRL records notes, key points and reflections throughout the data collection and analysis processes and is important as it gives the researcher space and time to reflect and learn to guide the next steps, and it helps to aid retention (Powell et al. 2017); it also became invaluable in the reflective thought-processes in writing up this chapter.

3.1 Research Questions

In essence, the lived experiences of IAS in their teaching and work environments will be explored, including their sense of self, identity/ies, coping strategies and/or any development initiatives; and "investment" in relation to the participants' positive reconstruction of "identity" changing through "time and space" (Norton 1997) will be framed within Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015). The following research questions are proposed:

1. *What are the experiences of IAS in their teaching and work environments in the UK, and how do they define their sense of self and identity/ies in these environments?*

2. *What are the coping strategies developed to overcome negative encounters and challenges; to what extent do IAS dedicate time and effort or seek additional support in further developing themselves?*

3. *How do academics make sense of a proposed online Development Toolkit (DT) as resources for self-directed learning to improve their teaching practices? To what extent can the interplay between IAS' development initiatives in the DT and/or development initiatives in general be framed around Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment with regards to the positive reconstruction of identity?*

3.2 Ontology and epistemology

The social reality of this research is "the product of individual consciousness [and] cognition" (Cohen et al. 2007, p.7), and "the result of human thought as expressed through language" (Wellington et al. 2005, p.100). The ontological perspective underpinning this research inquiry is that society or the world at large is not a separate entity, and it does not exist on its own, in a vacuum. This study requires my research participants to carry out certain "rituals" and it expects them to have to interact with their peers and their students, within their consistently and constantly evolving environments, to create that experience. The knowledge and experience created in this reality is "experiential, personal and subjective" (Jackson 2013, p.52).

Burrell and Morgan's (1979) "anti-positivism" believed that knowledge of the social world is "relativistic" – formed by the perception, consideration and point of view of its inhabitants; it is a subjective view which rejects the notion that science is "the search for laws or underlying regularities in the social world" and that objective knowledge can be generated through observation (p.5).

The anti-positivism approach shares the same characteristics as Crotty's (1998) view of ***Constructionism***, a condition where "meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world." (p.8). Constructionism is closely related to "Interpretivism" (Gray 2014) and in some instances, is regarded as the same thing (Grbich 2012). In the context of this research, it will be referred as "Interpretivism" for consistency.

The interpretative researchers accept that the subjective interpretation and perception of the research subjects of their social environment and of each other, is crucial in the

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social sciences (Willis 2007). Crotty (1998, p.9) noted that "in [the] understanding of knowledge…different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon" which I will anticipate as an important outcome from this study. This research is firmly situated within the interpretivist point of view as my research participants will bring with them their own experiences and stories, told from their own interpretation and perspectives and through interactions and communications within their own surroundings and environment.

Within Interpretivism, "phenomenology" and "hermeneutics" are highlighted as two fundamental theoretical perspectives by scholars like Guba and Lincoln (1994), Crotty (1998), and Gray (2014). This is important as it demonstrates the strong link between the "Interpretivism" approach to the methodological approach chosen for this research, which is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

3.3 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

3.3.1 Background

IPA was introduced by Jonathan Smith (1996) in his work in *Psychology and Health* and the approach was originally used in psychology but later became popular with other disciplines including human, social, and health sciences. In this research, IPA, a relatively new qualitative research methodology, is used to explore the in-depth lived experiences of IAS in the UK HEI setting. It is the most suitable approach because IPA is committed to examine, enhance the understanding of and interpret peoples' major life experiences and how they make sense of them (Smith et al. 2009). It seeks to "give voice" to its participant in telling their stories; and to enable the researcher to "make sense" of that world through an "insider perspective" of those experiences (Smith and Osborn 2003).

3.3.2 What is IPA?

"Phenomenology", "**Hermeneutics**" and "**Idiography**" are three theoretical foundations solidly anchored within IPA (Smith et al. 2009; Smith 2011; Pietkiewicz and Smith 2012), with "phenomenology" and "hermeneutics" both featuring strongly within the Interpretivistic approach. It is fundamental to explore and understand these three main areas to fully embrace the focus and objectives of IPA as a methodology (Goodall 2014) in the context of this thesis.

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3.3.2.1 *Phenomenology*

One strong characteristic of phenomenological principles is the researcher being able to interpret and ascertain the phenomena as exactly as how they are viewed, understood and perceived by the research subjects (Lester 1999; Cohen et al. 2007; Gray 2014) whilst retaining its "fresh, complex, rich description" as lived (Finlay 2012, p.172). Phenomenology emphasises the "personal perspective and interpretation" (Lester 1999, p.1).

Phenomenology was introduced by Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1938) who proposed the idea of "go[ing] back to the things themselves" – the "things" here refer to the "experiential content of consciousness" (Smith et al. 2009, p.12). For Husserl, Phenomenology meant "stepping outside of our everyday experience, our 'natural attitude' as he called it, in order to be able to examine that everyday experience" and that "phenomenological inquiry focuses on that which is experienced in the consciousness of the individual" – *intentionality* (Smith et al. 2009, p.13). Husserl described "Phenomenology" as "a process whereby presuppositions are put aside or are said to be 'bracketed'" (Mabaquiao 2005, p.1). This is also referred to as "epoche". Husserl's phenomenology embodied pure description of a reflexive process involving the individual and their consciousness, of any given experience; this process of reflexivity of an experience with certain objects, people, situations (phenomena) is done within the consciousness of the individual reflecting it in a vacuum and in a silo, and that "intentional" relationship between that consciousness and the object of attention during that process of consciousness, should not be influenced or affected by other "activities in the world" (Smith et al. 2009, p.13). This original idea and approach of Husserl's phenomenology will likely be restrictive and limited in this research. My participants' reflection and interpretation of their teaching experiences will be subjective, and will largely be influenced by their perceptions and interactions, experience and beliefs of and from other "activities in the world" (ibid, p.13), for example by the researcher, their students, peers, their sense of self, their skills and even their past experiences from their home countries. One of the essences of Husserl's phenomenology, which was the attempt for an individual to focus and reflect on experience and to describe all its specifics, essential features and characteristics, was one of the important foundations for the thinking behind IPA. The shortfall in Husserl's

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phenomenology lied in that Husserl was a philosopher who spoke about phenomenology as more of a concept rather than a method; and his thinking about phenomenology concerned mostly from the first-person point of view and lacked details in the processes of analysing others' experiences (Smith et al. 2009). Husserl's phenomenology became subjected to critique and criticisms, mainly by philosophers who were once his students (Langdridge 2007).

Phenomenology became an important approach and method of exploration, through spontaneous personal experiences, of fundamental cultural understandings, but only through the point of view of the research subjects, and free from the researchers' pre-conception, or any potential prejudice (Gray 2014). Langdridge (2007, p.23) highlighted, phenomenological reduction though was an imperfect process, was still valuable in understanding human nature which at times would have been "concealed". Phenomenological methods are especially useful at conveying to the forefront the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own viewpoints and perspectives (Lester 1999).

Husserl's Phenomenology was subsequently expanded and developed by other scholars, most notably Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre. This marked the move from a descriptive phenomenological position, to an interpretative one, where the focus is on understanding the personal perception in a world where that perception is a "property of our relationship to the world and others, rather than to us as creatures in isolation" (Smith et al. 2009, p.21). Langdridge (2007) described this transition as moving from a "Descriptive-Transcendental Phase" to a "Hermeneutic-Existential Phase", driven by Heidegger in 1927. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) was one of Husserl's students and a keen follower; but also an ardent critique of his theory (Langdridge 2007). What Heidegger brought to the table after expanding on Husserl's Phenomenology, was the beginning of the existential movement, which later led to Hermeneutics.

3.3.2.2 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics, in simple terms, refers to the principle of interpretation in fields of study; it is the art of understanding each other, and making yourself understood (Zimmermann 2017). Key scholars in this area include Heidegger, Gadamer, Schleiermacher, Dilthey and Ricoeur (Langdridge 2007; Smith et al. 2009; Goodall 2014).

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Linking the concepts of phenomenology to hermeneutics, Heidegger introduced the term “Dasein”, which means “question of Being” (Naess and Wolin 2019) and asserted that things must be interpreted and not just described. For Heidegger, phenomenology meant examining something which is hidden or unrecognisable, as it is revealed into the light (Smith et al. 2009). In Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, Dasein was concerned with access into “lived time and engagement with the world” through interpretation (Smith et al. 2009, p.23) and not through description of an experience detached from its context. Heidegger’s work in moving phenomenology towards a hermeneutic phenomenology and the connections he had made from phenomenology to hermeneutics was pivotal (Smith et al. 2009); this transpired into the understanding and awareness that much of our experience “can be best understood through the stories we tell” and that understanding of the stories quite often takes place with the help of hermeneutic, or other methods of interpretation (Langdridge 2007, p.41).

Another scholar instrumental to the development of Heidegger’s work was Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) (Langdridge 2007; Smith et al. 2009). For Gadamer, the fundamental nature of understanding lied within the cultural and historical “situatedness”, with discourse or language, especially conversations, right at the heart of all understanding (Langdridge 2007; Sultana 2014). In an online YouTube video presentation about Gadamer (Frazier 2015), Dr Jessica Frazier defined Gadamer’s “Truth” as “something that is coming to being, through the interactions of different people in each context; and Gadamer’s philosophical Hermeneutics is a hermeneutics of language which gives an account of language not so much as a set of words, but as the very structure of reality.”

Gadamer believed that in trying to interpret or understand something (or a phenomenon), the interpreter is open to and aware of their “fore-structure”, which in this sense, means that they are aware that their preconceptions and their previous belief systems which they bring may inevitably influence that process of interpretation (Smith et al. 2009); this may also in turn influence their “fore-conceptions” -- understanding of new knowledge and interpretation of new meaning takes place as this two-way process occurs.

> *"Every revision of the fore-projection is capable of projecting before itself a new projection of meaning; rival projects can emerge side by side until it becomes clearer what the unity of meaning is; interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones. This constant process of new projection constitutes the movement of understanding and interpretation."*
>
> [Gadamer (1990/1960, p.267) cited by Smith et al. (2009, p.26)]

The key to this process is that the interpreter (the researcher) is aware of these existing preconceptions and the truth emerging through this; and to navigate through this process with a high degree of openness and intuition.

> *"Only the person who knows how to ask questions is able to persist in his questioning which involves being able to preserve his orientation towards openness… It requires that one does not try to argue the other person down but that one really considers the weight of the other's opinion."*
>
> [Gadamer (1990/1960, p.267) cited by Smith et al. (2009, p.27)]

What this means in the context of this research is that as the researcher, I am aware that the research participants are the "experiential experts" and are to remain the focus; this will allow me to be able to acknowledge and process "[my] own pre-existing concerns, hunches" born out of my own pre-existing assumptions; and any ideas and assumptions that I may have about the subject matter and the research participants, as best as I could so that the participants can tell their stories. The nature and characteristics of the interview and its questions, should also be guided by the same set of principles (Smith et al. 2009, p.64).

3.3.2.3 Idiography

In a broad sense, "Idiography" is the study of the individual, or of single events or facts (Oxford dictionary). It is in direct contrast to the idea of "Nomothetic" which is to "produce general statements that account for larger social patterns, which form the context of single events, individual behaviors, and experience" (Crossman 2019, para.3). "[N]omothethic" as a research concept was heavily criticised due to its tendency to produce generalised and "overarching claims" about human behaviour (Goodall 2014, p.32).

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More specifically, in a research-related context, "Idiography" is best described as "the richly detailed and uniquely holistic representation of words and actions that attempt to describe a situation as experienced by its participants" (Watt Unknown).

For IPA, reference to idiography is pivotal because the "in-depth analysis of single cases" and close examination of the "individual perspectives of study participants, in their unique contexts" (Pietkiewicz and Smith 2012, p.363) means that the researcher can focus on the specific rather than the general; this allows the researcher to make individual and unique accounts, analyses and interpretations about the research participants and their encounter and relationship with their experience, through detailed case study analyses and explorations (Smith et al. 2009).

In the context of this research, this idiographic nature of IPA means that effective analyses of the data could include single case analyses where the personal perspectives and the experiences of particular individuals can be explored and understood; this is then followed by the search for patterns of "convergence and divergence" across the different participant accounts (Smith 2011, p.10). It is important to remember that the idea of idiography is not about studying and focusing on an individual and their unique experience; it is about understanding that that experience "is thoroughly immersed and embedded in a world of things and relationships" (Smith et al. 2009, p.29).

3.3.3 Why IPA

Smith noted, IPA is to do with examining in detail, the "personal lived experience", "the meaning of the experience" and "how participants make sense of that experience" (Smith 2011, p.9). Some of the typical questions that are consistent with the IPA approach include "*what is the meaning of*…", "*what is it like to experience*…", "*how do people make sense of….*"; the same pattern of questioning can be observed in the proposed research questions.

The reason for using IPA is simple – "experience cannot be plucked straightforwardly from the heads of participants, it requires a process of engagement and interpretation on the part of the researcher" (Smith 2011, p.10).

IPA engages in double hermeneutic "whereby the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them" (Smith 2011, p.10).

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In this research, my main aim is to understand and interpret how my participants who are IAS, make sense of their transitional period and their teaching and work environments, their personal experience, and seeking from them a reflection of these experiences, the sense of self, and identity/ies they bring into these environments. The aim of an IPA research is to engage with these reflections, the significance of these reflections to the research participants and the sense making that accompanies these reflections (Smith et al. 2009). My work as the researcher, is encouraging them and invoking them to share and to reflect on this important experience in relation to the questions of their sense of self and identity; as the researcher, I have every responsibility to present the truest account, representation and interpretation of these unique and personal experiences based on my understanding of the subject matter, their environment, and the research in question. Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012) stated, IPA study is a "dynamic process" in which the researcher plays an active role in influencing and accessing the participants' experience, and making sense of their personal world. Eatough and Smith (2017) pointed out IPA studies explore important human matters which are "transformative, bringing change and reflection" and it is entirely possible to distinguish common patterns within the studies – "a concern with identity and a sense of self, a focus on participants' meaning making", and all of these are centralised around "**identity"** and "**self"** as key principles.

It is anticipated and expected that each of my research participants will have their unique encounter, experiences, sense of self, and identity that they bring into their teaching and work environments in the UK. IPA is ideal as the IPA researcher can have detailed analyses and exploration of research participants on individual and/or case-by-case study approach; equally, the same level of attention and depth of exploration can be paid on examining similarities and differences between each cases (Pietkiewicz and Smith 2012). IPA allows me to be flexible, as well as adopt an individualistic approach at the same time (Eatough and Smith 2017) without compromising the validity and reliability of the research.

Mannan (2018) noted, much of the IPA research to date including Bennett and Coyle (2007), Clare (2003), and Coyle and Rafalin (2000), have been concerned with exploration of identity as a central theme; this is confirmation that using IPA was a sound approach for this study as "identity" is one of the central themes being explored.

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3.3.4 Research quality

Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012) suggested that "doing an IPA study is a demanding enterprise" (p.13). Apart from requiring "careful, systemic, and rigorous analysis" that "requires patience and openness", IPA research needs to be conducted and executed with validity and reliability. Recommended by Smith et al. (2009), using Lucy Yardley's (2000) suggested criteria, some of the key considerations on assessing and addressing the validity and quality concerns of this qualitative IPA approach will be discussed within the context of this research. Due to the subjective nature of knowledge creation in qualitative methodologies, having a robust means of "evaluating the quality of research…is absolutely necessary" (Yardley 2000, p.219).

There are four broad characteristics or categories that are used to assess qualitative research quality in Yardley's (2000) criteria – "sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance" (ibid, p.219).

Sensitivity to context – Recognising that recruitment of a sample consisting of "participants who share a particular lived experience" (Smith et al. 2009, p.180) may prove more challenging than trying to recruit for other sample types, the adoption of IPA as a methodology for this research to allow "close engagement with the idiographic and the particular" (ibid), is the first evidence of the high level of sensitivity to context for this research. Yardley (2000) explained sensitivity to context in terms of the researcher having awareness and understanding of participants' individual perspective and setting in relation to the sociocultural and linguistic context of the research, and how that interplay could affect participants' views and responses. In conducting this IPA research, it is crucial for me to have close awareness of the interview process – to show empathy, to put my participants at ease, to recognise potential interactional difficulties, and to know how to negotiate instances of intricate power-play between the researcher, who is the research expert and the participants, who are the experiential experts (Smith et al. 2009). To show sensitivity to the context also means to demonstrate appreciation and care for the data collected, and the ways that the data is being reported and represented. As suggested by Smith et al. (2009), the presentation of findings chapter will be supported by "verbatim extracts from the participants' material" where relevant

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to “support the argument being made” and to give participants “a voice in the project” (p.180).

Commitment and rigour – In this IPA study, commitment and rigour can be demonstrated by the show of care and attentiveness by the researcher during the interview as well as the data analysis processes. Smith et al. (2009) advised, during the interview, the research questions designed and employed should be relevant to the participants’ experience and context; and my use of probing and prompting questions should be consistent, appropriate and pertinent. During the analysis process, the researcher must be committed to analysing the data consistently, “thoroughly and systematically”, with “sufficient idiographic engagement” (ibid, p.181). My analysis must also show evidence of sufficient interpretation, “moving beyond a simple description of what is there to an interpretation of what it means” (ibid, p.181); and successfully highlighting and linking key aspects revealed by individual participants to their themes.

Transparency and coherence – The transparency approach of this IPA study is evident in the explanation and description offered throughout this chapter of the research processes stage by stage; including the participant recruitment process, the interview process and schedule, and the data analysis approaches and steps etc. Yardley (2000) proposed that a qualitative methodology that shows transparency is one which involves researcher “reflexivity”, which is evident throughout this chapter; as “our experience of the world is profoundly influenced by our assumptions, intentions and actions”, it is crucial for researchers to constantly and openly reflect on such factors to understand how the “product of the research investigation” (p.222) may have been affected.

Impact and importance – Yardley (2000) contested that research becomes impactful and important when “it present[s] a novel, challenging perspective, which opens up new ways of understanding a topic”. The preceding chapter has outlined not only the obvious gaps missing in the literature being researched, but also highlighted the urgency and important implications for more research to be conducted in the areas of understanding IAS experience in the UK HEI. In the past, key literature has sought to describe IAS experience and adjustment in their new environment, but very few has accorded this community a voice and platform to share their lived experiences.

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3.3.5 Limitations of IPA

IPA as a research methodology is not without its challenges and limitations. Willig (2013) explained, similar to other phenomenological research, IPA is under scrutiny for its conceptual and practical limitations and weaknesses.

One notable criticism for IPA is the role of language and the impact that this might have on the data collected. In qualitative research where the data collection process is conducted through semi-structured interviews or focus group discussions, language is a necessary tool in capturing that experience (Hennink 2008). Willig (2013) stated that when research participants use language to attempt to describe and communicate their experience, they may not necessarily narrate the truest account of the experience as the same experience can be described in many other different ways; and that language "constructs" rather than "describes" (p.94) reality. Noon (2018) in reflecting on his experience in using IPA, concluded that language can become a barrier in IPA study when respondents have weak language skills. Smith et al. (2009) conceded that the interpretation of experiences as researchers, is often "shaped, limited and enabled, by language" (p.194).

Tuffour (2017) in providing an overview and limitations of IPA also questioned the communication skills of both the participants as well as the researcher in successfully conveying and capturing the "nuances" of the experiences being investigated as the approach hinges heavily on the accounts of participants and the expertise and experiences of the researcher in capturing these.

Through the pilot study, one noteworthy point was that right before the semi-structured interview was conducted with the first pilot study participant, the participant had informed me that he was not talkative in nature, and that I should have prompts prepared. I think this point has proven that language can become a potential barrier if the respondent is introverted or is not articulated; however, that is not to say that the research will not generate rich and meaningful data as accurately described by research participants; it just means that the researcher has to take extra care and precaution in planning, ensuring that prompts are used appropriately without structuring or guiding the interview excessively, whilst employing the right questioning techniques.

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In the main study, the existing relationship and rapport shared with participants will be an added advantage. This is also enhanced by a discovery in the pilot stage – the participants welcomed the opportunity to share and voice their experience because no one had offered them the opportunity or platform to do so. These are academic professionals who have been exposed to and immersed within the UK academic teaching and work environments for a while; this will help alleviate issues regarding linguistic or communication barriers.

Another criticism of IPA is the generalisability and the transferability of the knowledge and findings from the study. Pringle et al. (2011) called into question the ability of an IPA research in significantly "contributing to theory" (p.21) due to the small sample size of an IPA research and also its idiographic nature. Noon (2018) added that the small sample sizes undoubtedly provoke questions and concerns regarding the transferability of the findings. The idiographic nature of IPA has often been stressed and highlighted as one of its prominent features. While this idiographic quality gives precedence to the in-depth and distinctive approach to investigating each individual experience, this can sometimes be viewed as a "limitation" due to lack of "connections" and "themes" across the cases (Noon 2018). However, Lech et al. (2017) acknowledged that it's important to consistently bear in mind that findings of an IPA should not be generalised – as the main aim of an IPA research ultimately, is to understand and share the lived experience of the participants of the study and to give voice to this experience. Noon (2018) noted that IPA is "compelled" with the task of giving voice to participants and is a useful methodology in researching individuals or groups "whose voices may otherwise go unheard" (p.80). Giving voice to my participants, is one of the main objectives to this study; the discovery at the pilot stage suggested that those were the seldom heard voices. Hefferon and Gil-Rodriguez (2011) stressed that "more is not always more" – the small number of participants examined in an IPA study examined at a greater depth and complexity will always outweigh the broad and often shallow and descriptive analysis with a large group of participants. An IPA research is not about uncovering what occurs in all common settings, rather it is to understand the "perceptions" and "understandings" of a unique and particular group of people within their setting (Smith and Osborn 2003, p.55).

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Having foresight of these limitations and challenges associated with IPA has been useful for me as a relatively notice researcher. The comprehensive guidelines and helpful approaches, facilitations and discussions by various experts (Smith and Osborn 2003; Smith and Osborn 2008; Pietkiewicz and Smith 2012; Willig 2013; Lech et al. 2017; McCormack and Joseph 2018; Noon 2018) but most notably Smith et al. (2009) will provide security, support and safeguard for the appropriate methods and approaches in ensuring maximum validity of the data collection and analyses processes for this research, going forward.

In addressing issue with transferability of IPA research, Smith et al. (2009) suggested that when the research account is "rich and transparent" enough and is linked to current literature, it is expected that the reader is able to assess and evaluate transferability of the findings. Pringle et al. (2011, p.22) added that to allow this to happen, the research account needs to be skilfully written up and appropriately contextualised, suggesting that tensions in IPA research can be overcome if limitations are "acknowledged and clarified by researchers".

Noon (2018) stressed that despite its challenges and limitations, a good IPA research can be conducted with a strong understanding of the philosophical underpinnings, excellent interview skills and rigorous, systematic and thorough approaches to analysing the accounts.

In short, the weaknesses and challenges of IPA research can be overcome when I adopt heightened and acute sense of awareness of these weaknesses at all points during the data collection process, to maintain maximum validity of not only the collection process but data analyses processes, in ensuring the optimum and robust outcome from this research.

3.3.6 Consideration of other methodologies

Phenomenology is broadly defined as "a theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value; and one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by external, objective and physically described reality [English and English (1958) cited by Cohen et al. (2007, p.22)] . When the descriptive phenomenological approach was first considered during the early stages of this research, it appeared plausible as phenomenology centralises around capturing “first person accounts of life experiences” (Langdridge 2007, p.17). However, true descriptive phenomenology requires the researcher to “abstain from [any] presuppositions” about the world and to attend to the research participant’s experience as they appear and are told. To generate and produce a rich and real picture of the phenomenon being studied, the researcher is expected to disregard all pre-existing knowledge about the phenomenon (Giorgi 2008; Streubert and Carpenter 2011). This aspect, “epoché”, to me will be impossible due to my shared experience and background with the research subjects. Aside from shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds, we have previously collaborated on projects; and we work in the same environment with mutual colleagues. “Bracketing” those prior knowledge, pre-conception, and beliefs out completely requires a strict, rigorous, and strategic framework. Even Langdridge has acknowledged that this aspect of phenomenological philosophy is very much contentious with different scholars having different views on the possibility or impossibility in bracketing off preconceptions about any given experience. It is decided that phenomenology, with “epoche” as its foundation, would never afford me the opportunities to fully understand and immerse myself in the lived experiences of the research participants.

Symbolic interactionism, an ethnography tool, was also considered as the underpinning methodology. Symbolic Interactionism recognises the social world subsists through human interactions; and those “reciprocal social interaction[s] influence behaviour and the character of society” (Benzies and Allen 2000, p.544). It also acknowledges that “**individual’s sense of identity** is constantly being constructed and reconstructed as he or she moves through differing social contexts and encounters different situations and different people” (Saunders et al. 2009, p.290).

Gray (2014) noted, in order to understand this process of meaning creation, “researchers have to study subjects’ actions, objects and society from the perspective of the subject themselves” (p.24). Meaning is derived from human interactions with one another within their social environment, and observation is key (Saunders et al. 2009). Gray (2014) explained, ethnographic research requires the researcher to be immersed within the culture and natural settings of the community being studied for a period of time so that observations can be made (Corbetta 2003). One major challenge in utilising

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ethnography in this research is that though some of the participants share the same origin, cultural and linguistic background, they are currently not living or physically situated within a *community* and the closest community setting is at the workplace, with the participants being placed amongst various *pockets of academic communities* which does not create the authentic physical and social environment most desired for the study. Participant observation at the workplace (where the participants are based in different offices across campuses), is unnatural and can be potentially awkward and disruptive. Symbolic Interactionism would have been invaluable in capturing identity shifts; it could present opportunities for interesting and insightful observations of the relationship between culture and behaviour in authentic settings. However, this method lacks the ability and capacity in capturing personal reflections and interpretations of participants' experience, and thoughts and feelings about them, as well as the IPA will be able to.

Benzies and Allen (2000) advised against using Symbolic Interactionalism as a standalone research framework and that it should be combined with other theoretical frameworks in a "multiple method designs". The assumption that human subjects are automatically and cognitively capable of "abstract and reflective thinking" which then enables the "development of the symbolic use of language and gestures for the creation and communication of meanings that produces a common response in interaction with others" was also highlighted as a potential weakness. These suggest to me that although the underlying principles of Symbolic Interactionism align with this research, the methodology lacks the robustness and the rigour required for the research design and execution of this research.

3.4 Adopting the principles of action research as intervention

Cohen et al. (2007) noted, action research "is a powerful tool for change and improvement at the local level" (p.297). It is suitable in this research because its scope as a method is both impressive and flexible (Cohen et al. 2007). To demonstrate its versatility, the authors proposed that action research could be employed in a multitude of settings, including "teaching methods", "learning strategies", "continuing professional development" (p.297) etc, all of which are relevant to the context of this research.

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The most applicable stance in the context of this research is the view that "people can 'create their own identities'"[McNiff (2002, p.17) in Cohen et al. (2007, p.298)]. Another useful philosophical stance is proposed by Carr and Kemmis (1986) who saw action research as "a form of 'self-reflective enquiry' by participants" with the aim of improving the understanding of their practice, albeit in the context of social justice (cited in Cohen et al. 2007). Most importantly, being linked also to "Ideology", action research "is not merely a form of change theory, but addresses fundamental issues of power and power relationships, for, in according power to participants, **action research is seen as an empowering activity**" (Cohen et al. 2007, p.301).

Kemmis and McTaggart (1992, p.21-22) summarised below key features of action research that relate closely to the context of this research:

- a systematic learning process in which people act deliberately, though remaining open to surprises and responsive to opportunities
- involves keeping a personal journal in which we record progress
- involves people in making critical analysis of the situations (classrooms, schools, system) in which they work

Most relevant to why the principles of action research were chosen to underpin the intervention process are proposed by Noffke and Zeichner (1987) on how it could benefit teachers:

- Increases their feelings of self-worth and confidence
- Increases their awareness of classroom issues

-cited in Cohen et al. (2007, p.299)

In this research, only the underlying principles of action research are used to underpin the execution of the intervention and not the full action research plan. The research participants were not directly involved in the "diagnostic stage" (Cohen et al. 2007, p.304) where the problems were identified; nor did they instigate the need for the research. Cohen et al. (2007) suggested, action research could be viewed in two simple stages: "a diagnostic stage in which the problems are analysed and the hypotheses developed; and a therapeutic stage in which the hypotheses are tested by a consciously directed intervention or experiment in situ" (ibid, p.304). In this research, only the latter

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stage will be carried out, with the researcher playing the role of an observer, and the research participants carrying out the actions of “reviewing [their] current practice”, “identifying an aspect [they] wish to improve”, “try[ing] it out” and “monitor[ing] and reflect[ing] on what happens” as proposed by McNiff (2002, p.71), cited in Cohen et al. (2007) as part of an eight-step model of the action research process (p.305).

One challenge in this approach was the danger that participants did not fully understand their tasks and/or the expectations from the intervention. They may not have necessarily agreed to the problems identified or appreciated what the success criteria represented (Cohen et al. 2007), therefore creating the difficulty in measuring or achieving success in the action research. Another noted challenge is the lack of engagement or involvement from participants. Referring the group being researched as “the critical reference group”, Wadsworth (1998) warned that “the difficulties in involving critical reference groups and them remaining involved are numerous” (page unknown). The role of the “outsiders…who are not members of critical reference groups ”, meaning to say the researcher, should resume the role of a “facilitator” or “an assistant” in assisting with the “pursuit of…truth” by the critical reference group (Wadsworth 1998).

Ultimately, the intervention was to provide a platform for participants to generate the experience and opinion that will be vital for Phase Three, where those experiences will be captured and analysed through the IPA approach to allow for the rich data of their lived experiences from the intervention stage to be teased out. Understanding the lived experiences of my participants remained the focus of this research.

3.5 The role (and responsibility) of the researcher

In IPA, the role of the researcher is central. IPA requires a vibrant and dynamic approach which involves the researcher playing an active role throughout the process (Smith and Osborn 2008; Pietkiewicz and Smith 2012).

To produce a robust and high-quality IPA research, the researcher needs to demonstrate a set of wide-ranging skills, from formulating questions, interview skills and techniques, to robust and systematic data analysis practises (Noon 2018). Smith et al. (2009) acknowledged that for a novice IPA researcher who has had limited qualitative research training or experience, there are numerous new skills which have to be learned in a short time.

The researcher is relied upon to listen to, understand and trust the participants and their voices (Joseph 2014); they then interpret the experience as how they occur to the participants, and subsequently give voice to the participants through their understanding of that unique experience. These unique experiences are vulnerable and open to the complications brought about by the researcher's own perception and interpretation. Smith and Osborn (2008, p.53) emphasised, "access [to participant experience] depends on, is complicated by, the researcher's own conceptions" and subsequently their interpretation. This two-stage interpretation process is also known as the double hermeneutic process. The researcher is responsible in ensuring that this is carried out appropriately and consistently.

Given the impact and the level of involvement and role that the researcher has on IPA, including "the role of preconceptions, beliefs and aims" (Brocki and Wearden 2006, p.91) the reason and rationale for acknowledging and recognising these in the research process are both practical and fair, to ensure best practice.

3.6 Recruitment of Participants, Data Collection Methodology and Planning

3.6.1 Pilot study

A pilot study emulating Phase one of the main study was conducted beforehand, to better inform the study and to trial the chosen methods, ideas and instruments in practice (Kim 2011; van Teijlingen and Hundley 2001).

It was designed in conjunction with the main research proposal to test the feasibility of the methodology and instruments and the idea of the Development Toolkit as self-directed learning resources, so improvements could be made before the main study.

The other purpose was to gauge the sample size and to test the interview questions and themes. This required recruiting participants who shared similar backgrounds with the target participants in the main study. Thabane et al. (2010, p.5) confirmed that "it is important that the sample for a pilot [is] representative of the target study population" and it should also "be based on the same inclusion/ exclusion criteria as the main study".

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In the pilot study, a purposive sampling method was employed and up to four participants who were IAS were targeted with the following inclusion criteria:

- 2 participants will have lived in the UK for less than two years – *this meant that the participants were still at the early stage of their acculturation process*;
- 2 participants will have lived in the UK for between three to six years – *the participants would have gone through a more substantial and longer adjustment period, therefore would have more varied experience from the first set of participants*

In summary, through the pilot study, three things were learnt which changed the course and planning for the main study:

1. The plan was to recruit ten participants who were Western and Eastern IAS in the main study of varying cultural and historical background to allow observable patterns of convergence and divergence to emerge. The response rate to participate in the pilot study was lower than anticipated and the pilot project ended up recruiting two Asian participants, of Chinese ethnicity. Results from the data analysis showed that recruitment of only Chinese academics as the purposive sampling strategy helped the study to be more focused, and it provided greater depth (Cohen et al. 2011). From the rich data collected through the pilot study, I was confident that a sample size of six people, of Asian heritage, for the main study was adequate.

2. It was discovered that the inclusion criteria set for the main study needed revision. Both participants interviewed had started living in the UK more than a decade ago. However, they only became established teaching academic staff within the last five to seven years. The likelihood of other IAS following similar career path would be high and this could be common for the majority of the target population for the main study, confirmed by Hsieh (2012) and Sliwa and Johansson (2013). The original inclusion criteria had specified that participants "will have lived" in the UK; this was later revised to "participants will have started an academic teaching post in the UK" to factor in that strong possibility and to ensure a consistent approach and outcome.

3. The participants were able to offer valuable and constructive feedback regarding the Development Toolkit. The pilot study interview gave me confidence on the

questions employed, as well as foresight in improving and grouping the question sets into themes to aid future interviews. I also became aware of the importance of having a question schedule and preparing appropriate prompts and probes to help frame and clarify questions, where needed.

3.6.2 Sampling

Cohen et al. (2011) noted “access” to research sample remains a key issue and that researchers need to be aware and ensure that access to participants is not only permitted for research but also, “practicable” (p.109). With limited target population to recruit from, care was taken to ensure that my sampling strategies were in line with my research aims and objectives; at the same time practical and effective to achieve this purpose.

Smith et al. (2009, p.49) highlighted the sample chosen for IPA is usually “homogenous” so that the inquiries are meaningful and they make sense to participants. The degree of this “homogeneity” (ibid) changes from study to study. The decision-making process to achieve this “homogeneity” is usually driven by issues of practicality and feasibility. In the context of this research, the concept of “homogeneity” (ibid) is understood as the following:

- The target participants were all IAS who had not spent their formative years in the UK;
- They were of East Asian origin, with majority being of Chinese ethnicity (due to limited target population)
- They have all moved from either their home country or other countries, to the UK and subsequently resumed an established academic post (to include teaching and research);
- They have been in an established academic teaching post for less than ten years

A sample consisting of all Chinese academic staff from China, with similar cultural background and length of teaching experience in the UK would have been ideal; the reality was this was highly unattainable and impractical due to the limited target population dictated by the study scope. The nature of my position at the University meant that the participants were known to me through various capacities so these participants were also targeted based on my intuition that they could “best inform the research questions” and help “enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study" (Sargeant 2012, p.1). The RRL after the first pilot study interview revealed that recruiting friendly and positive participants (through existing relationships) had given the researcher a clear advantage on the interview and data gathering process; and had contributed to a "very successful first interview" (Appendix C), further solidifying the positive outcomes and benefits from recruiting such participants.

Smith et al. (2009) stressed, the true aim of an IPA study is to bring out into the open, ***stories and tales*** of experience of each of the individuals involved in the study. Brocki and Wearden (2006) who conducted an analysis on the use of IPA in research, found that small sample sizes are "the norm"; and relevant to the context of this study, keeping a small sample size and interviewing participants several times, "is a strategy that retains IPA's idiographic emphasis whilst embedding emerging patterns in a rich and detailed context" (Eatough and Smith 2017, p.29). Consistent with the idiographic nature of IPA, having small sample in this research made the most sense due to the single case study approach, making the research doable and practical. IPA is an approach which benefits from detailed engagement with a small sample, as the sample selection though small in size, is still able to give a sense of the participant's unique lived experience (Joseph 2014). Langdridge (2007, p.108) stressed that being idiographic in nature, IPA research with small sample size does not pose a problem because the aim of the work is not to make "general claims about larger populations".

The main research study targeted at recruiting at least six participants. A set of inclusion criteria was developed as the purposive sampling method, alongside a practical recruitment strategy, to help gather and refine the appropriate research sample. –

- Non-UK born IAS
- Of East Asian origin
- In academic teaching post in a UK HEI for less than ten years

The purposive sampling method was used to ensure that the sample has been chosen for a specific purpose (Cohen et al. 2011), and this included accessing people who had the appropriate in-depth knowledge and understanding about their experience, their teaching environment and their sense of cultural and professional identity, that would contribute to the knowledge of this research. Smith et al. (2009) iterated when it comes to collecting data for an IPA study, there is space for imagination to allow for a practical approach; the techniques and strategies employed in my sampling methodology would allow the generation of rich and meaningful data for this research.

3.6.3 Ethical considerations

In discussing the place of “ethics” in educational research, Head (2020) argued that “[e]thics in educational research…is part of a continuous process of learning and development in research and, therefore, constitutes an issue of pedagogy” (p.73).

An understanding of ethical theories helps to better inform the rationales and ethical principles that the research will make throughout the entire research process (Head 2020).

Whilst “utilitarian”, “deontic” and “virtue ethics” are useful and adequate in “informing…understanding of the ethical conduct of educational research” [Pendlebury and Enslin (2001) and Parsell et al. (2014) cited in Head (2020, p.78)] in terms of wider ethical considerations, Head (2020) argued that “more is required for a more rounded appreciation of the complex ethical issues that arise throughout the research process”, in particular considerations of “care for the people involved in the immediate process.” (ibid).

In line with the “interpretive” and “hermeneutics” (Zwozdiak-Myers 2020, p.67) stances, this current research is firmly underpinned by the ethic of care. The ethic of care methodology emphasises that “researchers [should] ‘seek out and listen carefully to ***“voices”*** embedded in their social contexts to gain a true understanding of what people are saying and why they do what they do’” [Howe and Moses (1999, p.32) cited in Zwozdiak-Myers (2020, p.67)]. This aligns perfectly with the IPA principle “whereby the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them” (Smith 2011, p.10).

There are three main ethical principles that are recommended in The Belmont Report [NCPHSBBR (1979, B.1) cited in Zwozdiak-Myers (2020, p.70)] that will help provide better “understanding about key ethical issues associated with research involving human participants” (ibid) and they are “respect for persons, beneficence and justice” (ibid). Zwozdiak-Myers also helpfully highlighted from the Belmont Report the ways in which these principles can be more usefully translated and applied –

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- *Respect for persons*: informed consent, with sufficient and comprehensible information so individuals can choose to participate, voluntarily
- *Beneficence*: assessment of risks and benefits;
- *Justice:* in the selection of research participants, fair procedures to provide fair outcomes.

-Zwozdiak-Myers (2020, p.73)

In the subsequent sections, details provided about key ethical considerations and the description about the data collection and analysis phases will touch on the key aspects above, demonstrating how the "ethic of care" (Head 2020, p.78) has been carefully applied to the research methodology and processes.

In observing "respect for persons" (Zwozdiak-Myers 2020, p.70), due to the limited target population, the recruitment strategy was meticulously planned to ensure maximum success, whilst maintaining its ethics and virtue. Cohen et al. (2011, p.51) warned, one ethical dilemma faced by researchers it to reach a careful balance between "the demands placed on them as professional scientist in pursuit of truth, and their subjects' rights and values potentially threatened by the research".

There are advantages to conducting a research project internally – familiarity with people and surroundings and easy access to resources, especially human resources. However, this can lead to a multitude of ethical issues. Gray's (2014) checklist of ethical issues was useful in highlighting the areas for ethical considerations relevant to this research – informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, data access and ownership.

The Office of the Human Research Protection Program (2019) stated the informed consent process is not limited to the actual research process; it starts as early as the process of "identification, initial contact, screening and recruitment of potential subjects". I was responsible to create an environment which was effective, ethical, and non-coercive. Before the recruitment process began, the research aims and objectives, and the proposed methodology were subject to the review and approval process as set out in the University's Research Ethics Code of Practice.

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Once approval was granted, the recruitment process began with identification and screening of potential subjects. Recruiting internally meant I had access to the organisational “global address book” which lists names, job positions, contact telephone numbers, and email addresses of all university staff members. Potential participants were filtered out through their surnames and their job titles; this was based loosely on the study by Lauderdale and Kestenbaum (2000) on ethnic identification by surname.

One crucial theory proposed by Noddings, one of the strong advocators of care theory, in 1986, was that “the relationship between researchers and participants should exemplify caring, especially mutual respect and trust.” [Noddings (1986) cited in Zwozdiak-Myers (2020, p.68)]. A broad email was sent out to this initial pool individually to introduce the researcher and the intention of the correspondence; the overview of the aims and objectives of the research were presented to gauge their interest and willingness to become participants in the study. With this method of direct recruitment strategy, “considerable care” had to be taken so that individuals did not feel “pressured to participate” (Office of the Human Research Protection Program 2019).

Smith et al. (2009) stressed, the researcher is responsible in making participants aware of their right to give informed consent not just for their participation in the research, but also the “likely outcomes of data analysis” (p.53) from the data collected.

They warned that research participants may appreciate having their experiences represented; their voices heard, but “this should not be achieved at the cost of anonymity” (Smith et al. 2009, p.53) so care had to be taken to ensure their identity were concealed and protected at all times.

The participants were given the “Participant Information Sheet” <u>(Appendix D)</u> and requested to sign the “Participant Consent Form” <u>(Appendix E)</u> prior to the start of the data collection to allow them sufficient time to understand the background and objectives of the research and also for them to consider fully the commitment, the potential risks or benefits involved, in being a participant to the research.

3.7 Data Collection Phases

3.7.1 Phase One – Planning semi-structured interviews, formulating questions, and the interview process

In Phase One, seven participants were successfully recruited to the research.

The semi-structured in-depth interview approach was chosen for Phase One. Smith et al. (2009), Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012) and Smith and Osborn (2008) confirmed semi-structured and in-depth interviews as the best means for IPA research, with Smith and Osborn (2003) proclaiming semi-structured interviews as the “exemplary method for IPA” (p.57).

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews give the researcher and the participants the opportunity to engage in real-time conversations (Pietkiewicz and Smith 2012); they allow rapport to be built and maintained when managed well; and the participants have the chance and space to reflect, to speak and to be heard (Smith et al. 2009). The conversations can develop organically into areas not thought of before and it affords greater flexibility on areas that can be explored (Smith and Osborn 2008). Smith and Osborn (2008, p.59) warned “this form of interview reduces the control the investigator has over the situation, [and] takes longer to carry out”. A point from the RRL highlighted the difficulty the researcher faced following up pertinent points made by participant as the conversation took a natural flow into a different and unexpected direction during the pilot interview. This reflection played a crucial role in ensuring proper planning for the main study interview process.

As a novice IPA researcher conducting semi-structured interviews, I made sure the interview form and structure were planned, leading up to the actual interview, including devising a schedule (Appendix F) with carefully considered and formulated questions (Smith et al. 2009). An interview schedule consisting series of questions and prompts can help elicit the maximum possible information and maintain quality and consistency in approach (Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson 2013). It is also useful in managing the qualitative thought process while mitigating stress related to conducting the actual interviews (Smith et al. 2009). I found that keeping all email correspondence with participants and organising them in folder system helped with the process and made me feel in control.

The RRL revealed that the pilot study had helped to reorganise and refine the interview schedule to reduce repetitions.

The RRL also revealed that conversations at times took unexpected and unplanned directions, as cautioned by Smith and Osborn (2008). Smith et al. (2009) see these unforeseen turns as valuable aspects of interviewing, but it required the researcher utilising the right technique to steer the conversations back on track again, which I was able to do following the pre-planned schedule of questions, again highlighting the importance of having a schedule to help guide and control the direction of the interview process.

The interview schedule was also used to create an environment for a comfortable interaction between the participant and the researcher (Smith et al. 2009). It consisted of questions that were open, that would invite the participants to speak in detail and ones that did not make assumptions or generalisation. Being guided by Smith and Osborn (2008), I ensured that the questions were also neutral and not misleading; and the questions avoided jargon or technical terms.

Willig (2013) stressed that in a research which requires the researcher to “enter the life world of the research participant” (p.87), it is vital that the questions posed to the participants are “open-ended and non-directive”, to allow conversations to flow between the participant being narrative or descriptive, to being analytical or evaluative (Smith et al. 2009). These were some of the questions in my interview schedule to demonstrate that –

- Descriptive/ Narrative – How do you find teaching in general?
- Comparative – Compared to when you first started teaching, do you find the experience much easier now?
- Evaluative – Do you find it easy stepping into the classroom?
- Contrast – Do you think you’ll feel the same if you were teaching in your native country?

-Smith et al.(2009)

The planned questions were at times insufficient to generate a satisfactory response (Smith and Osborn 2008). I did not prepare prompts or probes for every question; just some which were deemed complex from the pilot study. These were clearly marked on the schedule so they could be utilised when needed. Some examples of prompts/probes prepared for the schedule included the following:

- Do you find it easy stepping into the classroom?

  or are you nervous? – probing question

  Why? – prompting question

- Have you ever observed native speaking colleagues teach in class?

  What did you observe? - probing question

  Was there anything to learn/ gain? – probing question

It was prudent for the researcher to be reminded that the semi-structured interview should be guided by the schedule and not be dictated by it (Smith and Osborn 2008) so the focus should be on building a rapport with the participants so they talk about their experience, rather than for the researcher to aim to ask every single question on the schedule. With the pre-planned prompts and probes, I still found that conversations at times took on unexpected turns and spontaneous questions had to be adopted as follow up, which generated unpredicted but meaningful and valuable input to the research.

Each interview lasted for between 60 and 90 minutes. After the first interview, the RRL recorded the importance of factoring in extra time to allow participants to get comfortable, to read the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix D) and to sign the Participant Consent Form (Appendix E). The interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission, using an application on a mobile device, with a secondary recording device as backup. To help ease the participants I ensured the purpose of the study was explained; the interview process was set out with opportunity for questions; the assurance of confidentiality was reiterated; the participant was offered a bottle of water; and the interview started off at a relaxing pace with an easy, general topic involving everyday life questions (Shi 2011; Gray 2014).

Smith et al. (2009) stated that participants should feel comfortable with you and trust you. This rapport building is crucial in obtaining useful, rich, and meaningful data from them. The RRL recorded that in attempts to build and establish that rapport, I came across "too friendly" and at times "too talkative", inevitably sharing too many anecdotal examples from my own experience. This point was also cautioned by Smith et al. (2009)

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– "on the one hand, such dynamics can facilitate a sense of rapport and the comparative dynamics can facilitate more detailed personal disclosure. On the other hand, however, personal disclosure of shared experience can set up competitive, or comparative, dynamics and even lead to a kind of response bias". This reflection from the first interview raised the researcher's awareness to be more mindful in subsequent interviews, to avoid potential negative impact from this "over-sharing".

I was mindful of the importance of listening attentively whilst adopting a high degree of open-mindedness in trying to "bracket" any preconceptions during the interviews, and to demonstrate to the participants that I was interested in what they had to share (Smith et al. 2009). There was a fine balance to achieve between knowing how much time to allow the participants to reflect and knowing the right time and place to probe them for more details; and acquiring the skills to be spontaneous without being too forceful or domineering. The RRL revealed that I had tendencies to get "caught-up in the moment" and interjected or interrupted the participants. That was quickly made a learning point for the main study so that it was kept under control.

There were times when the topics which emerged had been unexpected and although that initially took me by surprise, I was able to be flexible and spontaneous with the appropriate follow-up questions to keep the conversations going in the right direction as I deemed them valuable to the topic in discussion (Smith et al. 2009; Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson 2013).

3.7.2 Phase Two – Intervention in the form of an online Development Toolkit

Transferring Norton's (then Peirce 1995) notion of "investment" to the context of this study, this research recognises IAS have complex, multiple identities, that are changing across "time and space" (Norton 1997, p.411) and that these are reproduced in social and professional interactions in the target language with colleagues and students.

Billot (2010) explained, "an individual identifies themself as an academic, both in relation to the organisation itself and as a member of the academic profession" (p.712). The academic identity of that individual is also "intrinsically bound up with the values, beliefs and practices held in common with others of that affiliation [community of practice]". The construction of an academic identity is inherently connected to affiliation with others as proposed by Billot (2010). As newcomers to this community of practice and not yet practising those shared “values, beliefs and practices” found in this community of practice new to them, IAS find themselves as outsiders, longing to gain entry to this imagined community of practice through any means possible.

Adapting from what Darvin and Norton (2015, p.47) had hoped to achieve through the Model of Investment, the proposal of the online Development Toolkit as “investment” in the context of this research can be understood as such –

> *“By raising questions about their own ways of thinking of* ***their own status quo*** *(the research participants’ classroom and work environments, their position in them and how their sense of self and identity are shaped by them), it seeks to enable* ***more opportunities for reflexivity and dissent*** *(efforts made in questioning and opposing their status quo), so that learners may not only* ***participate in*** *(engaging using their new symbolic capital and power) but also* ***transform the multiple spaces of their life worlds*** *(enabling the positive reconstruction of their identity through time and space, and ultimately gain entry into their imagined community)”*

The main conception of the online Development Toolkit (‘DT’ hereafter) and its design was based on the key assumption that one of its intended outcomes was to empower its user (the IAS) to acquire the symbolic and material resources to increase their capital and power to enter their new imagined community. Situating this imagined community within the wider context of a UK HEI teaching and learning environment, the desired habitus in which members would operate within should ideally be informed by the guiding principles proposed in the QAA Quality Code on “Learning and Teaching” (The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2018) with strong emphasis on “effective learning and teaching” and “student engagement” in the target language, for example. The items of learning included in the online DT were designed with an aim to enhance and improve the academic’s effective teaching and communication, and student engagement skills in the target language, with the view that these will match the professional and academic identities and qualities (habitus) practised by members in that imagined community. With my four years of experience working as an English language teacher in a secondary school and, in particular in lessons planning and designs in this case, combined with both my undergraduate as well as postgraduate degrees and training in English language teaching, I was able to confidently and appropriately researched and identified varied and suitable multimedia materials and resources from the internet to use as the basis for the content of the weekly learning programmes.

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With the main objectives of the online DT as mentioned above as the focal point, for each weekly learning programme, the chosen content for each week was followed by a list of "Thinking points" for the participants and these were designed inspired by the "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" practice as suggested by (Schon 1983).

The table below lists the overview of the online DT, a 6-week self-learning programme and their "thinking points", which the participants will have to engage critical "reflection-in action/reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) in order to answer.

Table 1: Overview of the online Development Toolkit

Week	Learning programme content and instructions to participants	Thinking Points - *Elements of critical "reflection-in-action" will be marked with RIA and "reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) marked with ROA*
One	Participants read an article on research conducted with 100 undergraduate students on qualities perceived to be teaching excellence and provide their reactions to the thinking points and their reflection	1. Do you agree with these? 2. How many of these qualities do you practise in your teaching? (ROA) 3. Do you always do them? (ROA) 4. Do you do them well? (ROA) 5. What other qualities do you have that is missing from the list? 6. Practise some of these qualities with your students and let me know how you get on! (RIA and ROA)
Two	Participants watch a short TEDtalk video clip and provide their responses to the thinking points and reflection	1. Did you find it interesting? 2. What made it interesting? 3. Can you adopt some of his delivery style? – body language, hand gestures, the use of the right visual aid at the right time; using pauses; humour; using questioning? (ROA) 4. Can you adopt some of his suggestions? Using the correct register; tone? Pace? (ROA and RIA) 5. Pick a couple of his techniques that you have never used before and try them with your students and record your reflection below: (ROA and RIA)
Three	Participants read, consider and potentially try out 10 useful pointers in a framework for effective teaching practice by the Teaching and Educational Development Institute at The University of Queensland and provide their reflection	1. Did you get the opportunity to adopt any of the pointers and suggestions? (ROA) 2. If you have not, please explain why? (ROA) 3. If you have, did they work? In what way did they work or not work for you? (ROA)
Four	Participants consider a resource on "Student feedback: Responding Constructively" by The University College Dublin and	1. Have you ever received student comments in the similar nature to the examples given in the table above? (ROA) 2. How did the comments make you feel?

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	provide their reflection to the thinking points	3. Can you make use of the table above in dealing with your own student feedback? 4. Did you find the exercise useful? 5. Yes – why? 6. No – why?
Five	Participants read about students' likes and dislikes of their professors' PowerPoint presentations from a survey conducted in Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania and a TED blog post listing 10 useful tips on how to make better slides to better communicate ideas and provide their reflection to the thinking points	1. Have you ever reflected on the effectiveness of your PowerPoint slides in communicating your ideas to your students? (ROA) 2. Is this something you consider to be important in your lessons? 3. Do you agree with the tips in the TED blog post? 4. Are you open to trying out some of the tips from the blog post and incorporate them in your PowerPoint presentation slides? 5. If not, can you explain why?
Six	Participants read points from a compendium on 'Using peer-observation to enhance teaching' produced by Leeds Metropolitan University and then observe a lesson online before responding to the thinking points with their reflections	1. What have you observed? Are there prominent points from the observation? 2. Have you learned any new techniques or tricks you can adopt in the classroom yourselves? 3. What would you avoid doing? (ROA) 4. Did you think that was a good or bad lesson? (ROA) 5. Why? (ROA)

The full suite of the DT can be found in Appendix G.

The pilot study participants had confirmed that the proposal of the DT in the main study would be useful and effective. However, they warned that completing each weekly task as well as fulfilling the self-reflection section might prove challenging given their workload, so this was the caveat which the researcher needed to be aware of and consider in the reality of implementing the DT.

Aligning with this doctorate degree having Creative and Media as its disciplinary context, this online DT which combined various multimedia online resources and the "Thinking points" was launched online via email in the last week of March 2017 and lasted for six weeks, with a different activity emailed to the participants at the start of each week. Participants were urged to email their response to the 'thinking point section' and their reflection of the activity once completed. The first email which introduced the DT set out the dates and frequency in which the participants would receive the subsequent activities and the expectations, as well as the main aim of the programme. Please refer to Appendix H for the template of the email.

Seven participants took part in the DT, including a participant from the pilot phase. The RRL recorded the acute awareness of the reality that participants' demanding and challenging workload meant not all were engaging weekly, and it was highly unlikely to receive a complete set of feedback from all seven participants for all six activities. This was as forewarned by the pilot study participants and mirrored real-life challenges faced by academics in attempts to engage and invest extra time and effort in professional development initiatives.

3.7.3 Phase Three – Interview 2, Post Development Toolkit

After the intervention stage had concluded in Phase Two, all seven participants were invited again to another round of much shorter in-depth, semi-structured interviews.

Some participants who took part in Phase Two were reluctant to re-engage but after reassurance from the researcher that there was no requirement to complete the whole suite of the DT prior to the interview in Phase Three, they finally agreed to be interviewed again.

The interviews were conducted in the same rigour as Phase One. The interview schedule was designed according to four main categories – Process, Content, Identity Reconstruction and Future (refer to Appendix I for Phase Three interview schedule and questions). The questions under "process" and "content" sought to gauge from participants their views and reactions to the DT; and "Identity Reconstruction" and "future" were devised to document any suggestion or evidence of the positive reconstruction of identity with Norton's (1997) definition of "identity" featuring centrally – identity was "the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation, and the desire for security and safety". It is also "how people understand their relations to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future" (ibid, p.410).

In the second interview phase, the RRL recorded that lessons learnt from Phase One meant the researcher had spoken lesser, and had actually taken the initiative to listen more to what participants had to share, compared to during the Phase One semi-structured interviews. All interviews were successfully conducted within the timeframe, with some participants having more to say about the DT compared to others.

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3.7.4 The Participants – A Descriptive Summary

As a whole, the pilot study recruited two participants; Phase One of the study recruited seven participants; Phase Two of the study also recruited seven participants (including one from the pilot study); and lastly Phase Three recruited seven participants.

A summary overview of demographics of each participant (both from the pilot study as well as the main study) is presented below, in order to introduce the participants to the reader. It should be highlighted here that these summaries do not form part of the research analyses or interpretations – they merely provide more contextual information about the participants so that readers can get to know them better. To protect their privacy, the participants' actual names are replaced by pseudonyms not just in the section below but throughout the study, with minimal details provided about them so as not to jeopardise exposing their true identities.

Ang

Ang from China is a male lecturer in the STEM subject area and has been in an established academic position for 8 years, since arriving in the UK. Before the UK, Ang lived and taught in a South-East-Asian country for 9 years and he has credited his previous life and work experience in helping to adjust to life in the UK. Ang spoke with an accent which made some of the utterances unintelligible during the transcription processes. The RRL also recorded the heavy use of prompts and probes to ensure Ang understood the questions. However, Ang came across as warm, friendly, and enthusiastic and keen to help in my research. Even during our previous exchanges before he became my research subject, Ang had always been gracious and professional and appreciative of any support that was provided to him. In fact, Ang was so helpful that after the first interview, Ang proceeded to recommend a few of his colleagues who were IAS whom I could approach as my potential research subjects.

Beng

Beng is a newly established male lecturer who at the time of interview has been in post for less than a year. Originally from Malaysia, Beng is of Chinese heritage. Before being appointed in an academic position as a lecturer in the STEM subject area, Beng had been in the UK for 15 years, starting out as an undergraduate student. It was easy

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to understand Beng during our conversations probably because we came from the same background. As I recalled, Beng was self-assured and courteous during the interviews, but he was quite reserved at times and some of his responses were short to the point of being curt, if misconstrued. Beng had appeared rather nonchalant about his adjustment to his UK work environment, and things seemed to be going as they were expected. The RRL also recorded Beng being highly critical and sceptical of the research plan and objectives to a point where it was noted that "the participant seemed to have spent more time being critical of the research rather than sharing his views of the proposed learning programme".

For the first interview with Beng, I had booked a room on campus specifically for it. When we both entered the room, unfortunately a student had been using it to conduct an online interview and upon being asked to leave, the student had been unhappy and became rude and when Beng was adamant that he had to leave so that our interview could begin, the student had gestured rudely towards Beng before dashing out. That could have potentially affected Beng's mood and emotion during the interview process.

Cing

Cing, who is a female from Japan, is a softly spoken lecturer in arts and humanities. She compared her adjustment period in the UK to the US. Cing also arrived in the UK as an undergraduate student 14 years ago, and had been in an established academic position for the past 8 years by the time of the interview. Although Cing spoke with a slight Japanese accent, it was not difficult to decipher what Cing was trying to convey if close attention was paid to the speech. The one and only interview with Cing was conducted in her home and with her toddler present and though I managed to ask all my intended questions and lots of data was generated in the interview, there were some minor distractions during the interview that may have influenced Cing's responses. Cing unfortunately declined participation in the online Development Toolkit phase after the first interview.

Ding

Ding is a male lecturer from China in the STEM subject area. By the time of the first interview, Ding had been in an established academic position for between three to four years. Starting out as a post-doctoral researcher, Ding had been in the UK for almost eleven years. In many instances, Ding processed and deliberated on many of his responses, before sharing his views and opinions. Ding also spoke with a slight accent, but with clear and appropriately punctuated utterances so comprehension was not a major issue during the transcription processes.

Eng

Eng is also from Malaysia and is a male lecturer in arts and humanities. Like Beng, Eng is also of Chinese heritage but that is where the similarity ends. Eng shared a lot during both interviews and quite often spoke of his previous places of establishment with nostalgia. It was also where he had started his first teaching post and where he had obtained his doctorate degree. Eng started out in the UK seven years ago as a "tutor" (equivalent to a teaching fellow) due to the fact that he did not have a PhD then and the organisation was not able to appoint him to a lecturer post. Having also had previous part-time work experiences in Malaysia and in Australia, Eng saw himself as a truly global lecturer with extensive knowledge and experience. By the time of the interview, Eng had worked in an established post for seven years, as long as he had been in the UK. Unlike other participants, Eng spoke extensively about his other colleagues, in the present as well as past establishments as if I too, knew them. Eng came across as friendly, and like Beng, due to the fact that we were both Malaysians speaking in English, it was not a problem at all understanding Eng. But unlike Beng, Eng was talkative, willing to share, and the conversations flowed freely. And because we were both of similar age range, we were also reminiscing old Chinese songs and common cultural nuances that we both knew and, I felt I could relate easily to Eng.

Fang

Fang is a female lecturer in arts and humanities from South Korea. Fang compared her current work establish with that of her previous ones in America and Hong Kong. Fang started out her life in the UK straight away in an established lecturer post. At the time of the interview, Fang had been in the UK for between one to two years. Fang was very friendly, animated, and bubbly and even when relating negative experiences, she still had a smile on her face. Perhaps due to her previous stint in America, she spoke with only a slight accent, and it was not a problem at all understanding Fang.

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Gao

Gao is also from China and is a male lecturer in a STEM subject. Gao arrived in the UK in 2002 as a PhD student; and later became a part-time lecturer and demonstrator before taking up an established lecturer post eight years ago. Gao also spoke with an accent, and it was rather hard to understand Gao at times and recalling the interview processes, I had to clarify the questions many times and a lot of probing and prompting statements and questions were used. The process of transcribing the interviews also posed significant challenges compared to others. However, perhaps to show willing to participate in 'things', Gao was obliging through all stages of the research process including participating in the online Development Toolkit. Gao was not talkative in nature and a lot of things had to be 'teased out' through additional questioning.

Han

Han was one of my earliest research subjects from my pilot study phase. Naturally, he was helpful and friendly and warm, which was one of the main reasons for targeting him for the pilot study. Han is also from China, and is a male lecturer in a STEM subject area. Han spoke of his students with warmth and genuine professional affections. Han arrived in the UK as a post-doctoral researcher 12 years ago and had been in an established lecturer post for the past seven years. Han also spoke about his partner who was a fellow Chinese lecturer in another HEI. Han was the perfect research subject and was very co-operative and after the pilot study, I made the decision to also invite him to take part in the Development Toolkit which he was happy to comply with. Outside of this relationship as researcher and research subject, as previously mentioned, I have a professional support role within the organisation and both Han and myself have previously corresponded in various different capacities and for various purposes. Han had always been warm, friendly, and easy to talk to. Although Han spoke with a slight accent, much like Ding, understanding Han was not an issue at all.

Ing

Ing, a female lecturer from China in arts and humanities, also arrived in the UK as a PhD student, 14 years ago. At the time of the interview, Ing had been in an established

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post for seven years. Ing spoke with an accent but if enough attention was paid to the speech, it was not difficult to understand Ing. Like Han, Ing was also another one of my research subjects during the pilot study phase. Although Ing showed appreciation during the pilot study phase for having the opportunity to reflect on her experience and transitional period to the UK, perhaps due to other work commitment, Ing did not respond when contacted about the Development Toolkit phase and in line with the ethical approach in conducting a research project, I stopped contacting Ing after a second email was sent that generated no responses.

3.7.5 The role of reflexivity

Langdridge (2013) revealed that "Reflexivity" is a pivotal component of qualitative research but is unfortunately not often treated seriously. He explained the process of "reflexivity" as a "process in which researchers are conscious of and reflective about the ways in which their questions, methods…might impact on the psychological knowledge" (pp.58-59). Dodgson (2019) described research reflexivity as a way of ensuring rigour and quality; it is standard practice in instilling trustworthiness for the research.

Some IPA literature on reflexivity concentrates heavily on the data analysis process (Pringle et al. 2011; Gauntlett et al. 2017; Vicary et al. 2017). Pringle et al. (2011) mentioned that "reflection" can help to achieve validity in the analysis process while Gauntlett et al. (2017) suggested that because IPA studies recognise the role of researcher reflexivity, this translated to the fact that IPA data analysis is subjective and there will be no attempt of any "bracketing" by the researcher. However, quoting Fook and Gardner (2007), they went on to acknowledge that reflexivity is the ability to understand that every aspect and context of us as researchers, influence how we research. Vicary et al. (2017) proposed the use of a journal during the data analysis process as a reflective mechanism.

In some cases, the importance of researcher reflexivity was not mentioned altogether (Lech et al. 2017; Tuffour 2017; McCormack and Joseph 2018; Noon 2018). However, much like Langridge, I feel that researcher reflexivity in qualitative research involves constantly reflecting and questioning the research methodology and practices in all stages of the process and not just during data analysis, allowing past experiences and

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knowledge to guide and inform future practices, to generate the best data to fulfil the main research aims.

This was evident in the knowledge and learning experiences gained through conducting the Pilot Study as well as through the various reflections on processes of the main study found in the RRL. The RRL in itself, was evidence that this project relied on a rigorous and ongoing process of reflection and review, taking into consideration aspects such as the position and identity of the researcher, the relationship and the rapport that I shared and had built with participants during the multi-stage interview process, my thought process during the construction of my question set, my feelings during the execution of the Development Toolkit and participants' responses, and even the transcription process. Quoting Mruck and Breuer (2003), Ortlipp (2008) highlighted that researchers are encouraged to talk about themselves, their preconceptions, their choices and the decisions they make, their experiences and actions during the research process.

However, Finlay (2002) and Dodgson (2019) cautioned, issues around reflexivity in the research process is complex, muddy and plagued with ambiguity and uncertainties. Practical guidance in the processes and implementation of reflexivity has also been scarce and limited (Goldspink and Engward 2019). How then, does one ensure a robust, a systematic and a dynamic reflexive approach to enhance and add value to the research?

Finlay (2002) introduced five variants of reflexivity: 1. introspection, 2. intersubjective reflection, 3. mutual collaboration, 4. social critique, and 5. discursive deconstruction. I found reflexivity as introspection particularly relevant to my research process. This research was fundamentally born out of reflection of my own sense of identity in the workplace and how others perceive me (being an ethnic minority in a predominantly British setting); my sense of self-esteem and confidence and how I can be better! As Finlay (2002, p.213) explained, researchers who start their research with "data of their experience" seek to form a basis for understanding their participants through their own experience. Almost throughout the entire process of thinking about this research and its methodology, it was extremely challenging for me not to relate participants' experience to my own. As the researcher, I was constantly examining my own experience and the personal meanings of this research. This process of constant introspection, in my opinion, had formed the basis of my better understanding and

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interpretations during the processes of data collection and analyses, especially during the pilot study where varied and interesting insights had emerged about myself and my understanding of the research participants.

Sally Goldspink and Sarah Vicary are strong advocates of reflective journaling as part of the research process and have successfully utilised this tool in their doctoral theses (Vicary et al. 2017; Goldspink and Engward 2019). Like my use of RRL, in Sally Goldspink's case, journaling helped her to evidence her appraisals, thoughts, observations and her reminiscences throughout the research process in the forms of scribbles, doodles and textual narrative and helped to focus her thoughts in the "hermeneutic circle" with her interpretations growing from these "fore-structures". As Goldspink emphasised – "writing necessitates researchers find the words to express their thoughts, making a conversation between the participant voice and the researcher's inner world thinking visible to the external audience" (Goldspink and Engward 2019, p.303).

This was particularly true in my case where I had started keeping a journal recording ad-hoc and random thoughts and reflections throughout the entire doctoral process. I found these extremely useful and valuable in guiding and organising my thoughts and ideas, and would recommend this to prospective doctoral students.

3.8 Data Analysis Strategy

After all phases of the data collection process had concluded, the interview transcription began. The process was undertaken solely by the researcher, using otranscribe.com, a free and easy to use web-based open-source software designed to help researchers with their transcription process. It was extensive and involved listening to the audio files multiple times. For the purposes of protecting the identity of the participants in line with all ethical considerations, during the transcription process, all known names of individuals and places were also removed to prevent potential speculation and association of the names to the participants.

The data analysis process was organised and executed in accordance with the data collection process – transcripts from Phase One were analysed separately from transcripts from Phase Three. The findings chapter follows a similar pattern for consistency. As the pilot study questions were designed to emulate the main study, and the fact that one of the participants from the pilot study phase also took part in the DT phase, it made sense for the data collected through the pilot study to be incorporated into the main study analysis to contribute to the quality and richness of the data.

In IPA research, the aim is for the researcher to make sense of the participants' sense-making of their experience through personal accounts or perceptions of an object or event; this is done through a two-stage interpretation process called double hermeneutics. The data analysis process in IPA is focused on the researcher trying to understand "what it is like, from the point of view of the participants", whilst also critically asking questions of the participants' accounts, such as "what is the person trying to achieve here"? (Smith and Osborn 2008, p.53)

Although Smith et al. (2009) had stressed that no single method has been recommended or identified for working with data in the analysis of IPA research, they recommended a practical and helpful framework consisting of a 7-step analysis guide, which became a useful foundation in guiding the data analysis process in this project.

The table below outlines the steps and processes that I have taken which were adapted from the IPA analysis steps suggested by Smith et al. (2009) and Smith and Osborn (2003), alongside notes, descriptions and justifications for the data analysis practice.

Table 2: Data Analysis Stages and Process (adapted from Smith et al. 2009)

Step	**Step description**	**Analysis Process**
1	Reading and re-reading and Initial Noting	Even during the transcription process, the first initial noting and coding of salient points took place with annotations of researcher reflections where relevant on the transcripts; Once the transcription process had finished, I started to re-examine the transcript again closely to continue the annotation and coding process. Whist reading the transcript, occasionally there was also need to re-listen to sections of the audio-recording for multiple times in order to capture and understand the experiences shared and the underlying meanings; Some of these notes made included further describing and summarising something

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		important that the participant may have said; making comparisons and associations within the same transcript; observing the use of language, and making conceptual comments of what the participant has said (Smith et al. 2009).
2	Developing emergent themes	The transcript is examined again carefully but this time with the intention to organise any observations, points, notes, and comments made into more meaningful units and where relevant and of importance, these notes were turned into more concise phrases at a higher level of abstraction.
3	Searching for connections across emergent themes	This stage involved an effort to reduce the range of the initial themes by identifying and making connections and associations between them where relevant; this was done through use of NVIVO as a tool in organising the initial emergent themes into a hierarchical structure of nodes (consisting of clustered themes). This formed the foundation for the next step; The nodes and its structure were checked against the transcript again to ensure the broader themes still linked back to the words of the participant; The use of NVIVO also enabled the relevant quotes to be identified more easily during the writing up process; (See Appendix J for a snapshot of this analysis and structure on NVIVO)
4	Final theme structure	In the next step, the superordinate themes were identified through the hierarchy of nodes and from the connections between clustered themes created in the previous step (Smith and Osborn 2003); A table of these themes and clusters was then created on an Excel spreadsheet with the sub-headings of sub-ordinate and super-ordinate themes to represent their hierarchy and connection to one another.
5	Moving to the next case	The rest of the transcripts followed the same approach from steps 1 through to 4. I was mindful of approaching each case with little to

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		no preconceived notion of the previous ideas and themes that have emerged in the last transcript examined and to allow new themes to form organically.
6	Looking for patterns across cases	The individual table produced in Step 4 was then combined and organised into a colour-coded master spreadsheet to give an overview of all the sub-ordinate and super-ordinate themes that have emerged; (Please see Appendix K for a snapshot of the data analysis overview master spreadsheet) With the help of colour-coding, all super-ordinate themes and their sub-ordinate themes across all participants were compared for similarities and differences with some of the previously identified super-ordinate themes modified where relevant; and the isolated and less relevant super-ordinate themes dropped from the process; These were then further organised into a more meaningful structure of master theme, followed by their super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes.

Throughout the entire data analysis process, I found repeatedly following and referring to the steps to be useful and helpful to maintain consistency in my data analysis approach. As noted by Goodall (2014), the analysis process was very much a "cyclical" rather than a "linear" (p.44) process, especially with steps 2 and 3, as and when the data set required me to go through each transcript and my notes repeatedly to achieve a comprehensive and robust analysis process.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Findings

Introduction to chapter

This chapter synthesises data from the research which was gathered through Phase One of semi-structured interviews; with the online DT as intervention in Phase Two, before the Phase Three interviews. It then outlines findings from the analysis of the data based on Smith et al.'s (2009) Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis methodology as illustrated previously. The emergent themes from both interview phases will be summarised and presented with analysis of the execution of the DT in between phases.

The IPA write-up

With the motivation of all aspects of a thesis being towards the contribution of knowledge, it might be considered more efficient to frame the findings in a way that directly answers the research questions. However, this research was conducted using an IPA methodology and it is important to be faithful to this approach in all areas. Whilst, according to Smith et al. (2009), "there is not a single right way to write up an IPA analysis" (p.108), for the data and its analysis and findings to make sense to readers and be of value, Smith et al. (2009) strongly suggested that in a typical IPA "write-up", the results sections would largely be "constituted by transcript extracts" and this is accompanied by "the detailed analytic interpretations of the text" (p.109). The researchers also stressed the importance of "support[ing] [the] account with plenty of quotes from the data" and "presenting extracts from participants" to ensure a strong "evidentiary base" (p.110). Further, common to the IPA approach, "some extracts will seem richer or more illuminating and so one finds oneself needing to say more about them" (p.110). The presentation of data, the analysis and its findings in the subsequent sections of this chapter will therefore follow the same methodology and principles. As cautioned by Noon (2018), in an IPA study, weak language skills could pose barriers and limitations and in the case of most of my participants who were non-native English speakers, there were excessive use of fillers, vocal pauses, repetitions and instances of incomplete sentences, as participants took time to consider and formulate their thoughts in sharing their experience. To provide a smoother reading experience for readers of this study, a pragmatic approach was taken to exclude irrelevant fillers and repetitions that did not directly contribute to the analytic interpretations of the text.

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4.1 *Findings from Phase One: First interview*

In Phase One, participants were invited to semi-structured interviews to talk about their adjustment periods, and work experiences in their environment; coping strategies, sense of self and their identity/ies, and opinion regarding investment in general. Most of the interviews lasted longer than an hour and being semi-structured, the conversations led to unplanned territories and became unstructured on occasions, in keeping with the essence of the research, which was to give voice to the participants.

The main emphasis during Phase One interview was to address the first two research questions previously illustrated.

The areas of focus were on exploring participants' lived experiences in their teaching and work environments, how they regard their sense of self and their identity/ies in these environments; their resilience and the coping strategies employed, or potential support received to help navigate through these; and their motivation and willingness to invest in developing themselves.

Following systematic and complex data analyses that went through a few iterations and evolutions, four main broad master themes have emerged from the data that aligned with the overarching research aims:

I: Environment and Network

II: Teaching and Coping

III: Sense of Self and Identity

IV: Improvement and Support

Under each broad master theme, the findings will be classified and presented under various super-ordinate themes (Smith et al. 2009) that relate to them, with interpretative narrative, extracts and quotes from interview transcripts (in blue font) to support the presentation of the findings. As Smith et al. (2009) advised, "the most orderly sequence is to take each theme in turn and present evidence from each participant to support each theme" (p.109). To illustrate how each super-ordinate theme relates to the participants, at the start of each theme, there will be a table

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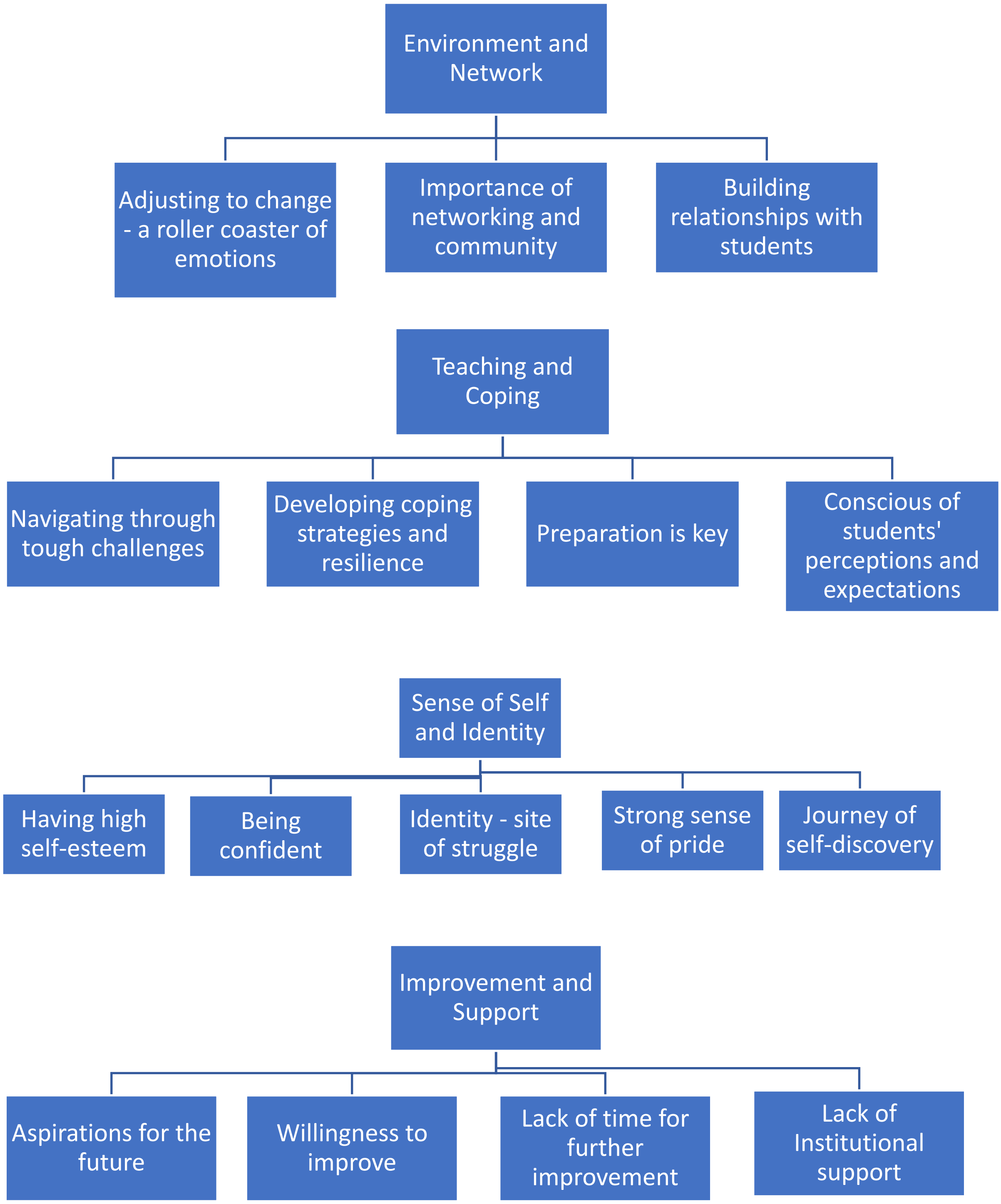
showing the level or recurrence of each super-ordinate theme across all participants (Smith et al. 2009, p.107).

The figure below is a visual representation of the theme structure and how the broad master themes relate to their respective super-ordinate themes.

Figure 2: A diagrammatic representation of the broad master themes and their super-ordinate themes – Phase One



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4.1.1 *Master Theme I – Environment and Network*

Under Environment and Network, the super-ordinate themes are - Adjusting to Change – a roller coaster of emotions, Importance of networking and community, and Building relationship with students.

4.1.1.1 Adjusting to change – a roller coaster of emotions

Super-ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Adjusting to change – a roller coaster of emotions	•			•	•	•			•

Being unfamiliar with their new professional, and social surroundings and systems, not having friends and being apart from family were the concerns some participants had initially.

Ang was more affected by the difference in climate and the physical "environment", town structure and the way of life which he found was challenging.

> *"…come to the UK… everything's quite different… outside environment… the weather… climate… quite challenging… UK is more like suburb area…"* (Ang, p.1)

Beng on the other hand seemed unperturbed; and the use of language reflected that.

> *"I mean... **let's put it this way**, I didn't consciously put effort into trying to adjust myself to the environment. Yeah, I probably did some unconscious, but **I don't know**..."* (Beng, p.1)

Despite having previous mobility experience, Eng still found it difficult adjusting to his new environment, especially navigating the system.

> *"…professionally definitely it's a big shift…it was really difficult because it was the first year that I exposed to the UK system which is completely different from the Australian system… in Australia…we did not have second marking, third marking, or these meeting like board of study, board of examiners, and external examiners"* (Eng, p1.)

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Network and kinship featured strongly in Eng's professional and social life. Arriving in the UK, feeling isolated and alone had a negative impact on his adjustment period and his work.

> *"...definitely major shift both positive and negative... I arrived in the UK on my own, I do not have family here...it was really difficult...it was the first year that I exposed to the UK system"* (Eng, p.1)

Eng also found his British teaching team reserved and unhelpful, which was challenging. Eng however admitted that this could be due to the working culture when he noticed similar trends in a previous UK HEI.

> *"British are generally quite reserved anyway...they are quite independent... after two or three months... you are expected to do it without any guide...that was a big learning curve... I think the* [redacted] *[another UK HEI] culture as well everyone so busy...They're helpful... but not limitless so it's that you need ...moderate in terms of how often you ask for help."* (Eng, p.2)

Eng was proud when he finally became accepted.

> *"after maybe two years, they get to know me...of course I did a good job as well...they recognised that"* (Eng, p.2)

That signalled the moment that Eng had established his position and gained entry to the group (habitus), sealing his sense of belonging.

Fang also experienced a difficult cultural shift and felt she could not be herself and that her bubbly, approachable, and talkative personality aligned more with American rather than British culture.

> *"I spent...time in America... I am not Americanised, but I'm familiar with the culture, people, outspoken, small chats in the hallway, people are warm, expressive... all the time [adjusting her personality to suit the British environment] I was like, Oh...I talk too much, right?...Yeah that's been quite difficult...I have to like... stop myself"* (Fang, p.2)

Fang also thought her British counterparts unhelpful –

> *"when new people came in, they don't really like actively help"* (Fang, p.9).

Being softly spoken, and quite reserved, Cing's impression of her British counterparts was more amenable as she related better to the British.

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> *"in the US...they're very friendly, in front... they don't mean it... [British] people are not that open. When you first meet them, they're quite reserved. But once you [get to know them], they open up... they are really welcoming you"* (Cing, p.1)

Ding felt insecure about his language skills as he speculated about how he might be viewed by his counterparts, especially with regards to communication with them. Although Ding thought that the British "tend to keep to themselves" and that "everyone's happy", this has prevented opportunities for socialisation for Ding, which has caused him to deal with issues of "loneliness" (Ding, p.12). However, Ding saw that as mostly due to his personality, as he stressed numerous times.

> *"due to my personality, I'm not very chit-chat person...when I go to a party, quite often I don't know what to say..."*

> *"But, that's part of personality, part of the language issues if you don't speak well, you can't socialise well, and also partly...your personality, so all come mixed...I feel sometimes lonely, and I feel less than I should in the amount of collaboration with my colleagues in the same department also less socialising event with them...challenging thing for me. But not just because I'm a Chinese, it's because my personality...it is very difficult to say... different things can be jointly concluded the same feeling so to some people they might feel, oh because my language skills, or because my identity as a foreigner I might not integrate into this team better, but that's one perception. There might be some other angles and also the native speakers they might see this differently. They don't think you don't belong to them because your language is not good, maybe just because you don't talk to them every day, if you don't talk, they don't want to push you to talk. And just keep a distance, everyone's happy."* (Ding, p.12)

Ing recounted her 'honeymoon period' where her move was a pleasant change from her native country as a lawyer. Ing's excitement and sense of euphoria at the start meant she felt carefree and paid little attention to how she was adjusting.

> *"...when I first came here... everything looked different...you got nice teaching material, so it was wonderful... the first year. I think I was too busy enjoying myself... to feel anxious or stress or pressure"* (Ing, p.3)

This excitement upon arrival to a new place was shared by Eng, whose excitement about his new job, new system, new training opportunities, all combined to mask his nervousness and made him feel less daunted by the move.

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"…I don't recall being extremely difficult or challenging... In fact I was quite excited about it actually because it was my…first time in UK… first full time paid job, so I remember being very excited…yes… Erm, I feel like I'm learning a lot, I was quite excited, that's why I attend every training I can find…" (Eng, p.6).

4.1.1.2 Importance of networking and community

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Importance of Networking and Community	•	•		•	•	•		•	•

Despite being introverted as claimed, Ding still thought that he got by through his accommodating nature and English skills. That combined with being in a supportive department and network, Ding thought he was well-supported.

> *"I was…accommodating and adapting person… my English wasn't bad, given the first time I came here. So I could ask people around"* (Ding, p.2)

> *"if you have some issues with students usually your colleagues will stand for you"* (Ding, p.11).

Han felt comforted both professionally and socially, being surrounded by fellow Chinese as it provided a supportive and familiar environment and a sense of community and belonging.

> *"… it was kind of lucky for me because my research environment, I get lots of Chinese people, so same nationality, same language, so it's much easier for me to merge into that environment… the life, the academic research, everything kind of quite smooth, very easy"* (Han, p.2)

Being open and friendly, Han benefitted from working with a British post-doctoral researcher who helped improve his language skills and Han saw that as an important point in his transition to the UK.

> *"… at the beginning…he's native English. I worked with him and because at that time it was quite easy for me… his spoken language was really, really clear, everything is so simple, yeah, communication is quite good"* (Han, p.2)

Although Beng seemed nonchalant regarding his transition period, he acknowledged his friendly colleagues for this relatively smooth experience.

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> *"… things are going as expected…colleagues are quite friendly and if I have questions then just ask around and I get some answers..."* (Beng, p.2)

Networking resonated strongly with Eng. Forming tight network, especially with other non-British international colleagues became a beacon of light for him, as he felt his native counterparts were "reserved".

> *"… luckily I met some colleagues…office is just a few doors away…having friendly…non-British…colleagues help…I met other people… all foreigners…sense of community and belonging…. and we become friends"* (Eng, p.2)

The proximity and shared situations between Eng and his new network helped too.

> *"… having someone new starting at the same time…in the same department…live next to each other… all foreigners… immediately allow us to bond"* (Eng, p.2)

Keen to establish bonds, Eng found it easy to share teaching issues and experiences with peers in his team. However, this could be due to Eng having more access to other IAS.

> *"Of course we do…we're quite a small team…"* (Eng, p.13)

Fang thought her female line mangers contributed to her successful adjustment as she felt included in various joint research collaborations, signalling a two-way relationship and collaboration.

> *"…my bosses…department head… both been very supportive…our research …I think they put extra effort to make me feel included. I can see that they're doing extra work for me. Oh, you're doing well... I think they're...maybe it's a female thing..."* (Fang, p.6)

It must be cautioned that this response was prompted by the researcher, who felt at that time it was appropriate to capitalise on the gender issue. On reflection, this could have potentially posed a validity issue. However, without being prompted, Fang volunteered the following to solidify her view –

> *"but other male bosses, if there are other bosses, they could have been different story. I just imagine…"* (Fang, P.6)

Fang also revealed her struggle in unit co-teaching with peers. Being new and foreign, she felt the pressure to compromise and conform to the norm, which was the local practice.

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> *"I've been compromising a lot... because I am obviously a foreigner...they feel like they have to... teach me the way...the British way..."* (Fang, p.6)

Fang's bubbly and approachable personality became a double-edged sword; and she thought of adopting a different persona.

> *"because of my personality, teaching has been working well, but then because of my personality, the power dynamic didn't...I'm too nice... should I just start being mean and not smile"* (Fang, p.5)

Ing's initial excitement turned into loneliness and isolation after she started her PhD. Ing felt disconnected, stressed, and lost, caused by an unsupportive environment and unclear expectations.

> *"With PhD...you feel lonely... you don't quite understand what is expectations on you...we don't have a very encouraging, learning environment for PhD and we were too isolated....you don't quite understand academic activities as a whole"* (Ing, p.3)

Things did not improve once she started teaching. Ing was conflicted. The lack of international network within her subject area stopped her from seeking support; when it came to reaching out to other experienced "international academics" outside of her department, Ing had issues of "trust" (Ing, p.10) and insecurities. Ing did not feel comfortable confiding in other non-international peers.

> *" [Long pause] ... not really ...at that time you don't have the environment to do that. I remember, in [the] department, I don't have the people like me. Outside the...department, there were a couple of international but they are quite experienced now...but you don't have that kind of trust, or that you don't feel comfortable doing that. And there was a subtle thing there..."* (Ing, p.10)

Han who was friendly, approachable and who learned from native peers, in contrast found it difficult reaching out to fellow colleagues (who were also Chinese) for support. As Han and Ing were both Chinese, this could be due to their shared cultural background, which Han confirmed.

> *"... we are in the same position...we know, we are not that good, normally we don't feel comfortable to admit we are not good...I always share with colleagues about my excitement... but when I'm not that good, I don't want to share, I don't like to share... probably it's kind of Chinese personality, for*

Chinese personality, we want to learn from observing but definitely not communicating [with each other]" (Han, p.6)

Gao, who was also Chinese, also avoided talking about teaching issues when he was with fellow Chinese colleagues. (Gao, p.8).

4.1.1.3 *Building relationships with students*

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Building relationship with students	•			•		•	•	•	

Ang placed importance on building relationship and personal rapports with students to gain trust. Ang showed a high level of empathy and a sense of moral duty towards students, being proud of his teaching quality.

> *"Yeah.... between the lecturer and the students ...you need to gain their trust. If they trust you, they like you, the more they like you, the more they listen to you and the more they follow you... if every time you ask them, you call their names... in the corridor or in campus or if you're in supermarket, or on your way back, you often meet some students, rather than just say hello, if you call their names, they feel like more personal. They feel more important"* (Ang, p.4)

> *"Overall it's quite good. I got like 80% [feedback from students] ..."* (Ang, p.7)

Ding relied on communicating with students to gain confidence in enhancing his teaching and to help students focus and learn better.

> *"to get feedback...also from students, to know what we need and what they want us to do, and also I want, I like communication with students..."* (Ding, p.13)

Fang put extra time and energy into building rapport with students.

> *"I put much energy into it...when I walk in like cafeteria like 'Yay Fang" and they are very like, happy to see me... I think I tried to become kind of like... funnier...when I introduce myself, I showed like Psy Gangham style..."* (Fang, p.4)

Gao's relationship building with students happened organically through technology-based teaching and project collaboration in the lab. Through shared technical terminologies, Gao was able to communicate with his students and to guide them, at the same time learning their needs and expectations.

"… mainly from the technical point of view…research point of view…different terminologies, different concept, different names …we always kind of support certain…project… technology-based project…talk with students to know what they want and to tell them you know what should they do, prepare… in terms of how the other technology can help do the production… So it's a lot of, I wouldn't say it's negotiation mainly, but it's a lot of you know, thinking ..." (Gao, p.5)

The efforts that Han took to build positive relationships with students became techniques to improve his teaching and in combating his nervousness over student questioning. The extra effort and energy spent to make his lessons interesting for students showed Han had a genuine and keen interest in his students and their receptions to his classes. -

"… for most of the international academics, the difficult part is answer students' questions… If I don't quite understand the students' questions, I ask question …quite enjoy the students ask questions… I think the enjoyable part is when I find out the response from students….if I tell jokes, the students laugh at my joke, that's really the best part… sometimes I talk about the [unclear] mission, I do like the robot, you can see their face, you can see the smiles on their face…" (Han, p.3-4)

In contrast, Cing had made no conscious effort at relationship building with students.

"students are not happy, when they're not happy, they're not happy" (Cing, p.5)

This was caused by how she saw her personality and having preference for doing research over teaching.

"Teaching, sometimes I enjoy it, sometimes I don't …I don't think I'm very good public speaker and that makes it difficult… Now, I'm more researcher than teacher" (Cing, p.3)

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4.1.2 Master Theme II: Teaching and Coping

Under this master theme Teaching and Coping, the super-ordinate themes are- Navigating through tough challenges, Developing coping strategies, Preparation is key and Conscious about students' perception and expectations

4.1.2.1 Navigating through tough challenges

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Navigating through tough challenges	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Almost all participants related periods of tough times in their professional lives that they had to navigate through, with four participants noting their accent to be a challenge.

Ang saw relationship building with students a crucial aspect in his teaching. Although having no problems with general teaching in class, Ang regretted not possessing more advanced language skills to help improve students' experience.

> *"Yeah, spontaneously… kind of challenging… to use the word spontaneously… it's like [unclear] humour, or like jokes…it's a bit difficult to do… to have some spontaneously humour…try to say something to stimulate atmosphere…sometimes students may be a little bit down…or the content a little bit dry…you need more advanced skills, language skills to maybe.. to move things, to stir..."* (Ang, p.9)

Due to his confidence in his subject knowledge, ultimately Ang also felt strongly that language did not necessarily play a key role in someone being able to teach well, and he did not see being spontaneous as a real challenge, but rather, as a skillset he would like to enhance.

> *"I would say language definitely helps a bit, but more importantly I think it's like you know the subject"* (Ang, p.2)

Cing did not enjoy teaching and found it challenging; she had negative perceptions of her students and felt that efforts to engage their attention were too arduous.

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> *"Teaching is challenging… in general… you have to keep attention from students, try to make it interesting… but if it's only serious and too academic, then they will complain"* (Cing, p.3)

Cing felt insecure and marginalised during her early teaching days for being young, and female, with an Asian accent. She taught evening classes to undergraduate mature learners and some of the "men around [her] age…didn't like to be taught by Asian women" (Cing, p.4) and they did not respect her authority because she was an Asian woman.

> *"…I didn't get that from the students who were like 19, 18/19… 20, up to 21 years old. But when it came to 27, 8 and 30 odd men, British men, I had this very strange feeling that they particularly didn't like it…[to] some British men, Asian women are somebody who should serve them, not to teach them… my accent shows that I'm not from here."* (Cing, p.4)

However, this could also be Cing's own sense of insecurity as the men in question did not directly challenge her authority.

> *"Not… challenging… you get this feeling, the way they ask, behave towards you… the way they sit back and do 'this'…. And then their facial expression"* (Cing, p.8)

Cing thought her accent would always disadvantage her because it indicated that she was Asian; even when she had extensive global cultural knowledge and experience, it still made her feel helpless.

> *"My accent shows that…I'm from Asian country… my accent is always a disadvantage…first-hand knowledge of different cultures as my advantage, it always stays that way I don't think my accent becomes advantage at any point"* (Cing, p.8)

In the present day, with maturity and experience, Cing still felt that accent always determined her Asian heritage and how "British men" feel about her.

> *"…if I was native speaker he would have perhaps behaved differently"* (Cing, p.4)

Eng's first year was difficult, dealing with negative comments from students regarding his pace of teaching and accent. He was worried at the beginning of not being on par with his native counterparts and he saw getting rid of his Malaysian accent as means to be "equal" and to improve.

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"… definitely the first year was very difficult and I remember the first year's comment was that I did not understand what he says or I did not understand accent...The reason I get rid of my Malaysian accent and try to speak more proper English…in a way I'm trying to Westernise myself, so that I can be equal with my colleagues, so if I can speak good English, not necessarily perfect English, then I would see myself as more equal to them" (Eng, p.21)

Eng spoke of having confidence and assurance having established himself; however, Eng would always be conscious of his pronunciation.

"being an Asian I'm always, still now, I do that all the time, I'm quite conscious of my pronunciation" (Eng, p.3).

Ing went through tough times during her earlier years especially with native students because she was a young Asian female -

"…other British kids or students, they were a little bit sceptical about a young and international academic, a newly graduate, PhD graduate standing in front of you…" (Ing, p.9)

Ing felt insecure due to her accent, which severely affected her confidence. After receiving negative feedback from students, Ing felt even more anxious about stepping into the classroom.

"if I'm being very frank, it was really a struggle… they had some scepticism…really I think I was thrown into a frying pan and yeah it was quite a struggle…yeah they will say, they will just say that 'I don't understand, I can't follow Ing, her accent is so strong" (Ing, p.9)

Ding also faced a blow to his confidence when students conveyed feedback that they "couldn't follow" (Ding, p.2) his lessons due to his speed and his Chinese accent. Ding's initial challenges included time management issues in lesson planning and preparations and anxiety over covering as many materials as possible within the given timeframe. Both issues seem related as Ding probably received negative feedback on his pace as he struggled to fit in all the planned content during the lesson.

"… it was a bit challenging and because the main challenge was to prepare…And you have to cover so many different materials within one hour slot… From students' feedback I talk too fast sometimes. I rush through and they couldn't follow. And also I had some accent…some Chinese accent, so if I'm too fast sometimes they lose some information from it." (Ding, p2)

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Ding also admitted to feeling lonely and thought it was due to his personality. Unlike Eng's networking experience with other IAS, Ding probably did not find many other international staff around him, much like Ing's situation. This was compounded by the fact that the British were quite content to keep to themselves and that "everyone was happy", which contributed to difficulties in establishing or finding networks of support, even for the accommodating person he claimed to be.

> *"But, that's part of personality… I sometimes feel lonely…it's because my personality…maybe just because you don't talk to them every day, if you don't talk, they don't want to push you to talk. And just keep a distance, everyone's happy"* (Ding, p.12)

For Han, due to the lack of confidence in his language skills and nervousness in the early days, he prepared everything for his lesson, from the content of the lesson to the language to use and he would mentally go through the lesson so that he was prepared, especially for student questioning. That was time consuming.

> *"At the very beginning, because I prepared everything… and before the lesson, I had to go through everything, to think through everything – what I'm going to talk, what I'm going to speak at that moment so prepared a lot, not only content but also the language"* (Han, p.3)

Related to that Gao thought that demands from his workload meant there was a lack of lesson preparation time.

> *"I would say the more challenges is we don't have enough time to prepare sometimes"* (Gao, p.7)

Due to his untalkative nature and his way of handling or hiding things, I sensed that even if there were problems, Gao may not have shared them with me.

Gao thought that having "language issues" was natural for Chinese academics in the UK. But this referred to his teaching team who had received negative student feedback, and not him personally.

> *"…you know, for some Chinese, because you know probably the language issues…"* (Gao, p.9)

When delved deeper, Gao thought the issues may not always be language-related as claimed, and that the feedback may have been unfounded.

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"…problem is student said this might be the language issues, the barriers, they don't understand [the topic], or maybe the lecturer doesn't understand the topic…" (Gao, p.9)

Although not openly admitting to facing language issues, Gao's experience with language wasn't a straightforward one.

"…but certainly it's improved a lot…I could, you know, communicate more… " (Gao, p.5).

Issues on gender also came up as a challenge for some.

Whilst Ding expressed full support for gender equality initiatives, there was an underlying sense of conflict. Ding was unfairly treated when he applied for a promotional opportunity and got side-lined due to gender policy within the department. He did not agree with the policy and thought the appointed candidate wasn't qualified.

"…some time last year they were trying to find a deputy head for that. I applied. I didn't get it because there was another female applicant. Well, I agree if you know this person is more suitable for this position in the professional way, it's fine, but just because you need a female to be the deputy head, that reason sounds a little bit, too much for me." (Ding, p.7)

Ding was annoyed when he recalled previous efforts taken in ensuring gender representation in a PhD viva and he could not see the reasoning behind it, demonstrating a lack of empathy or understanding in gender policies, or even the lack of respect for the female when he used the phrase "some woman, some female".

"…there's a bit trouble for everyone, like last time when I interviewed my PhD, we had four members supervisor team all male, then we had to find someone… we decide to invite another person to be the chair, who is also male. But then we were told that you must find someone to sit there, just ***some*** *woman,* ***some*** *female [OBSERVATION: sounds almost exasperated by it] just sit there... ah really? So in the end, I asked another colleague to help. She was happy but then that's kind of extra for her.* ***Why should we do that****?"* (Ding, p.7)

Eng had the stereotypical opinion that females in academia had the added challenge of balancing work and social life and his female colleagues seemed more worried about settling down and having families than establishing themselves professionally at the workplace. To Eng, male academics typically tended to concentrate more on their professional life than their social life.

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"…female colleagues they're often trying to balance their work life and their social life… one of the issues we often talk about is very difficult to find a partner… female colleagues…they think they feel like they cannot meet good guys…so eventually many of them have left…I think being a male we don't really worry about that…" (Eng, p.14)

Fang was vocal and frustrated for being disadvantaged due to her gender.

Fang felt disadvantaged not being a male academic who was "white, tall [and with] deep voice" (Fang, p.2). Fang and her husband both arrived together and worked in the same faculty. Comparing herself with her husband, who shared similar qualifications and career paths, Fang had had a challenging and frustrating first year adjusting.

Fang felt disrespected because she's not white and male.

"… similar teaching experience… similar qualifications… but he's a white, male, tall… deep voice, never smile kind of guy… it's hard to pin down, and there is no documented evidence… I feel like he's more respected in the department" (Fang, p.2)

Fang was discriminated against for promotional opportunities and teaching allocations again for not being "tall, white male with deep voice" (Fang, p.4). Having a PhD qualification did not seem to matter much; but being white and male did.

"…so I've been asking to be unit leader instead of like a unit tutor… but my husband's…he's only unit leader for every unit he's teaching, but I had to fight for being unit leader… he has more control over his unit. I'm always unit tutor so I kind of have to follow the unit leader's way"

"… they did some survey… so I really wanted to teach any masters' class… my husband didn't… the following week he got to teach masters class and he didn't even request…we have a male colleague… he doesn't even have a PhD… he's teaching masters class in his first semester without PhD. I mean I have PhD, I've been teaching it, I requested it and ***'hello?'*** *[indicating frustration]…"* (Fang, p.4)

Fang confronted her colleagues but received no constructive feedback and the outcome remained negative. Even more frustrating was she felt unable to officially file a complaint about this discrimination and unfairness for fear of being seen as causing unnecessary problems and creating baseless accusations. This unfair discrimination has made her feel frustrated in her teaching environment.

"… it's hard to pin down, and there is no documented evidence…"

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> *“Yeah... I actually [unclear] out to them…‘what just happened? …and they're like... erm, it's not our fault...they didn't know what to say. I was really upset. These kind of examples .... Yeah, that's the more frustrating part because I cannot officially complain or report or talk to anyone cause maybe people think oh you just…”* (Fang, p.10)

Fang also feared she may be overexaggerating or over-reacting.

> *“I shouldn’t mention gender again but…. And I don’t know, this totally just my personal interpretation…”* (Fang, p.4)

Fang also lacked authority for being “young and female”. Her dissertation students did not respect her, and she struggled to provide guidance and constructive feedback to be taken seriously by the students because she’s not a “professor” with “grey hair”, leaving her feeling helpless and vulnerable to the situation.

> *“students… they have no respect for me. And, another male, older person said the exact same thing…she said ‘Oh he said that, I’ll do it’… if I give them negative comment, maybe they think ‘Oh what do you know right, you’re not a professor’… professor, grey hair… they immediately trusted him, whatever he said, even harsh comment they accept, but if I give them harsh comment, they get upset? … I don’t know how to cope with it actually…”* (Fang, p.7)

4.1.2.2 Developing coping strategies and resilience

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Developing coping strategies	•	•		•	•			•	•

Majority of participants now felt comfortable in their position and their role, and in teaching. However, along the way, participants have tested, trialled, and developed various coping strategies and these were multi-faceted and varied.

One commonality was that they were born out of resilience, perseverance, and determination for a better future.

Eng and Beng cited critical self-reflection during and after lessons as a coping strategy in enhancing their teaching in terms of content planning and delivery -

> *"let's say for example the previous class… the students seems to be more quiet, more bored, and then the next class I will adjust… so it's kind of also learning about the student in the class because different class the student composition may have different behaviour. So, this is all the things, is by observation, so while I'm giving lectures, trying to explain things I observe so some maybe losing interest, you know..."* (Beng, p.3)

> *"also I personally, I often reflect on the way I teach especially after each class. I mean I try to ask myself er did the student understand me, have I given too much content…"* (Eng, p.3)

It was natural for Ang to find efforts in relationship-building with students and gaining students' trust as a coping strategy.

> *"… students come to your office, to ask you questions… have a chat with them, not really about the study… about their parents… their part time job… the more they like you, the more they listen to you and the more they follow you…"* (Ang, p.3-4).

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Ding had discovered better time and lesson content management through a more relaxed style of communication with students. Both exposure and concern for students' learning outcomes had given him confidence and taught him to be less anxious about covering "everything".

> *"…I have better time management with preparation. I have a more relaxed style to communicate with students...I know it's good to remove some things from the materials. You don't worry too much … when you start you want to put everything there but overtime you know you have to remove something to enable people learn better"* (Ding, p.4)

Eng saw relationship-building with peers as a coping strategy. Eng valued support from colleagues who were also "foreigners" (Eng, p.2) and throughout the interview, Eng stressed this a few times.

> *" … luckily I met some colleagues… we're also foreigners in this country…having friendly colleagues help… I met other people…they all foreigners… we become friends… having that kind of colleague… helped me go through the period"* (Eng, p.2)

Eng's bond with his international community of practice was positively stronger than with the community within the department.

> *"…I think having all these non-British colleagues then become friend helps so in fact I turned to that for example* [redacted] *more often than I turn to my line manager or my immediate colleague"* (Eng, p.2)

Eng also employed various coping strategies in enhancing his teaching.

> *"…I tried very hard not use any big words or word I cannot pronounce clearly…every time I prepare my lecture I try to visualise it… I tried to think what sort of questions will I get…what sort of examples do I have to give them so I do try to prepare myself mentally..."* (Eng, p.7)

Eng relied heavily on his knowledge, experience, and reinforcements in helping him build his confidence and in combating nervousness and anxiety over students' questions. His coping strategy was also the confidence to tell students "I will get back to you later on that!" (Eng, p.4), something he would never have thought of before.

> *"…I think knowledge and experiences give me confidence…and then convey into the way I conduct myself in the class…then you reinforce back…it's more like a iterative process… now, I feel like I can answer either, say or, I do not know, I*

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get back to you, or I would take my time to think about it and then explain" (Eng, p.4)

Eng was also highly competitive which he saw as his strong quality and coping strategy.

"…because I'm quite 'kiasu' …I want to do my job well…so I made sure…I'm constantly looking for way[s] to improve myself..." (Eng, p.3)

To give context, in Lexico.com, "kiasu" means (of a person) having a grasping or selfish attitude arising from a fear of missing out on something. In Eng's case, this translated to a sense of fear that he was not doing his job well, and this strong sense of competitiveness within him propelled him to improve.

Eng also saw attending as much training as possible as a coping strategy.

"that's why I attend every training I can find" (Eng, p.6)

Han who previously thought answering students' questions was challenging due to "language barrier" (Han, p.3), saw relationship-building with students as a coping strategy and like Eng, Han was constantly challenging himself and saw being "spontaneous" (rather than relying on prepared materials) as a key coping strategy aside from using "plain language" (Han, p.7).

"I'm trying to practise… kind of trying to make it spontaneous…to challenge myself…how to find out some really, really plain language to explain that…" (Han, p.7)

Ing now felt confident in her position. Her strong resilience was born out of her "perseverance" and her tenacious attitude.

"I keep telling myself… I will never give up… what can't kill you make you stronger… Perseverance…and one of the qualities which I really credit myself…" (Ing, p.5)

Like Eng, her benchmark for excellence was to be "as good as British" (Ing, p.9) which pushed her to commit time and money in seeking out training initiatives from elocution training, public speaking training, Shakespeare reading aloud classes, which she's immensely proudly of, to observing native speakers in the classroom, to identify good practices.

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Ing also learnt to deal with negative criticisms constructively and she no longer thought her accent was an issue.

> *"I do care but I learnt… I've learnt critical analysis…including students' comments. And I do care how they perceive me but I learnt how to evaluate that comment…good or bad…if someone gives me a very harsh comment, I will take it on board… but that doesn't mean that I will just completely accept it… one has to be quite objective…I still have a strong accent but I think it's quite acceptable level."* (Ing, p.5-6)

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4.1.2.3 Preparation is key

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Preparation is key	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•

Preparation before lessons was crucial for most participants for various reasons.

Ang felt that having knowledge in the subject area is key to successful teaching. However, at the same time, he could not rely entirely on his subject expertise.

> *"you must get prepared to answer some questions… especially difficult questions"* (Ang, p.3).

Although Beng came across as being unfazed, he admitted that necessary preparation before class was needed to deal with nervousness. However, his language used such as "bla bla bla" and "okay" showed that he was brushing off the issue and that he wanted to be seen as having the situation under control.

> *"I had to do preparations…do some of my own background research beforehand…so, there's some nervousness …but* ***okay****, having done the background research myself, and adjusting the level of expectations from the students* ***bla bla bla****,* ***okay****, it's fine. There's still some nervousness****, let's say but overall it's fine****"* (Beng, p.2)

Cing thought the first year of teaching was hard and she was exasperated about the time and effort required to prepare just for a one-hour lecture. There was a lack of confidence and total reliance on her prepared materials during her lessons and she saw the adherence to the planned lesson as a success in achieving the objectives, suggesting a teacher-centred approach. It was evident she did not think spontaneous discussions or interactions with students outside of her prepared materials and topics necessary in the classroom.

> *"…first year is very difficult because you have to prepare everything… one hour lecture… imagine speaking for one hour about something, explaining, the preparation takes so much time…if go to another university, and start from scratch…*

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"[Researcher]: you don't deviate too much away from your planned lesson? Cing: no…if the question is that if I would have done anything differently? Then perhaps not, I think I teach what I had to do and I, I don't think there's any other way" (Cing, p.5).

Ding relied heavily on advanced lesson preparations in helping him cope and he gradually found himself improving.

"The preparation took too much time….the main challenge was to prepare… you have to decide in advance what to cover, what not to cover. And you have to cover so many different materials within one hour slot…And, in the past… if I need to remove this part, wouldn't that be too much, and wouldn't that be not good for the students… but now, I'm more confident to remove things and to slow down and even to have a little bit of fun moment" (Ding, p.3)

Eng placed importance on excelling all the time and he saw preparation for lessons as a way to assure him of his readiness and of his confidence in class. As a result, Eng did not recall his teaching experience being too difficult.

"I wanted to do well… I put a lot of time preparing my materials, and make sure I go in very well prepared, erm, yeah I don't recall being difficult, really."

"I prepare my lecture, I try to visualise it, how I'm going to deliver it… what I'm going to do in my lecture… I tried to think what sort of questions… what kind of questions would [they] ask" (Eng, p.6-7)

Han felt nervous and often rehearsed the entire lesson mentally including what to say and when. During his early days, he was so focused on following the prepared slides and ensuring everything would go smoothly, that he did not have the scope to reflect on the outcome of the lessons.

"…at the very beginning, because I prepared everything…before the lesson, I had to go through everything…what I'm going to talk, what I'm going to speak at that moment so prepared a lot, not only content but also the language…so I probably don't notice if the result is good or not, I don't have time or energy to see that…" (Han, p.3)

Han eagerly noted that things have changed for the better. He no longer relied heavily on his slides and was satisfied to disclose the use of spontaneous and current examples as a marker to indicate the confidence to move away from prepared materials.

"… I changed a lot to be honest… at the beginning, I just follow everything on my slides, but right now I put a lot of kind of small stuff…more interesting stuff

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into my teaching, … the example I bring in… is the example I see the night before that day…" (Han, p.3)

Although Han thought that students' questions posed a huge challenge; instead of preparing extensively for potential questions from students, he relied on his subject knowledge and devised his own questioning and clarifying techniques.

> *"…for most of the international academics, the difficult part is answer students' questions…because I know that [the subject] very well… I can answer any question for that topic…if I don't quite understand the students' questions, I ask question…"* (Han, p.3)

Gao felt under pressure from students' high expectations and demands, especially since students started paying higher fees. As a result, he was in a heightened and constant state of preparedness so that he could answer their questions.

> *"… in the UK, I feel that students is very demanding… demanding in terms of want to get the most they paid…comparing in the past…high expectations, we have to really prepare, fully prepare in terms of how to answer their questions. Although they might not ask you any questions, but you have to fully prepared"* (Gao, p.7).

With experience, Ing no longer felt anxious when stepping into her class. She did reveal that if she hadn't spent enough time preparing for the lesson, she would still panic and "feel less comfortable" (Ing, p.8), suggesting perhaps the lack of confidence still, to be spontaneous. Ing also added that she now enjoyed learning and teaching new subjects but stressed again that "a reasonable amount of time for preparation" (Ing, p.3) was needed before teaching.

4.1.2.4 Conscious of students' perceptions and expectations

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Conscious about students' perception and expectations		•	•	•		•		•	•

Beng expressed his curiosity of students' perceptions of him from a professional perspective, detaching any personal and emotional involvement by changing the specific to the general.

> *"…I don't specifically wonder what did **this student** think about me… how does **this student**… **in a general sense** I do wonder, okay, how's the class perceived my lecture today…"* (Beng, p.2)

Cing thought that every lecturer should be self-conscious about students' perceptions and lecturers should "worry about that, how they think of [their] teaching" (Cing, p.5). The irony was Cing had quite negative perceptions of her students and of her students' perceptions of her.

> *"But student feedback is the most annoying…we always talked about student feedback,... one of the things we get is, not personally me, but they would say 'oh I don't understand her language'"* (Cing, p.6)

> *"…most of the time, students are not happy when they're not happy, they're not happy…"* (Cing, p.8)

Ding was conflicted. On the one hand, he didn't seem too bothered; on the other Ding was conscious about being a foreigner with an accent.

> *"…I couldn't guess how they felt about it…one thing did occur to me is that I'm a foreigner…I do have accent…"* (Ding, p.2)

Ding showed resistance towards being judged based on his appearance or heritage. He tried to justify his accent and to compensate that with his professional standing, a strong

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indicator of his self-belief in his prestige, quality, and strength. Nevertheless, he was still conscious of his language.

> *"I am not native speaker so I do have accent…everyone has an accent…in the academic world, everywhere is international, and secondly, if I am here to teach you means I'm really good so it doesn't bother you whether I'm Chinese or English or **whatever**, you are here to learn, and I can teach. If I don't teach, nobody can, then that's my strength. But, erm, but, but sometimes you know my language skills can change from level to level..."* (Ding, p.5)

Fang admitted to stereotyping her students as "British students who might appear a bit arrogant, and looked down on me and don't understand my accent" (Fang, p.6) even before stepping into the classroom. Fang later discovered that while she was feeling extremely nervous, students were merely curious about her.

> *"I was really nervous…when I met them, they were very curious"* (Fang, p.6).

Gao thought that students have become more demanding, since the introduction of tuition fees for domestic students.

> *"…in the UK, I feel the students is very demanding…I mean demanding in terms of want to get the most they paid… comparing in the past…"* (Gao, p.7)

As unit leader, Gao was conscious about negative student feedback received for his Chinese colleagues. However, Gao did not see himself belonging to this group of Chinese colleagues. He saw himself in the role of a programme lead, working to mitigate this negative outcome, and detached from the group who had received the negative feedback even though he was a Chinese academic too.

> *"…sometimes I do talk with other lecturers, because the feedback from students is not very good …yeah some student feedback is not well…for some Chinese…"* (Gao, p.9)

Much like Fang, Han thrived on positive reaction from students.

> *"Yeah. A really happy part for me is, last semester when I finished the last lecture I told them, okay is the last lecture and the students went – ohhhhhh … so I really enjoyed that sound."* (Han, p.5)

Han had a high level of care and awareness of his students' perceptions and expectations by developing various techniques and coping strategies in the classroom

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through the years, ranging from rehearsing before class to employing questioning techniques, and challenging himself to be more spontaneous.

Ing confessed to being "overwhelmed about pressure of teaching" (Ing, p.6) and worrying constantly if students thought she wasn't good enough. However, through time, Ing learnt to critically analyse students' comments and feedback before acting on and reacting to them.

> *"… my first three years, I was really obsessed and overwhelmed with… whether or not I could be a good enough teacher…"* (Ing, p.6)

Although Ing had learnt to deal with students' feedback more constructively, Ing still cared about students' perceptions of her.

> *"I was observed …I got quite good comments but still that doesn't boost your confidence dramatically… ultimately you have to be approved by students…"* (Ing, p.14)

The feeling of inadequacy when in front of students, especially natives, as young, Asian female lecturers was felt by all three females Cing, Fang, and Ing.

> *"I had this feeling they didn't like to be taught by Asian women… when it came to 27, 8, and 30 odd men, British men, I had this very strange feeling that they particularly didn't like it."* (Cing, p.4)

> *"actually dissertation student…I've experienced they have no respect for me….'Oh what do you know right, you're not a professor' …Oh, [unclear] 'professor, grey hair'… they immediately trusted him, whatever he said, even harsh comment they accept, but if I give them harsh comment, they get upset?... So that's been, I don't know how to cope with it actually…"* (Fang, p.7)

> *"…standing in front of a group of people, and in particular other British kids or students… they were a little bit sceptical about a young and international academic…a newly graduate, PhD graduate…. I think they had… some scepticism…"* (Ing, p.3)

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4.1.3 Master Theme III: Sense of Self and Identity

Under the master theme Sense of Self and Identity, the super-ordinate themes are – Having high self-esteem, having confidence, Identity – site of struggle, Sense of Pride, and Journey of Self-Reflection

4.1.3.1 Having high self-esteem

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Having high Self-esteem	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•

Most participants showed high levels of self-esteem and assurance of their role, status, and positive contributions within the institution, signalling a sense of belonging. All the male participants have expressed that.

Ang felt positive about his professional identity – his teaching ability and his subject knowledge. Ang also felt assured that students regarded him highly.

> *"…like I said the confidence… it's because mostly I know what I'm teaching. I know… the course, this unit, the subject is supposed to be taught…language definitely helps… but more importantly… you know the subject"* (Ang, p.2/5)
>
> *"Overall it's [feedback from students] quite good. I got like 80%...overall 80%...so it's quite good"* (Ang, p.7).

Beng's demeanour, his choice of words, his expressions, and his tendency to gloss over issues in teaching showed him to have a high level of self-assurance. Despite being new to his environment at the time of the interview, Beng seemed unflustered.

> *"**let's put it this way**, I didn't consciously put effort into trying to adjust myself to the environment… I didn't put specific effort on this."* (Beng, p.1)
>
> *"erm **well**, it's what I expected, to be honest, it's **okay**"*
>
> *"**So far so good, yes**"* (Beng, p.1)

When Beng considered his position compared with his British counterparts he thought the differences were irrelevant to teaching.

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"Of course I do know I'm not native… when you start to teach it doesn't occur to me now where I'm from…" (Beng, p.6)

Being non-native, Beng was unperturbed by not possessing native language skills. Criticising his native colleagues, he showed confidence as an international academic who did not need the linguistic advantages to be a successful lecturer in class to explain things well.

"I mean, fine, the native may have linguistically… an advantage, they may have better phrases, better ways…to explain things… but then … I do know some native lecturers who's not that good in explaining things…" (Beng, p.9)

Beng doesn't see his cultural background having an influence in the way he taught – an attempt to separate his professional and cultural identity.

"No, I don't think it's relevant. The task is to give the lecture. The background, not so relevant" (Beng, p.6).

Obligated by his sense of professionalism and his expertise in research, Beng questioned the purpose, intention, and technique of this research. He was sceptical and defensive towards the hypothesis of the research.

"Okay fine. It's an occupational problem... so how long have you been doing your PhD? Your sample is pretty low, I think …by this, you assume they have problems…" (Beng, p.9)

Ang, Ding, Eng, Fang, and Ing saw themselves as equal to their colleagues, if not better. Ding and Eng especially, saw their position, contributions, and experience as absolutely vital –

"…you are here to learn, and I can teach. If I don't teach, nobody can, then that's my strength… if you decide to hire me, that means I'm good enough for you, for the students…" (Ding, 57)

"At the moment, I see myself as equal…in fact sometimes I see myself even better than them. It's not because the language, but it's because of the experiences that I have…They have not lived in different country like I did…most colleagues just have worked in one or two institutions and mostly in UK…I feel like I have more exposure." (Eng, p.5)

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Eng confirmed the essence of his professional identity – subject knowledge, research (and grant), and publications when he benchmarked himself against his native colleagues.

> *"I have the same experience, I know my topic well, I have done my research, I have publication, so I don't feel inferior…I would like to see myself… not just someone who read and teach and regurgitate what I studied, but definitely someone who have published"* (Eng, p.5)

Research and publications remained consistently important throughout the interviews for not just Eng, but Cing too.

Being recognised for doing a good job (especially by his native colleagues) was important to Eng and firmly sealed his sense of belonging.

Eng's esteem was also elevated through being an international academic with global knowledge and experience which students appreciated – "students like to listen to your own experience" (Eng, p.4). To him, making use of his experience as an IAS was a benefit for him in teaching. Eng was convinced that his students had very positive perceptions of him and his teaching, which further boosted his self-esteem.

> *"…especially based on my score last week… my average is about 1.3... yeah 1 is strongly agree, which is very positive, 5 is strongly disagree…my average is between 1.3 and 1.4"* (Eng, p.13).

Unlike Fang, Eng felt assured that exchanges of ideas and knowledge between himself and his native colleagues took place on a 50/50 basis. As a team, they worked closely together, and they worked well (Eng, p.14).

Fang also saw herself as deserving equal standings with her fellow colleagues.

> *"… so we're in that equal…"* (Fang, p.4)

However, there were elements of insecurities and conflict regarding her sense of self and her identity. Fang showed confidence in her previous skills and knowledge, but these were undermined when co-teaching colleagues saw her as a newcomer with no experience. Fang had had to make lots of compromise due to being new and being a foreigner.

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"because I'm used to design my unit and teach, mark, everything by myself right, which is quite simple work… I have to do meetings and teaching style is different, teaching philosophy is different..."

"I think I've been compromising a lot… I feel like when they… talk to me about unit and plans, because I'm obviously a foreigner…they feel they have to like teach me the way… the British way… we're in that equal…" (Fang, p.4)

Fang's lack of self-assurance stemmed from being new and she felt she had to conform to the procedures already set up. Seeing herself as a young, female lecturer who was not a professor, she did not earn the respect and authority she deserved, both from her peers and her students. Fang felt conscious of her age and gender, more than her ethnicity –

"… I don't think about the foreigner part, but I think about erm young female part more…" (Fang, p.12)

Fang felt that her integration was a one-sided process.

"…British academics also they have to make an effort to adjust to new culture? … I have a sense we always have to kind of follow one say, instead of meeting in the middle" (Fang, p.16)

Students' reaction also caused Fang to regard herself as not having prestige.

"…But maybe I don't have much authority… I'm on the bottom... Authority wise. If I say anything harsh, students will be like [facial expression] yeah..." (Fang, p.11)

As unit leader, Gao exercised higher authority and standing over his fellow Chinese colleagues. Gao saw his role as a patriarchal one, listening to and helping his colleagues to overcome these challenges (that were unrelated to him).

"…because I'm the programme leader… so I have to… listen what the lectures will feedback… because the feedback from students is not very good…" (Gao, p.9)

Even though Gao saw himself as equal to his native counterparts, he acknowledged that the Chinese were disadvantaged due to their heritage and cultural background. Again, Gao saw the viewpoint not necessarily of himself, but of the general Chinese academic community within the institution (as he has successfully broken through the expected cultural norm and became a leader).

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"…I would say…equal…slightly, you know… disadvantaged in certain aspects…maybe because of the culture… the Chinese… you know only focus on you know… certain things…in general… I would say probably in terms of leadership… the Chinese wouldn't go for leadership…you probably recognise the Chinese probably more shy…" (Gao, p.11-12)

Han conveyed a sense of assurance when he rejoiced that he had changed a lot – his teaching style, approach and mannerisms and part of that was being more confident in handling students and being more spontaneous and able to incorporate impromptu materials into the lessons. Through experience and employing various coping strategies, Han felt reassured that students enjoyed his teaching and that he now enjoyed students asking questions.

"Right now, I change a lot to be honest…" (Han, p.3)

When Ing talked about her contribution within the institution, there was a definite tone of certainty and conviction, of her equal position in her work environment.

"… life favours me… I have the privilege to choose a place I like to live to work and I shouldn't be treated any less than any British here because I make equal contributions." (Ing, p.11)

Ing felt assured and confident that she now gave students good quality teaching.

"… certainly I'm quite confident of what I gave to the students is quality and I don't hear any criticism… with quality of my teaching, I do have faith in that" (Ing; p.6 and p.8)

All may not be what it seemed. Some participants revealed their high self-esteem to be riddled with conflict and self-doubt. Han and Ing may have voiced their assurance and sense of security with their current teaching achievements but like Cing, they were convinced that they were "not so good" and that ultimately, students would always prefer to be taught by British lecturers.

"the master's degree students are non-British. They want British person to be a teacher" (Cing, p.6)

"normally we [international academics] know, we are not that good… we don't feel comfortable to admit we are not good" (Han, p.6)

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*"but **obviously** students would enjoy teaching by British colleague of the same type of knowledge and they'll always be a preference like that, if all the other conditions are equal…"* (Ing, p.13)

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4.1.3.2 Being confident

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Being confident	•	•	•	•	•			•	•

When the participants talked about confidence, a common theme which came across was **confidence stemmed from having the necessary subject knowledge**.

Ang maintained that language was not an essential factor in teaching because it was more important to know his subject well. He had confidence in the subject he was teaching and the way he taught it.

Beng had high confidence in his ability to perform as a lecturer. He highlighted – to be employed as a lecturer in a UK university, one would need to possess the desired linguistic ability and the skills level to qualify, indicating his self-belief in possessing such skills.

> *"…if you can't teach, how can you be a teacher? If you cannot speak, if you cannot communicate, you can't"* (Beng, p.3)
>
> *"So, there must be a vetting process there, by right, that you have certain level of skills in this [term] to be employed …"* (Beng, p.3)

To Cing, her cultural identity did not determine her confidence. Her confidence level was also something that was constantly shifting. This demonstrated her resistance in being judged based on her appearance, and the fluidity of her identity and the constant flux and struggle.

> *"… my confidence doesn't come from the fact that I am foreigner or I'm not foreigner, it comes from my knowledge, how much I feel I know the subject. So when I'm talking about what exactly I know, my confidence level is quite high"* (Cing, p.2)

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To Ding his confidence came from knowing his materials and the contents he was delivering.

> *"yeah that's where my confidence comes from... if you don't know your materials..."* (Ding, p.11)

Eng saw his confidence level, experience, and knowledge all inter-connected and in a cyclical and iterative process.

> *"...I think knowledge and experiences give me confidence...then convey into the way I conduct myself in the class... then you reinforce back...the more I do... it would reinforce my confidence...like a iterative process"* (Eng, p4)

Eng was highly driven and motivated, and he had confidence and conviction for the linguistic abilities that he possessed through reinforcements, which gave him more confidence and sealed his position.

> *" ...you need to have the drive to improve as a foreign academic... there are colleagues still do not speak very good English even though they have been here much longer than I do... that goes back to my sense of superiority... I speak better English than them...language that is...once you do that, everything becomes natural. You feel more confident, you feel more, part of the established like system, you know, being an academic"* (Eng, p.11)

Eng was competitive. He saw himself better than others. Eng saw his language proficiency as enabling him to feel like he belonged in the establishment; like an academic. His PhD too gave him confidence and self-worth.

> *"After I got my PhD... I feel that I've become...a proper member of staff now because I feel like I've achieved that type of benchmark...I am a PhD holder now...I **deserved** to be respected"* (Eng, p.5).

Han's ability to rely less on his prepared materials to be more spontaneous, showed his confidence.

> *"Right now, basically, I just get lecture notes, and go to the room and start talk"* (Han, p.3)

Although Han maintained a level of confidence when it came to being spontaneous in class and in delivering good teaching, he also believed that what made teaching easy was he knew the subject well.

> *"I think the main reason is that the unit I'm teaching…is that knowledge I know very well"* (Han, p.2)

Han agreed that language was a contributing factor to him being able to be more spontaneous in class, and having to prepare less beforehand; however, his pronunciation had not changed. Rather, his confidence with using the language had increased.

> *"For my pronunciation, probably not much, but I think the big change for me, is, I am more confident."* (Han, p.4)

Fang lacked confidence when it came to handling her dissertation students. This deep-set issue that Fang faced stemmed from being young and female.

Ing who used to deal with negative criticisms from students about her accent now felt good about her teaching. She had started to enjoy the challenges and developed the skills of learning new things quickly but admitted "a lot of it has to do with confidence" and perseverance.

Initially, Ing thought that confidence meant more than having the "academic knowledge or skills" (Ing, p.3). Recalling her own experience, confidence to her meant "standing in front of a group of people, and in particular other British kids or students [who] were a little bit sceptical about a young and international academic" and surviving that. After going through her "struggle", and speaking through experience, Ing also felt strongly for new international academics to have the chance to be familiarised with the subject that they were teaching because "confidence only comes when [they] think that [they] not only know this subject but [they] have known it so well that [they] have the confidence to pass it down to other people" (Ing, p.5).

Ing later confessed to not liking the way 'confidence' was perceived at times.

> *"… I don't like the word confident … people using the word confidence to judge people too much… I also don't believe confidence is just some…empty phrase, like I believe in myself…I think, you should have something concrete...your*

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> *skill…knowledge, that is something that you proof you can do and know really you can... It has to be evidence-based”* (Ing, p.11)

Ing has stressed the importance of confidence being “evidence-based” – having the skill and the knowledge, and not just a gut feeling. Ing did not like to be judged based on her cultural identity. Now possessing the right skills and the local knowledge about the systems, she rightly felt deserving of feeling “confident” and positive about her professional identity.

4.1.3.3 Identity – site of struggle

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Identity – site of struggle			•	•	•	•	•		•

Cing professed that "being Asian doesn't hold me back" (Cing, p.3). Not having English as her native language however, Cing thought would always disadvantage her. Her accent would always be a shortcoming as it indicated that she was Asian. She thought having an accent was less than ideal as she admitted that it was easier to understand "when British person is speaking [and] …easier to follow and understand than somebody with accent" (Cing, p.8).

Cing did not see herself equal to her British counterparts as she admitted to making mistakes in her sentences and her speech (Cing, p.6); if she was a native speaker, Cing thought that perhaps British mature students would react to her differently and have more respect towards her.

Cing also struggled with her professional identity; although obligated to fulfil her role both as a teacher and a researcher, she much preferred to be a researcher, as it suited her personality. She admitted to never being a good public speaker; and she did not enjoy teaching.

> *"Teaching is challenging…"* (Cing, p.2)
>
> *"Teaching, sometimes I enjoy it, sometimes I don't…however you try, and I don't think I'm very good public speaker and that makes it difficult…Now, I'm more researcher than teacher"* (Cing, p.3)
>
> *"I pretty much enjoy being in a closed room, alone, reading and writing"* (Cing, p.3)

Ding's identity was multi-faceted, and constantly shifting depending on contexts, and situations. Ding felt equal with his colleagues and was always happy to discuss and share about his cultural background, but he was also insecure about his language and communicating or collaborating with his native peers.

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Ding thought his status and position in the department and the institution was highly important because he claimed, “if you decide to hire me, that means I’m good enough for you, for the students”, however, this could be a defence mechanism to mask his insecurities.

> *“…I’m a foreigner…I’m not native speaker so I do have accent…if I am here to teach you means I’m really good…it doesn’t bother you whether I’m Chinese or English or whatever, you are here to learn, and I can teach …but that’s me, you have to take it… if you… decide to hire me, I’m good enough for you…”* (Ding, p.5).

Ding admitted to his performance level decreasing when “his language skills” weakened due to him being tired, and consequently his speech would slur. And he was conscious of this professional inadequacy whenever that happened.

Fang was desperate to be friends with her students and to be liked; at the same time, she also craved authority and respect from her dissertation students who disregarded her advice.

As an approachable lecturer who was younger and with a bubbly personality, she was happy she got along well with students, but she admitted that it was a double-edged sword because that personality in turn caused her to suffer issues of power relations and imbalance between her and her co-teaching colleagues.

Fang spoke of assuming the personality of being “mean” and “not smil[ing]” so that she could be like her husband who seemed to be more respected within the department.

> *“.. but he’s a white, male, tall … never smile kind of guy…I’m very smiley… he’s more respected in the department…should I just start being mean and not smile?”* (Fang, p.5)

Gao felt he was an equal, especially within his own department, where other British counterparts were concerned. However, Gao admitted that, for cultural reasons, in general, the Chinese were slightly disadvantaged in certain aspects. To be recognised and to be acknowledged, Gao worked hard for a leadership role, and he broke through his own cultural barrier.

Similarly, Ding also expressed that being a “leader” for him was challenging. However, he stressed that this was due to his “personality” rather than being “Chinese”. Ding

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thought that to be a leader, “you have to communicate well with other people” (Ding, p.12). He was keen to ensure that this was not to be misconstrued as him not possessing the desired language skillset. He explained that native speakers may have that stereotypical perception about him because he was a “foreigner” – however, he stressed that it was his personality more than anything that stopped him from being a “leader”.

Ing always viewed herself as Chinese. Although she constantly worked hard to “get rid of [her] Chinese accent” (Ing, p.11), she never wanted to lose her Chinese identity. Ing saw her language background and her connection with other Chinese researchers as an advantage which benefitted both her research and teaching.

> *“… I have my advantage in comparison to my British colleagues, my language and I do understand the culture much better, and it has a lot of advantage compared with my British colleague…”* (Ing, p.11)

Ing, however, revealed a conflicting side to her identity. Ing feared that after having been in the UK for more than a decade, she was not sure of her identity anymore and that her “Chinese identity” (Ing, p.11) was beginning to weaken. At the beginning, she worked hard to get rid of her accent so that she “can be good, as good as British” (Ing, p.9); later, when she gained better professional grounding, she feared (losing her Chinese identity) and becoming British because she thought it was boring.

Relating how her earlier struggles had made her confident and comfortable standing in front of the public to speak, Ing still had a niggling fear that “it doesn’t mean I’m brilliant” (Ing, p.4), instantly betraying her claim to her confidence level.

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4.1.3.4 Strong sense of pride

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Strong sense of pride				•	•		•		•

Ding was notably proud of his heritage and his background. There was a strong sense of pride of his knowledge and capabilities, and to an extent, defensiveness about being a Chinese academic who is a "foreigner here [and] not a native speaker [with an] accent".

> *"...everyone has an accent, but it's not English kind of accent, it's a foreign accent...it doesn't [shouldn't] bother you whether I'm Chinese or English or whatever, you are here to learn, and I can teach. If I don't teach, nobody can, then that's my strength... if you decide to hire me, that means I'm good enough for you, for the students..."* (Ding, p.7)

When Eng was awarded his doctorate, he felt his status elevated and he demanded to be respected. To top that, Eng also spoke of having gained experience and knowledge, and having good teaching evaluations as part of that feeling of pride.

Eng was proud as a "global citizen"; a lecturer who had had study and work experience in Australia and in the UK and because of that he saw himself in a better position than his other (native) colleagues due to this international exposure and experience.

Eng talked about a sense of superiority over other fellow Asians, and he was keen to portray himself as an established professional in the UK. To Eng, speaking "proper English" was an indicator of being a successful professional.

> *"I don't want to sound or speak like a Malaysian...So I make conscious effort to try to get rid of it...I want to feel that I am a bit superior...superior to maybe my Asian fellows... superior in terms that I speak better English...if I can speak proper English, then maybe, maybe people would see me as more professional..."* (Eng, p.9)

Eng saw himself better than his Malaysian counterparts. He imagined that Malaysian students would be impressed by his English and the fact that he had taught in universities in the UK and Australia.

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> *"…Malaysian students would be very impressed with me… my English, secondly, because I taught in UK and Australia before…if I were to teach in Malaysia, I think they would just 'Wow' you know, I think, despite that I'm Malaysian as well…"* (Eng, p.13)

Gao was proud of his achievement as programme leader, when he suggested that Chinese in general were shy and they typically "wouldn't go for leadership [opportunities]" (Gao, p.11). Instead of conforming to the cultural norm, Gao broke through that barrier and sought out a leadership role to be recognised and to be known.

Ing, who used to deal with negative criticisms from students about her accent, now felt good about her teaching. She was proud she now received invitations as external speaker at national events. She had started to enjoy the challenges and developed the skills of learning new things quickly.

With pride mingled with self-assurance, Ing disclosed that she stood in front of the audience at external events, and she felt completely at ease with herself, even when the subject may not have been her strong suit.

> *"…nowadays… invited to give a talk outside and most of the times in English and sometimes it'll be in Chinese…all different type of audience and the talk I was asked to give… not really, my strong… I thought I might be nervous and might panic, but when I stood there, I… just feel quite comfortable with myself …"* (Ing, p.4).

Ing was proud of her heritage and the added advantages that this has given compared to her native counterparts.

> *"…my language and I do understand the culture much better… it has a lot of advantage compared with my British colleague…"* (Ing, p.11)

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4.1.3.5 Journey of self-discovery

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Journey of self-discovery			•	•	•				•

For some participants, certain journeys of self-discovery have given them opportunities to reflect on their sense of self, their position, which led them to alter their perceptions, behaviour, and attitude; this resulted in some positive outcomes.

Due to his introverted personality, Ding felt lonely. The problem had led to a lack of collaborations and interactions with colleagues. He began to gradually improve by attending leadership programmes (similar to Gao). Ding also really wanted to be a leader, but he realised that being a leader meant being able to communicate well with others. He reflected that it was challenging for him, not for the fact that he was Chinese or that there were language issues. It was because of his personality, and Ding felt that this was something that he could not change easily.

Even after gaining his PhD and feeling that his status had been elevated, Eng still struggled with anxiety over his language and admitted worrying he couldn't write as well as his native colleagues and that he did not speak as eloquently as them.

Later, he came to the realisation that "*I don't need to be like them. I could never speak like an English person … I cannot be like them because it's not my st*yle" (Eng, p.9). This to him was a massive turning point and he began to work on conveying his message "clearly and effectively" (Eng, p.9) and to be more engaging in other ways.

For Ing, her journey of self-reflection was realising not all students' criticisms were rational or well-founded. She learnt to critically analyse students' criticisms instead of accepting the criticisms at face value and feeling completely overwhelmed and anxious by them.

4.1.4 Master Theme IV: Improvement and Support

Under this master theme Improvement and Support, the super-ordinate themes are: Aspirations for the future, Willingness to improve, Lack of time for improvement, Lack of institutional support

4.1.4.1 Aspirations for the future

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Aspirations for the future	•			•	•	•	•		•

Related to his care for students, Ang desired advanced language skills to create spontaneous humour and to stimulate the atmosphere when the subject became dull or boring.

Although Ding showed scepticism for suggestions of support for IAS, Ding wanted to possess a better grasp on his communication skills – to have better structure to his speech, and to be spontaneous to incorporate elements of humour in the information he was delivering. He desired to have the ability to control the speed of his speech. Ding however, was quick to stress that it wasn't the language aspects that were the issue, for fear of being regarded as less competent than his native counterparts due to a lack of linguistic abilities. He was adamant that he saw himself as an equal counterpart to his native colleagues.

> *"...we need to be equal. If they say, because you're not British you can perform at a lower level, [this could be misunderstood]...I don't need language wise, but you know the structure of the content and also the way of speech, so can deliver a lot of information while at the same time a sense of humour, a little bit of encouragement... where to really slow down..."* (Ding, p.9)

Ding also desired to be a leader but thought that the lack of ability to socialise in English and his personality would impede that. Although he took initiatives to attend leadership programmes and to "change" his introverted behaviour, Ding again stressed that he found the effort challenging due to his personality. Ding did not have many

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opportunities to interact or communicate with other native colleagues, this "personality" could be related to a fear of putting himself forward and risk exposing this lack of communication skills in front of his native colleagues.

> *"But, that's part of personality, part of the language issues if you don't speak well, you can't socialise well, and also partly of your personality, so all come mixed, so yeah, I sometimes feel lonely… and I feel less than I should in the amount of collaboration with my colleagues in the same department also less socialising event with them…I want to be leader, if you want to be leader, you have to communicate well with other people. But you know, it's kind of a little bit, challenging thing for me. But not just because I'm a Chinese, it's because my personality…"* (Ding, p.12)

At the beginning Eng "tried to be like a native speaker" (Eng, p.8), to write well and to speak eloquently. He recalled the first year being difficult, especially dealing with negative comments from students regarding his pace of teaching and accent and he was desperate to change that as he saw speaking like a native as a benchmark of excellence.

For Eng, it was important for him to excel all the time, "to do well" (Eng, occurring throughout the script), and positive feedback from students was an important marker.

> *"…after all we want to get better MUSE and it's important for NSS score…"* (Eng 2, p.7)

Fang desired to have more authority with students. Because she was "young", her advice did not carry as much weight as the advice from a male professor. Fang also wanted her co-teaching partners to value her contributions in improving existing practices rather than to expect her to follow the norm all the time.

For Ing, she had a strong desire to be "as good as British" because students were criticising her accent. Like Eng, she had strong desires to speak well, like a native, without an accent, indicating also where she set her benchmark for excellence. Coupled with strong reactions to students' negative feedback, that desire had pushed her to work hard, committing in various efforts to improve herself.

To Gao, being in a leadership position was important to him, as a way of gaining recognition in his new field. Against the expected cultural norm which he recognised could be impeding him, he put in the extra effort to obtain a leadership position.

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“you probably recognised the Chinese…more shy… nobody knows who you are… it’s not very nice…. this is why you know, I want to be a programme leader” (Gao, p.12)

Cing, in discussing how a native fellow lecturer was good at public speaking, had showed no desire to be like him because that’s not her personality. She did not enjoy public speaking and she saw that as her personality as she disliked being in the centre of attention and she wanted to be “in a closed room, alone” (Cing, p.3). Cing had not spoken of coping strategies to improve her teaching; she made no efforts in building rapport and relationships with her students, and she expressed no desire in changing her practices.

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4.1.4.2 Willingness to improve

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Willing to improve	•				•		•		•

Only four participants proactively committed time and efforts in improving themselves with a view to positively impact on their profession. Others realised they should, but it was not something they actively engaged in or saw the need for.

Ang spoke of learning more vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and proverbs. However, it didn't really help him with being spontaneous.

> *"... learn more words, more phrases, more idioms, more proverbs which I hope could be used during in the classroom... So that kind of opportunity, occasions don't appear quite often...it'd be great to use that one...You need to do that at the right time immediately in that moment. Afterwards there's no effect. So that's a challenge."* (Ang, p.9)

Eng did not want to be "complacent" (Eng, p.11). He was highly driven and took initiatives to improve himself.

> *"you need to have the drive to improve as a foreign academic".*
>
> *"I go to...speech training workshop and all that"*
>
> *"I attend every training I can find"*
>
> *"speak regularly and...just practise, practise, practise"* (Eng, p.6-11)

Like Eng, negative criticisms from students prompted Ing to want to be better. Help and support from the institution was not enough. Ing dedicated her own money in attending presentations skills and public speaking skills classes; and she signed up to a Shakespeare reading aloud class, which she tremendously enjoyed, and had later turned into a hobby.

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> *"Read aloud…Shakespeare sonnet…copying strategy… the things you were criticised at… So I invest in public speaking, in elocution but gradually it developed into, when you feel you're making improvements …nice surprise… become a hobby. Now I do Shakespeare …"* (Ing, p.6)

> *"…because you were struggling… other peoples' lecture…I had my elocution class. Firstly it was supported by the department…after a while, department only needs me to reach a certain standard… also was eagerly to go to all sorts of, I'm taking of all opportunities, of training the skill for public speaking of elocution myself, I did invest quite a lot of money in that myself…"* (Ing, p.5)

During his early years, out of necessity rather than choice, Gao attended training and mentoring workshops which he thought was useful. Gao reflected that the main reason behind his motivation to improve was **safeguarding for the future,** even as a student.

> *"you come to a new country and start a new life, at that time it's just as a student, but you have to think about what we're going to be after you graduate…."* (Gao, p.4)

Fang admitted to not doing much to improve herself but that she should. Fang thought that the area where she most needed improvement on, was marking and providing constructive feedback during marking.

> *"Not too much, but I should."* (Fang, p.12)

Cing saw no need to actively improve herself. Cing thought that the content of her lesson was far more important than her style of delivery; what spare time she had while not teaching, she spent it on research as she saw that as a big part of her job.

> *"I don't actively try to find a way to, I think it's more that to the content I teach rather than how I teach… my time, not teaching is spent on my research"* (Cing, p.10)

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4.1.4.3 Lack of time for further improvement

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Lack of time for further improvement	•		•				•	•	

Although he adopted the view of life-long learning, Ang was initially reluctant to take part in the online DT and admitted he was busy and that he saw no benefit to gain from participating.

To Cing, spending time on research was more important than improving her teaching. Finding time to attend any types of developmental programmes was always a challenge, even when there was a clear benefit -

> *"We once had this trainer come to school… the presentation expert… that was rather useful…practice was useful… they made it compulsory to attend…what we don't have is time. Because research takes up so much time… time is very important"* (Cing, p.11)

Gao appeared to be content to go along with developmental opportunities, even when they were not always based on his own initiatives. He employed the same open-minded attitude when it came to attending future training opportunities; but did confess that it was something that he had had to "find time" for (Gao, p.13).

Like Gao, Han also adopted an open-minded approach regarding participation in a self-learning programme but did warn that "some [staff in the university] are crazy busy" (Han, p.9).

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4.1.4.4 Lack of institutional support

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Cing	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han	Ing
Lack of institutional support	•	•		•	•	•		•	

There was no strong evidence of institutional support when participants first arrived, but this did not appear to be a major issue.

Ang had recalled no institutional support being offered and he did not need them.

> *"… for people like me, who has taught for years in an English environment, there isn't strong need… to have that kind of support"* (Ang, p.9)

Consistent with his previous stance, Beng naturally did not seek out any support. He was also highly sceptical of the DT and of suggestions that IAS needed extra support to cope.

> *"No. And I didn't ask for any….Things seem to be going well at the moment, so…"* (Beng, p.6)
>
> *"By this, you assume they have problems?"* (Beng, p.9)

Beng also thought that as professionals employed in a UK HEI, IAS should not need further support.

> *"if you're accepted [or] employed as a lecturer in a UK university, you are supposed to already possess the linguistic ability"* (Beng, p.3)

Ding also did not recall receiving any institutional support. He again became defensive and warned that such support could indicate that "because you're not British you can perform at a lower level" (Ding, p.13). Instead of regarding institutional support as potentially being helpful, he believed any suggestion of support immediately signified one's professional inadequacy.

Eng also recalled having not received institutional support; and like Beng, Eng thought this should be the norm.

> *"I should be expected to be able to teach and communicate"* (Eng, p.17).

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Eng however valued the informal support received from his peers.

Eng thought that institutional support offered should clearly demonstrate its associated "benefit". Institutions should not waste academics' time if benefits from the programme cannot be clearly evidenced. Eng strongly felt that as academics they must never become complacent; however, due to their busy schedule, it was important that the institutional support offered was guaranteed to be beneficial to attract participation.

> *"... I think if the support is there, and it is promoted… I believe in selling the benefit, if we sell the benefit of why you should do it, I think people would take up on it especially if it doesn't cost any money"* (Eng, p.17)

Fang was the only participant not satisfied with the lack of institutional support upon arrival. Comparing her experience in the UK with that of the US, Fang was disappointed there was no "sandwich lunch or welcome party", which was possibly why Fang felt that the British were reserved and unwelcoming. When Fang had requested for additional moving cost due to the distance, she was turned down, further putting strains on the stress of moving to the UK.

Han had not received any forms of institutional support; he did however highlight the kinds of informal support which he had experienced and that helped him to improve – mirroring Eng's experience. This highlighted the importance of receiving informal support through bonds and networking with colleagues, and learning through everyday communication.

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4.2 Findings from Phase Two: Intervention - Development Toolkit Phase

4.2.1 The execution process

After the first semi-structured interview phase, Ang, Beng, Ding, Fang, Gao and Han took part in the online Development Toolkit (DT) Phase, consisting of six weekly self-learning programmes. Cing declined during the Phase One interview; Ing never responded to my invitations.

The items of learning incorporated into the DT were designed to be relevant to their teaching and communications and the activities were chosen to vary the programme. Throughout the DT Phase, participants were sent different weekly programmes (please refer to Table 1) which they engaged in critical "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) in order to complete, and to follow up by writing a short reflection after each activity.

The tables in Appendix L show the weekly activities and participants' responses and reactions to the activities they were able to complete.

4.2.2 Unexpected turn of event

During Week 4, the initial activity suggested participants seek out a fellow colleague to observe their teaching and to conduct a post-observation discussion based on a few suggested thinking points. However, this activity had to be revised and replaced with a different programme of learning when the researcher was informed that all teaching had finished for the semester. The peer observation activity was substituted with observation of an online teaching for Week 6.

4.2.3 Reality and outcomes from the intervention

Overall, the learning programmes were executed weekly as planned, with all activities emailed to participants on time, with the exception of Week 4 when the activity had to be modified based on feedback from Han.

However, the reality was some of the participants only completed the suggested activities as much as they could, leading up to the second interview.

In each weekly learning content, the description and explanation of the learning content and instructions to participants were followed by a list of "Thinking Points" and these were designed inspired by the "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" practice as suggested by Schon (1983). In order to answer the "thinking points", participants engaged in critical "reflection-in action" or "reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983).

The weekly tables in Appendix L showed participants' answers to the "Thinking points" for the activities they have engaged in, with evidence that the process of critical "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) had been employed, whilst engaging in the chosen weekly activity.

The overall timing of the programme was less than ideal due to the timeline of the research study progression. As the interviews for Phase One commenced in March and to ensure continuity of the data collection process, the implication was that by the time the learning programme was launched, teaching activities had already finished for most of the participants.

For the first activity in Week 1, six out of seven participants who took part responded. As the weeks went by, less participants were able to complete the activities to provide their responses and reflections. After Week 4, only two participants managed to complete all six learning programmes from the DT.

As previously mentioned, the focus of the intervention in Phase Two, was to create a platform to allow participants the opportunity to use critical "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" whilst gaining experience in engaging with the DT so that in Phase Three, the researcher can gauge participants' experience, reaction, and opinion, with potential evidence or suggestion of impact from the DT to be documented. Therefore, though not complete, the intervention stage was seen as a success because it had enabled the participants to engage critical "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" as shown in the tables in Appendix L and to share this valuable insights, experience and reflections with the researcher in the Phase Three interviews. This will now be elaborated upon next.

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4.3 Findings from Phrase Three: Post Development Toolkit Interview Phase

A second interview was arranged with all participants who took part in the intervention in Phase Two (regardless of the number of activities completed) soon after it had concluded to capitalise on the fact that their reflections of the DT were still fresh in their memories. This was approximately three months after the Phase One interviews.

The focus of Phase Three interview was to answer the third research question.

Participants' attitudes, views and opinions towards the DT will be explored; the way they saw the possibilities for the future in relation to time spent on the DT; and any evidence or suggestion of positive reconstruction of their identity/ies will also be recorded.

Following another systematic data analysis process and the same methods and procedures employed for Phase One, two master themes have emerged that aligned with the overarching research aims of exploring to what extent the academics were invested in their learning and development, or in their professional identity, and their legitimate place in an academic institution.

The themes were noted as below and will be discussed in detail within the subsequent sections:

I: Development Toolkit

II: Impact

Like in Phase One, under each broad master theme, the findings will be further classified and presented under their various super-ordinate themes that relate to them, with extracts and quotes taken from interview transcripts to support the presentation.

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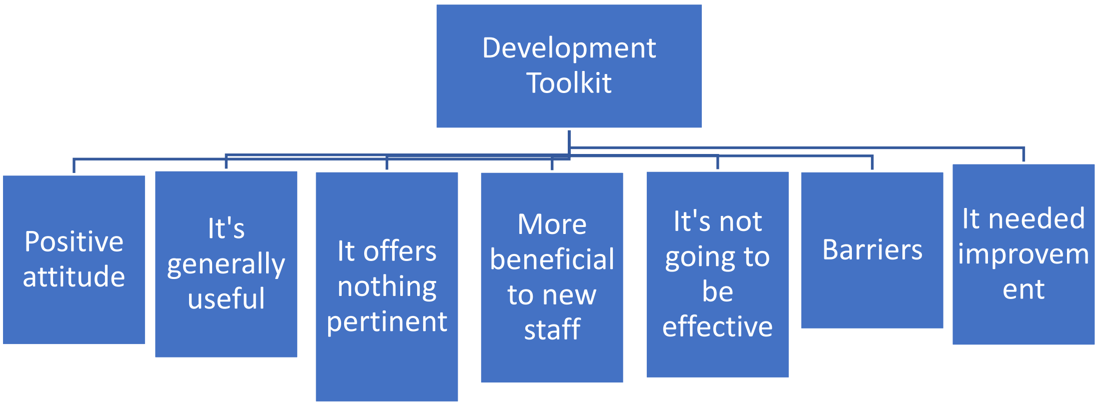
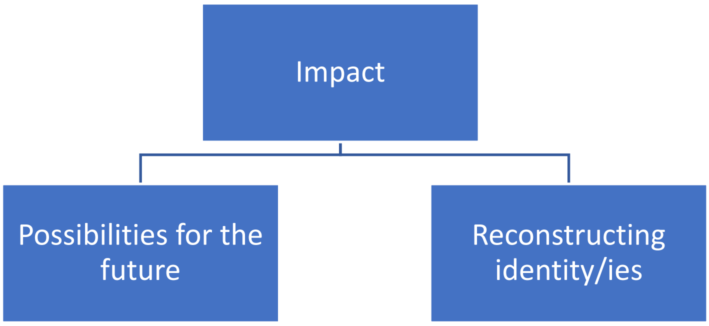
Figure 3: A diagrammatic representation of the broad master themes and their super-ordinate themes – Phase Three





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4.3.1 Master Theme I: Development Toolkit

Under the broad master theme of Development Toolkit, the super-ordinate themes are: Positive attitude, It's generally useful, It offers nothing pertinent, More beneficial to new staff, It's not going to be effective, Barriers, It needed improvement.

4.3.1.1 Positive attitude

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
Positive attitude	•		•	•	•		•

Some participants were more positive towards the DT than others.

Motivated by his need for positive rapport and engagement with students, Ang welcomed such a training opportunity. Even though the timing of the DT was less than ideal, he was positive; and he was keen to share what he had learnt.

> *"… I care a lot more about this presentation skills, how to engage students, like for eye contact, like eye contact looking at you, maybe I look at other students, I need to look around, maybe on the back, on the front, left, right"* (Ang 2, p.4)

> *"… I haven't got a chance really to apply, to practise… having said that I would try to apply some of them… I think it's quite good programme"* (Ang 2, p.1)

> *"… I should help to share"* (Ang 2, p.5)

Ang showed appreciation for the effort put into the design and content of the programme. This reflected his sense of empathy and general positive attitude.

> *"…the programme you have chosen… it's really good…you have done good work"* (Ang 2, p.1)

> *".. I think it's not easy for you to find such good programme… there are a lot of programme available…but finding the right, good programme…you have spent time and effort on selecting, finding…the right programme…it's quite useful"* (Ang, p.2)

> *"… thank you very much…"* (Ang 2, p.5)

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Ang showed positivity and receptivity.

> *"…it's really useful, even though like I said a lot of them I already know…"* (Ang 2, p.3).

Ding felt obligated towards the DT and he was defensive. However, he still gained from it and was positive.

> *"… I think it's mainly the obligation… I learnt some very interesting points so I could try in my future teaching work"* (Ding 2, p.1)

Ding also thought the DT could potentially increase communications and teamwork with peers. Ding who admitted to feeling the need to change his introverted behaviour and to be more communicative and collaborative with peers, saw the DT as an opportunity for him to change his situation.

> *"If you want to have peer observation, then you're going to be closer because you asked them for help, they ask you for help. And it's like because you're doing the same thing together"* (Ding 2, p.4).

Eng was very positive towards the DT, using the expression "very" multiple times, and that he wanted to see it exposed to more academics

> *"… they are easy to follow… I have found them very, very useful"* (Eng 2, P.1)

> *"…overall, they are very, very useful, very good… I hope…you can share that with more academics"* (Eng 2, p.1)

Like Ang, Eng's positive attitude may have stemmed from the fact that he cared about students' feedback and viewed the opportunities offered in the DT positively.

Even though Eng only completed two weekly activities, he was positive, and he understood its purpose and he showed high receptibility towards it.

> *"…it's easy to apply… practical, and it doesn't require a lot of effort [to access]…"* (Eng 2, p.3)

> *"…even just the two that I completed…they're definitely very helpful, they're easy to understand…very relevant…"* (Eng 2, p.2)

Fang showed polite positivity about the DT compared to others.

> *"But it was a good reminder, of course…"* (Fang 2, p.3)

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Fang became very impressed however, almost to a point of disbelief, when it was revealed to her that the DT was designed by the researcher.

> *"You designed all this? … Really? … you created this programme?... Oh my god…"* (Fang 2, p.5)

Han liked that the DT was easy to follow

> *"… instruction very clear… the points are… very very useful…"* (Han 2, p.1)

Beng and Gao however felt less than enthusiastic about the DT, with Beng being critical and negative about the intention and purposes of the DT, which was consistent with his attitude in his previous interview.

> *"…basically, you start with the assumption that okay you're international academic teaching staff, you might have some problems to adapt or whatever…"*
>
> *"okay, there's some question mark before even I start…"*
>
> *"…but I don't see that relationship between one or two…"*
>
> *"… I'm not sure exactly what links to your, what this activity, how they're linked to your research"* (Beng 2, p. 3-4)

Beng had failed to see or to even contemplate the intended outcomes or potential benefits one could gain from engaging with the DT due to his negative attitude.

Gao cited examples from the training programme he went through in the past to show how he thought the DT was not as useful.

> *"…my practice in my early career development…how to make a good impact…as a shadow lecturer… to go with senior lecturers to do some tutorials together… they have their own way to communicate in terms provide tutorials…progression on their work….to make guidance to the student, what to do next. I think it is, definitely good practice. I think it's very helpful"* (Gao 2, p.2)

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4.3.1.2 It's generally useful

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
It's generally useful	•		•	•	•		•

Although the DT offered nothing new, Ang and Eng thought the activities were useful, and they were keen to demonstrate that.

> *"…maybe I look at other students, I need to look around, maybe on the back, on the front, left, right [physically turning left and right during the interview]"* (Ang 2, p.4)

> *"…really helpful like vary your tone, manage your pace… sometimes you don't remember especially if you've been doing teaching the same unit for… a number of years"* (Eng 2, p.1)

Both Eng and Ang saw themselves as experienced academics and that the DT served as a good reminder of those skills.

> *"even though someone who are very confident or maybe knowledgeable but the content I think this kind of little pro, this kind of programme you're doing is a good reminder…"* (Eng 2, p.2)

> *"of course, it will help… like reinforcement…we knew this…still helpful to have this refresh of memory about those skills…"* (Ang 2, p.8)

Ang thought its usefulness and transferability extended to even international academics outside of the UK, or perhaps even native speakers.

> *"…not only for the UK… I would like to see, not only international lecturers, maybe for the local lecturer, native English speaker…"* (Ang 2, p.8)

Ang also found other unexpected ways that the DT was beneficial for him.

> *"…when I was writing application for HEA fellowship… I think one of the materials… I cited that paper as well…so that's where I feel useful as well…"* (Ang 2, p.7)

Eng felt that had he been given enough time to complete all six programmes instead of just two, he would have gained more use out of it, especially the reflective elements of the DT.

> *"…I didn't follow through the programme… just by looking at the things that you get us to do is for applied, because you can immediately like, oh looking at this, and then looking at that…"* (Eng 2, p.3)

Eng thought that the DT was more useful than the PG Certificate course that he undertook due to having opportunities for reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action -

> *"… it's different because this one….you apply into your teaching…when I did the PG cert at [redacted], it's more like a workshop type, they talk about, it's like a lecture, they go there, you talk about the different things they do, they're different, you know, experience, personal experience* (Eng 2, p.3)

Fang thought that though useful, the DT had offered nothing new to her.

> *"…But since I've been teaching for the past six years, I think it was a bit, very familiar context"* (Fang 2, p.3)

Fang however found the ease and online accessibility of the DT helpful with encouraging participation, especially for extremely "overwhelmed" and busy new staff, compared to the certificate in college teaching that she undertook years ago.

> *"...easier to access 'coz this one you have to sign up for the class, you have to make an effort to go to class ... coz if you're first year teaching coming from foreign country, you are overwhelmed you don't have time to do extra things so if have just ten minutes do it, I learnt something... I would prefer this than going to classes"* (Fang 2, p.6)

Gao thought the DT was less than useful as academics should learn to accept students' comments and not get offended.

> *"… it's very common to get feedback because you know the system, you get feedback you know from students to reflect on the teaching and everything so I don't think there's any particular you know, bad feelings about the student comment"* (Gao 2, p.1)

> *"… to find out probably why student comment on that, probably as the lecturer probably didn't realise that, you know they have to see why… I don't think it's a very bad you know …need to be...yeah offended"* (Gao 2, p.1)

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Gao also thought that the teaching and academic awareness elements found in the DT should be ingrained as academics.

> *"… it's happened in academia, so our everyday life, so I think in overall, it's just, you know, just like us, ingrained I would say, self-awareness how to satisfy...[students]"* (Gao 2, p.3)

Han was motivated by the activities in the first few weeks of the DT and found them useful and relevant because they were on topics such as delivering lectures, a subject area which Han had a vested interest in. He listed examples from the DT which he found useful.

> *"…especially the first few is a more about…how to deliver a lecture... presentations styles…about feedback, about the PPT, yeah I think some of the points are really …very very useful. Especially the presentation one…"* (Han 2, pg. 1)

The DT also gave Han the opportunity to reflect on his current practices and have them endorsed.

> *"…reflection, yes... especially when I read that point I think 'oh, this is what I've done before' is really good points, I find out, quite useful"* (Han 2, pg.2)

Han felt the DT was beneficial especially to new lecturers and he used the word "very" a lot to reinforce his points.

> *"I think especially for the junior or maybe the new kind of lecturers, some of the practice, especially some of the new structures, it's very, very good, very very helpful….That will be very, very helpful. How they're facing the students, how they look at the students, let the students interested in this kind of presentations, the talks, lecturer…"* (Han 2, pg. 3)

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4.3.1.3 *It offers nothing pertinent*

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
It offers nothing new	•	•	•		•	•	

Because the DT was like numerous other developmental courses previously attended, Ang thought many training elements within the DT were not relevant to him.

> *"… the suggestions, advice in the programme…are not very new to me… I attended this kind of presentations, courses…"* (Ang 2, p.1)

Ang also thought the activity in Week 4 did not mirror examples encountered in real life.

> *"It's a bit tricky to deal with…when you receive that kind of feedback, especially really like written more negative side, it's a bit hard to respond. Luckily, most time, we didn't get it."* (Ang 2, p.1)

For Beng, his familiarity with video training materials meant the DT offered nothing to him.

> *"…the video I mean, I've known parts of those, I can say I know all of them already."* (Beng 2, p.4)

Beng thought that the DT might have benefitted inexperienced or even experienced staff who had no knowledge of such practices; however, he removed himself from this observation.

> *"… open up awareness if they don't know about all the different…presentation skills, slides preparations… There's never, no harm exposing academics or the staff with more information about this. I don't see any harm there."* (Beng 2, pg.4)

Beng thought he had a strong foundation through previous experience gained and the DT had nothing to add.

> *"… personally, the material … I was a research fellow, and before that I worked for a consultant company… so I more or less know the material. Not specifically*

the research paper that you read, but the foundation, I know some of them already…" (Beng 2, p.5)

Ding thought that the resources within the DT had offered nothing new or challenging; and it was unlikely to alter his existing practices.

"…more than half of the contents I already knew before I started this learning programme…" (Ding 2, p.1)

"… I'm not going to change too much because going through these materials because I have been using them most of them for some time already" (Ding 2, p.4)

Ding was against the idea of a mandatory training programme. Although admitting that academics with no teaching experience might require extra training; having to engage with the DT at the same time as juggling challenging workloads would add more pressure and intensify the struggle.

"… it's not ideal to be a mandatory programme ... Unless this…new person has absolutely no teaching experience…they always feel busy, especially for new lecturers…we have more admin work, teaching, marking… a little bit difficult sometimes. For new lecturers, first year's always a struggle because they need to prepare new lecture, and new unit…maybe it's not good time for them to..." (Ding 2, p.10)

Fang did not see how the DT would be of use to her due to her experience.

*"Based on these two…it was really good and useful...beginner lecturers these are really, really useful…If I just came to the UK, and this is the first time teaching, these would be even more useful right. But since I've been teaching for the past six years, I think it was a bit, very familiar context." (*Fang 2, p.3)

Like others, Gao thought that the DT was not offering anything new or interesting as the resources and activities were all familiar to him.

"… you want to discover, investigate how the process, or how [unclear] could be, [unclear] benefit from that or not. It's certainly, it's a good to [unclear] the ideas but from my point of view, quite a lot of stuff I've already been through, and it's not..." (Gao 2, p.2)

4.3.1.4 More beneficial to new staff

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
More beneficial to new staff	•	•	•		•	•	

Participants who highlighted that the DT had nothing pertinent to offer them, thought that the programme would be more beneficial to new staff.

Ang thought the DT could enhance skills and the sense of confidence of new IAS.

> *"…it's more on enhancement…bringing the lecturer's presentation level and confidence from basic level to more advanced level…"* (Ang 2, p.9)

Seeing themselves as having extensive experiences, the DT was more suitable for new staff with little to no exposure, thought Ding and Fang, even Beng.

> *"I didn't get so much because I've been teaching for several years…I was doing talks…conferences"* (Ding 2, p.8)

> *"…it's not exactly that I'm totally unaware of these things …this material are really new to the staff…it's possibly open some doors for them"* (Beng 2, p.4-5)

> *"If I just came to the UK, and this is the first time teaching, these would be even more useful…"* (Fang 2, p.3)

Gao also thought the DT would suit new staff better.

> *"…if it is packaged for …the beginners, so that will help them to understand… how to present themselves as lecturers..."* (Gao 2, p.4)

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4.3.1.5 *It's not going to be effective*

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
It's not going to be effective	•	•	•		•	•	

Ang was certain that the examples used in Week 4 were not effective because they were not realistic.

> *"...you must understand more about the English...they are very polite...they don't like try to do something so directly. They, most times they will not say that."* (Ang 2, p.2)

Being a researcher, Beng felt he was in the position to express his doubt and scepticism towards the DT and the research; he also questioned the effectiveness of it.

> *"What is the purpose that you give this task...I'm researcher, I'm sorry. So when I first read, okay, so I will start to think, okay what exactly is your research question? What exactly... is, the question you're asking from your part because you're doing a PhD so you must be investigating something"* (Beng 2, p.3)

Beng was so critical he had difficulty understanding what the activities required of him.

> *"I don't know what you're investigating, So, then, okay fine, I can do the task without knowing that but... there's some question mark before even I starts..."* (Beng 2, p.3)

From his tone of voice and the choice of phrases such as "I don't know", "fine", "okay", "whatever", they all indicated his scepticisms for the research and the DT, and he certainly did not think the DT was effective.

> *"...you start with the assumption that **okay** you're international, academic teaching staff, you might have some problems to adapt or **whatever**"* (Beng 2, pg.3)

> *"**I don't know** what you're investigating, So, then, okay **fine**, I can do the task without knowing that"* (Beng 2, p.3)

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*"So, you might need some adjustment or adapting yourself and then through the activities, you provide some opportunities to, **I don't know**, improve…Yeah, I think the third question is the one that I missed. Okay, anyway, go on..."* (Beng 2, p.3)

*"…there's no harm giving all this…But, how effective it is a question mark…**I don't know** how it's going to be so effective"* (Beng 2, p.5)

Fang thought the DT was not effective for her, due to a deep-set sense of inadequacy as a "young Asian female".

"If I do the same stuff as him, in my lecture…if I do the same speech, in front of the academic, then I don't know how people would react. If he does that same thing, people would [go] 'oh he's very good', 'he's so engaging'... but if I do that, I don't know...[Researcher] So, in your opinion, you feel that the, the ability to be authoritative depends a lot on your gender.[Fang] Yeah" (Fang 2, p.1)

Her husband had also confirmed her suspicion.

"Okay…my husband…he's tall and really deep voice, maybe it's the voice…. But people [body language gesturing people in awe] ...you know that kind of dynamic. Even he admitted it. He can see that too" (Fang 2, p.2)

Ding thought that the presentation skill points and tips were more suited for use with students in a smaller setting and therefore thought that they were not effective to be used in a big lecture theatre of over 200 students.

" I think the size of the audience is a big factor" (Ding, p.3)

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4.3.1.6 Barriers

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
Barriers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Time pressure consistently came up as a challenge and a strong barrier for all. The pressures felt by the participants also meant that any form of personal or professional development initiatives inevitably became a low priority in their workload and posed a major hurdle for them in trying to improve their practices, no matter how effective the programme.

> *"…I was halfway through and then I left it for some other things ...mainly."* (Ding 2, p.1)

> *"…mainly my fault…when you teach multiple units in a semester, you try to… do many things with the little time you have… too many things to think about…we can't de-prioritise"* (Eng 2, p.1)

> *"… although it's fraction of the time, in a day… I probably expect only very short time to finish, but actually by going to this subject and by going to look at the questions..."* (Gao 2, p.2)

> *"…Because I've been doing some data collection and...writing observation notes, just takes up so much time."* (Fang 2, p.1)

> *"…No, I think it's just the time…No, no, I like this"* (Han 2, p.1)

Ang however had managed to complete all six required activities. Influenced by his positive outlook, Ang felt that even gaining from just one of the activities was a good return for his time.

> *"... but I think like this kind of thing, even just this point, register, I think it's good enough coz sometimes you didn't know… no one told you that."* (Ang 2, p.5)

> *"Actually there's still room to improve for everyone..."* (Ang 2, p.5)

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Ang however was sceptical towards the sustainability of the benefits gained from the DT as it would require commitment, tenacity, perseverance, and continuous efforts in using and practising points from the DT as such practices were not natural occurrences.

> *"Not only willing, also need to…spend time on the programme. Not like okay, answer yes and no, you need to, need to a little bit more serious...You have to be committed..."* (Ang 2, p.7)

> *"I will do my best, but I cannot guarantee 100%, you have to be honest…you tend to forget, because that's… not what you normally do, but to do this, it takes effort... it's, because normal conversation is very easy, you know like..."* (Ang 2, p.8)

Many also thought the timing of the DT did not fit in well with their teaching schedule which became a barrier in engaging with it fully.

> *"…I haven't got a chance really to apply, to practise.... in a big, lecture theatre"* (Ang 2, p.1)

> *"…it's bad timing …."* (Beng 2, p.2)

> *"…I did reflect but I reflected on my past years experience or even earlier than that because this term I didn't have so much teaching…"* (Ding 2, p.8)

> *"…you sent the programme a week before the lecture [had finished]…"* (Eng 2, p.1)

Beng's critical view of the DT also became a barrier, as evident throughout. This is one example -

> *"… if it's a programme that I embark on, then this task, too limited. If it's a programme, like a self, self-training, then it's very limited…"* (Beng 2, p.3)

Ding and Han thought the difficulty in transferring knowledge to practice was a potential barrier in realising the effectiveness of the DT.

> *"…So now they're changing…so it's not just about having all these things included, but rather how to have them included and how to distribute this information to the audience."* (Ding 2, p.7)

> *"He's [the presenter in one of the TEDtalk videos] a really good talker. But the problem this one is important and necessary, but how to implement that, that is tricky."* (Han 2, p.8)

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Though Eng was positive of the usefulness and effectiveness of the DT, he also cautioned the potential barriers to academics gaining benefits from it. Eng thought the first challenge was making academics see its benefits, to engage with it, especially for some of his more senior colleagues who have become complacent.

> *"… for academics is just to convince them, the benefit of it… As I say, including myself we get complacent…we teach the same unit…for many years and then… we don't really stop and think…and check"* (Eng 2, p.3)

> *"I can just imagine some of the colleagues who have been here for many, many years they're not going to do it...they will not see a benefit because, because they believe they're good at what they're doing"* (Eng 2, p.8)

Eng also thought it was not practical or realistic to expect instant result or significant improvements in such a short time.

> *"…because six weeks... we can't assume if you do this, then immediately improves..."* (Eng 2, p.6)

Aside from the challenge of time, Gao thought that support for academics should be highly individualised and tailored according to different needs and career trajectories.

> *"… I think it has to be individual based…What kind of journey you want to go? … but you see there's a different steps that could help you to go there, so you probably have to find more appropriate lessons or something to support you to go there."* (Gao 2, p.5)

Han too agreed; however, he thought that the job of tailoring the DT could be another potential issue due to the extent of problems that needed to be addressed or tackled, due to academics' varied culture and background.

> *"It will help…sometimes, it's English problem, sometimes it's the pronunciation, or style, so different culture, actually there's a lot of problems."* (Han 2, p.4)

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4.3.1.7 *It needed improvement*

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
It needed improvement		•	•	•		•	

One recommendation that came across prominently and consistently from the participants was that there needed to be an overview, better introduction and structure to the DT to help with engagement; and to allow participants to select their desired programme, especially when time was of the essence.

> *"...I didn't see the structure ...if you can give a preview... so I can see a flow...have the full view of the whole thing... if I buy the book, I see the table of content..."* (Beng 2, p.3)

> *"If you could have like an overall plan ..."* (Ding 2, p.9)

> *"... label or categorise the content...we have different strengths and weaknesses...academics can choose...based on their own reflection...so that will allow them to prioritise..."* (Eng 2, p.4)

Although Ding valued the easy accessibility of the DT, propelled by his desire to collaborate more with colleagues, Ding thought there should be a collaborative element to allow participants to engage in group discussion sessions over engagement with the DT.

> *"...It's like four other participants, these points can be discussed..."* (Ding 2, p.3)

Consistent with his stance in the first interview, Ding again expressed his strong opinion of the danger in making the DT compulsory, and his defensiveness against the idea that IAS needed support.

> *"Are you proposing something mandatory again... it's bordering on discrimination ...so who says international lecturers can't do it well? Who says that native, local English-speaking people can do it better? ... As an optional support, then it's fine..."* (Ding 2, p.10-11)

Eng also suggested forward-planning of the DT so that academics can plan their priorities accordingly.

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"…if I have got the programme much earlier…like before the beginning of the semester, then we can embed it into [teaching] better" (Eng 2, p.1)

Influenced by his competitive nature and his expertise and knowledge, Eng was keen to see means of measuring outcomes from the DT and suggested there should be mechanisms for comparing and contrasting, as well as assessment. Without a robust way to measure outcomes, the DT might be seen as pointless.

"…the person who tries it also do an evaluation…compare and contrast…there is the third stage…there needs to be stages…for assessment…to just introduce it, it's quite easy, applying it is easy, I think it's...assessing the outcome" (Eng 2, p.6)

Fang thought that the content and execution of the DT was on point; however, she felt academics would only engage if a certificate of achievement was issued at the end of the programme.

"…if we complete this six-week programme, give us a small… [Researcher] Certificate of achievement? [Fang] Yeah! People will do it" (Fang 2, p.8)

Gao thought that the training resources should involve how to write student feedback and to build confidence.

"…another practice is you know writing feedback. Because you know the writing feedback is not only to reflect the student's work but also to reflect your view on student work, overall." (Gao 2, p.5)

4.3.2 Master Theme II: Impact

Under this master theme Impact, the super-ordinate themes are: Possibilities for the future, Reconstructing identity/ies

4.3.2.1 Possibilities for the future

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
Possibilities for the future	•		•	•	•	•	•

Participants had imagined many possibilities for the future, through engagement with the activities in the DT.

Ang, who was positive and open towards the DT, was keen to demonstrate the effectiveness of the new practices that he had learnt from it in voice projection and register. Ang saw many possibilities for the future in using the pointers learnt from the DT, in empowering him to use them to improve his interactions and his relationships with students going forward.

> *"I didn't know before…the TED or YouTube videos you sent…the sound, voice… let me show you here... how do we sound, how do we voice... they talk about 'timbre' .... 'timbre'..."* (Ang 2, p.4)

> *"…before I watch the video I didn't know this word, so I talk to you like this, but afterward, I know if I want to get my voice sound, I need to bring my voice, not only from your throat, it should be from here, your chest, then your register would be wider... and deeper..."* (Ang 2, p.4)

> *"…I did practise a little bit, not only with you but with some students, talk to my final year students… to public, when you give lecturer, because you need to increase your voice..."* (Ang 2, p.4)

> *"…Yes, of course it will [help with students]. Provided that I could apply properly and I could apply consistently…"* (Ang 2, p.8)

> *" Thank you very much Peng Peng, that's the thing which I practise a lot of times now and also feel it's really, really useful."* (Ang 2, p.5)

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Ang also saw the possibilities for the future in situations outside of the classroom.

> *"…not only my lecturer… I go to church… the hymns, the worship sounds..."* (Ang 2, p.5)

> *"…even register, it's just one point, I feel that's worth it…I can apply to lots of time…even for interview..."* (Ang 2, p.6)

Consistent with his view that the DT had offered nothing concrete or useful, Beng also failed to see any possibilities for the future from engaging with the activities in it.

The hurdle in Beng trying to imagine any possibilities for the future through engagement with the DT, was his inability to understand its intention or purpose. Failing to understand the rationale behind the programme also meant that Beng refused to or was unable to imagine how it would help him in the future.

> *"I'm not so sure about the intention... learning programme…as well as… purpose…"* (Beng 2, p.2)

Although being opposed to the idea of mandatory training programmes for staff, Ding confessed that he was always striving to improve himself. Ding also showed positivity and receptivity towards the DT and like Ang, he also imagined instances where it would be of use to him in the future.

Ding confessed to feeling lonely and having the desire to establish better communications and collaborations with colleagues in the interview in Phase One; he saw the DT as a potential means of affording him that opportunity in improving interactions between peers, through engaging with the DT together.

> *"… If you want to have peer observation, then you're going to be closer because you asked them for help, they ask you for help. And it's like because you're doing the same thing together..."* (Ding 2, p.4)

Ding also saw the DT as a way to benchmark against the standards of good teaching practices within his community of practice; and born out of that was also the possibility for him to develop a feeling or sense of belonging to that community of practice.

> *"…it's definitely going to help because if my teaching ability or teaching level is roughly the same as other colleagues here, then you might feel more belonged to this whole group of your colleague…"* (Ding 2, p.7)

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Eng, was only able to complete two of the six proposed activities in the DT. When I explained the rest of the activities to him, he was interested in the activity in Week 4, which was on dealing with negative feedback from students constructively. Having just dealt with a negative student feedback, he could see the possibilities in dealing with this better and more constructively in the future, through engaging with the activity described to him. Eng promised he would take a closer look at the activity in the future. However, that could just be politeness on his part, and following up with him on that aspect was not part of this research plan.

> *"It's good, I would definitely have a look… I just finished a unit monitoring report, one of the qualitative comments that a student wrote…even though just one comment…at the beginning I was a bit annoyed…it was only one comment, by one student…I find, quite a bit...I did [take it personally]…yeah I would definitely have a look at that…"* (Eng 2, p.2)

Based on the two activities completed, Eng could see the possibilities of improving his speech in his interaction with students.

> *"… I don't think I pause enough because I tend to duhduhduhduh… I speak continuously I think students look at me quite confused. Erm, yeah, I definitely can see [the benefit of introducing the DT to other academics]"* (Eng 2, p.3)

Eng was also positive about the possibilities for the DT in empowering him to further improve his practice.

> *"…so the programme you're doing basically provide us a tool, a simple to apply tool to achieve that…definitely, for me, it would help me…as I said, programme #2 about the speech, and I already think oh yes, next time I need to be more aware, yup".* (Eng, p.5)

Eng in Phase One revealed that he regarded himself quite highly amongst his peers and amongst his (fellow Asian) students. It was therefore natural for Eng to also consider the DT from the point of view of seeing himself in a better position compared to others who he would recommend the DT to.

> *"… if I have followed the whole, all the programmes… it would help me, and I feel great about myself. I definitely will share that with my colleague and encourage them…'have you tried it out'… especially new colleague, if I were to mentor new colleagues…"* (Eng 2, p.5)

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Eng placed enormous time, effort, and energy in ensuring that he received positive student feedback and that he thrived on this. In the DT, he saw the possibilities for the future in enabling him (or his colleagues) to get better MUSE (Mid-Unit Student Evaluation) feedback and NSS scores from students.

> *"overall…it's very much about…tool kits, that is applicable…practical…easy to apply…help you to become academic…definitely that would be my benefit…just to self-reflection and to just check now and again... after all **we** want to get better MUSE and it's important for NSS score…"* (Eng 2, p.6-7)

Fang also thrived on positive feedback and relationship with students, and she saw the possibilities in further gaining students' trust and respect in the future through efforts in varying the teaching materials used with her students in the future.

> *"…And when they're being bored in front of… big lecture, two hours lecture without any pictures or videos activities, of course they [unclear]... so yeah definitely…Maybe they trust me more they respect me more, I put this effort doing these different activities…"* (Fang 2, p.5)

Ding and Gao both saw the possibilities of the DT in compensating for the lack of language skills through hints and tips they could employ from the DT, to make lessons more interesting and to engage better with students.

> *"…we all almost always want to improve our teaching abilities…to achieve that you have to use some skills, and tricks… to make students think, okay this lecturer is really interesting … Of course we can't have the same level of language skills, maybe it's acceptable for most students, actually we're not native speakers, that's why sometimes you must be better in some other aspects and all these tricks can help us really…"* (Ding 2, p.3)

> *"… the awareness of the how to make communication more effective is quite important… as international, probably have to think other ways to you know, to highlight…we touched on some language issues, and language and the accent, so the student might not understand clearly, so that probably will affect, you know the quality of the delivery… I think certainly…it definitely will help the lecturers to get a more positive response…"* (Gao 2, p.3)

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Like Eng, Han felt a sense of security for the future – if he should find himself having to deal with negative student feedback in the future, he felt he could rely on the practices learnt from Week 4 to deal with the feedback more constructively.

> *"…what I kind of…fear, if the students give me this kind of really negative feedback, how should I deal with that? But, quite lucky, right now, I haven't found something similar, but if..."* (Han 2, p.2)

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4.3.2.2 Reconstructing identity/ies

Super-Ordinate theme	Ang	Beng	Ding	Eng	Fang	Gao	Han
Reconstructing identity/ies				•		•	

Although many participants have imagined various possibilities for the future after engagement with the DT, those possibilities did not necessarily or naturally transfer to the positive reconstruction of their identity/ies.

Ang thought it was challenging to consider any possible positive reconstruction of his identity because it was difficult to benchmark and compare himself against other native colleagues.

> *"Not sure. It would be a hard question to answer…it's hard to define or distinguish between you know international lecturer and also local lecturer..."* (Ang 2, p.9)

This could also be because Ang did not quite grasp the essence of the question.

Ultimately, Ang saw the DT as a tool in reinforcing and refreshing his existing skills, and not a tool capable of changing identity. Ang also did not mention if the DT had contributed new skills in helping towards improving his spontaneity and advanced communication in class.

> *"…nervous, is not easy to be overcome by just reading a programme even reading the programme and going to the stage, going to the classroom, the new lecturer may still feel a little bit worried…this won't solve the problem completely."* (Ang 2, p.9)
>
> *"… it's kind of another like reinforcement… there's no harm actually maybe still helpful to have this refresh of memory about those skills"* (Ang 2, p.8)

Beng did not see how the DT could positively contribute to his professional identity/ies in the classroom as this was highly subjective on other factors, not just how the lecturer viewed themselves.

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> *"…highly dependent on the individual…if you manage to communicate students or relate with students better, or let the student relate to you better, then in itself, it's, it's an improvement to the relationship, as opposed to teachers students hierarchy model…but in terms of how this change the relationship between the student and the teacher, this really depends on how you approach the, how the subject approach the student. Actually, it depends on the student as well…"* (Beng 2, p.4-5)

When Ding spoke of how the DT could help improve the way he felt about himself, he felt a sense of empowerment as an international teaching academic, equipped with "tricks and skills" so that people could see how hard he was trying to make the lessons interesting.

> *" …Oh yeah sure they will…Yeah. we all almost always want to improve our teaching abilities, and of course to achieve that you have to use some skills, and tricks…things to make people, make students think, okay this lecturer is really interesting"* (Ding 2, p.3)

However, when he viewed the DT from the perspective of improving his language and communication skills with a view of positively reconstructing his professional identity, Ding was less positive and thought that he couldn't imagine any positive change since he had already done the best he could with his students. The DT was unlikely to change that and there was no sense in trying. This could perhaps be related to his sense of inadequacy in his language skills.

> *"…for me personally maybe not…I have used most of these advices and suggestions already and I think I have always been trying to develop a more interactive and more personal relationship between me and students. But the thing is, most of the time, they didn't follow. …when I ask questions… like this and that…Just silence.... they just look at me"* (Ding 2, p.3)

> *"Of course we can't have the same level of language skills, maybe it's acceptable for most students, actually we're not native speakers, that's why sometimes you must be better in some other aspects and all these tricks can help us really, yeah"* (Ding 2, p.3)

Eng was the only participant who envisaged a positive reconstruction of identity through the DT and in his view, this sense of himself and his identity was unrelated to his relationship with his students or how students perceived him.

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"Yeah, I think definitely… for me I find useful... the last thing I want is when I go into lecture, I thought I give a very good lecture and then I look at the student expression and they didn't enjoy…at the end of the day, those little thing help, whether student enjoy or not enjoy, whether they understand or not understand you, help me to be a better person, help me with my identity so the programme you're doing basically provide us a tool, a simple to apply tool to achieve that…if I have followed the whole, all the programmes…it would help me, and I feel great about myself…" (Eng 2, p.4-5)

Fang had a deep-set sense of inadequacy about herself. From that point of view, Fang made the conclusion that no matter how good the DT was, and how hard she tried to practise the points from it, it will not change the fact that she was an Asian female – and that she will never gain the respect and authority that she deserved from her peers.

"this tall man talking and I…if I do the same talk how would people receive this message? And I can the same thing as he does I used gesture, I do humour, of course I do all the same thing but I think the reception from people can be very, very different…" (Fang 2, p.1)

"[Researcher] …when I was looking at the video, he's really good, he's really engaging, he's very good but it never really occurred to me if it was a woman doing it... [Fang] Asian woman [the emphasise on ASIAN]" (Fang 2, p.1)

"…but if I do the same speech, in front of the academic, then I don't know how people would react. If he does that same thing, people would [go] 'oh he's very good', 'he's so engaging'... but if I do that, I don't know…" (Fang 2, p.1)

"But, relationship with colleagues can be very tricky…" (Fang 2, p.6)

Fang was particularly sensitive about how people treated her because she was not British. Although not really related to the DT, Fang again took the opportunity during the interview to voice her frustration of being treated differently.

"…But Peng Peng this has been really interesting in the past 20 months in the UK….I bring my English student assistant and we go together and talk to people for conversations for data collection and I'm the researcher and she's assistant, right? But she's white and yeah, and people will talk to her, these English people and she said oh I'm not the researcher, she is my lecture researcher and they looking like.... kept talking to her that happened every single event." (Fang 2, p.2)

Gao also felt that the DT could help improve academics' sense of self, especially those who felt that being equipped with more knowledge and awareness on how to improve the quality of delivery would compensate for any language and accent issues they may face. However, it's not clear if Gao included himself in that point of view as he seemed to remove himself from facing the same issues.

> *"Definitely…you know because the awareness of the delivery, you know, the awareness of the how to make communication more effective is quite important, but I would say also, you know as international, probably have to think other ways to you know, to highlight…we touched on some language issues, and language and the accent, so the student might not understand clearly, so that probably will affect, you know the quality of the delivery..."* (Gao 2, p.3)

Han felt confident and positive regarding himself and his approach when it came to dealing with students and he felt comfortable about the relationship shared with them. For that reason, he really could not see how else he would improve further on this aspect.

> *"…[Researcher] so you're saying that it would not have changed your, the way you feel about yourself, as a lecturer? [Han] Not much, not much."* (Han 2, p.2)

Even when the DT was able to offer him different perspectives in tackling some of the issues he was dealing with, he felt that it was unlikely to change the way he saw himself.

> *"…not too much change but this is the first time… I realised this some kind of teaching technology, I probably should follow. Basically from different perspectives to look into the same thing."* (Han 2, p.2)

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Chapter 5 Discussions of Findings and Conclusion

Introduction to chapter

In this chapter, key aspects from the super-ordinate themes identified through the different phases of the research as presented in the preceding chapter will be discussed and related to the research questions and the wider literature.

Reflecting the nature of an IPA methodology, under each super-ordinate theme, there is a mixture of idiosyncratic but inter-connected experiences and meanings as expressed by the research participants. As described in Chapter 3, these super-ordinate themes were identified through a rigorous process which also involved careful interpretation by the researcher. Following that, these interpretations of the participants' "lived experience" should then be situated within the wider context of the existing literature (Smith et al. 2009) and relevant theories, which the subsequent sections will aim to achieve.

In line with IPA research, new literature may also be introduced so that "unexpected… themes that emerged" can be framed and contextualised (Smith et al. 2009, p.113).

5.1 Discussions

5.1.1 PART I

The ***first section*** of the discussion in this chapter focuses specifically on answering these two research questions:

1. *What are the experiences of IAS in their teaching and work environments in the UK, and how do they define their sense of self and identity/ies in these environments?*

2. *What are the coping strategies developed to overcome negative encounters and challenges; to what extent do IAS dedicate time and effort or seek additional support in further developing themselves?*

5.1.1.1 Navigating through tough challenges

Like the research subjects in Antoniadou and Quinlan (2020), this study has discovered that participants found ***their adjustment periods to be a roller coaster of emotions***. For some, the initial transition period was rather challenging and difficult, due to being

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unfamiliar with their new surroundings and systems; not having friends and being apart from family. This is aligned with the wider literature, where participants in this research also found difficulty adjusting to different academic standards, new education system and local practices in their new environment (Collins 2008; Jiang et al. 2010; Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010; Willis and Hammond 2014). However, less highlighted by previous literature was for some, refreshing and exciting experiences in their new environment potentially helped ease their adjustments by masking their initial anxiety and nervousness with the heightened sense of euphoria and the invigorating feeling where participants were fascinated by the refreshing change from their previous life, also found by Clifford and Henderson (2011). This in part seemed to support the initial "honeymoon" stage of acculturation as proposed by both Oberg (1960) and Lysgaard (1955) even though both cross-cultural frameworks have come under fire for making generalisations and assumptions and for their inability to capture the "complexity and unpredictability of the process" (Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020, p.72) of acculturation.

In efforts to navigate their way through new systems, policies, practices and network, what contributed more challenges for participants was ***the difficulty in penetrating the local network*** and consequently feeling like they were not being welcome or acknowledged (Thomas and Malau-Aduli 2013). Like in Kreber and Hounsell (2014), participants also struggled with feelings of isolation, and not having many socialising opportunities with colleagues and many regretted that "the connections at work were not as close as they would like them to be" (ibid, p.20). Participants in this research also found the UK working culture to be isolating, with the expectations that academics were individualistic and worked independently from one another (Pherali 2012). There is a lack of opportunity for collaboration both professionally and socially, on top of having to accept the reserved, unwelcoming and at times unhelpful attitude displayed by their British colleagues with some admitting this to be a steep learning curve. Although one participant saw the British culture as being more reserved compared to the American culture where people were "outspoken…warm…expressive" (Fang, p.2), another participant however observed that this reserved attitude was common across other UK HEIs too – people were just too busy. This aligned with Pherali's (2012) opinion – this "independent" attitude displayed by the British could be a true representation of the UK professional culture, driven by the accepted norms related to "professional performance within HE in the UK" which were leaning towards the "celebration of power, competition and survival-of-the-fittest-culture" as observed by Welikala [Benschop and Brouns (2003) in Welikala (2018, p.67)]. Under such pressurised, contested, competitive and performance-based conditions described by Mula-Falcon et al. (2022), Weliakala (2018) and Archer (2008), which the unsuspecting participants in this research unwittingly found themselves in, it is no wonder that one of the participants noted that their British team members were helpful to a certain extent, but one has to judge when to stop asking for help. This finding has affirmed the difficulty for IAS forming meaningful network and relationships with their local peer groups as found in previous literature.

Like in Hsieh (2012), there was a general sense that participants thought they possessed sufficient English language ability to operate in daily tasks and to deliver course content, as most felt confident and assured in their position. However, issues caused by their ***accent and pronunciation*** seemed a consistent topic of concern across interviews – even for participants with years of experience in academia and in the international arena, as found in previous literature. This led to participants feeling inadequate and powerless, especially as Asian women having to lecture British students or British men older than them. One participant found that her accent stigmatised that she was not native born (Lindemann 2002; Derwing and Munro 2009; Kim et al. 2018), therefore, not earning the respect and authority she deserved as the lecturer. Their rich global and cultural knowledge bore no weight or currency in these situations. The three Asian professionals in Liang (2005) also had strong inclinations that their perceived lack of credibility as instructors in their initial teaching period was strongly related to their language and accent and they too, had had their authority challenged. Like my participant, these strong inclinations have never been validated with stories of actual incidents, suggesting perhaps their feelings of inadequacy could be in part due to their own perceptions and interpretations. Hsieh (2011) in discussing academic challenges facing Chinese lecturers, related that some of the participants in her study admitted that the feeling of being discriminated against by students may not be completely true. It could merely be their own interpretation of students' behaviour. Similar to my participant, Welikala (2018), who was acutely aware of her "colour, gender and accent" (ibid, p.68), also spoke of her own "self-constructed insecurity" (ibid, p.67) when analysing her role in the workplace.

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Nonetheless, it is unquestionable that the accents and pronunciation of IAS can cause them severe anxiety, nervousness and a deep-set sense of insecurity, especially for newly-arrived IAS, which then lead to potential other cultural issues, as highlighted by Jiang et al. (2010), Pherali (2012) and Green and Myatt (2011). Participants in this research recalled experiencing constant worry and self-doubt especially during early teaching days caused by negative student feedback on their strong accent and their pace. Like in Kreber and Hounsell (2014), participants expressed strong desires to "speak as eloquently as their native peers"(p.21). However, unlike Kreber and Hounsell's research subjects who developed a sense of frustration as they realised the native-speaker level was unattainable, participants in this study after considerable efforts, eventually came to realise that it was almost impossible to achieve native-speaker level and sought to commit their time and energy instead in developing other strategies and their self-confidence grew. Although participants did not go as far as refusing to believe students' criticisms on their strong accents or denying students' complaints and treating them as a poor excuse to judge their academic performance like what the research subjects in Sliwa and Johansson (2013) did, one strategy developed by participants in this research was to analyse negative student feedback more critically and constructively. Instead of taking them at face value and instantly reacting negatively to criticisms, sometimes the negative feedback may not necessarily be the reflection of the truth. The students in Alberts' (2008) research revealed, sometimes foreign instructors really should not be blamed when students cannot understand them; it's students who should make the effort to learn to "deal" (ibid, p.193) with the accent for their own benefits.

On the subject of ***negative feedback from students***, implications from the NSS score on the institutional ranking and reputation (Office for Students 2020b), coupled with the introduction of tuition fees to domestic students also meant that more than ever, students have become more demanding (Papakosta 2014). The fact that students were treated like "consumers" (Woodall et al. 2014; Morgan 2016; Bunce et al. 2017; Brooks 2021) also meant that there were high expectations for academic staff to ensure that their students were happy and satisfied all the time, not just with their lecturers and their lessons, but also with their curriculum as well, as observed by participants in the current research. Some participants revealed that negative feedback received from students created more anxiety and nervousness, especially at a time when they were

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already feeling insecure about their abilities and position. Although most participants showed that they were highly conscious of students' perceptions of them and their teaching ability, one participant was simply resigned to the fact that when "students are not happy, they are not happy" (Cing, p.5) and nothing could be done to change that. They were quite happy to retreat to a closed room to do research, concurrently putting their hands up to say "I will never be a good public speaker" (Cing, p.3) due to their personality. Whilst others, as pointed out above, suffered the traumatic blow to their sense of confidence from receiving students' negative feedback on their teaching during the initial adjustment period and they worked hard to try to improve their situations.

Considering the government's own review of the NSS in 2020 which has exposed its unreliable nature due to it being "open to gaming" (Murray 2020, para.7), we can understand the participant who thought that nothing could be done to change students' negative attitude and feedback. As pointed out by an anonymous academic (2017), keeping students happy all the time to generate positive NSS scores was an unfair responsibility for managers to put on academics, and an impossible mission to achieve, as they were beyond the academics' control. Also observed by participants in this research, negative feedback may sometimes be unfounded. Henry Asei Kum (2018) concluded after discussion with colleagues in Liverpool Hope University in the UK, perhaps the low scores given were merely based on "one bad experience or dissatisfaction with one tutor" (ibid, p.36) or perhaps the student concerned was just having a really bad day, and Henry, a lecturer originally from Cameroon, was highly sceptical of the "true reflection" (ibid, p.36) of the NSS on his teaching excellence, much like participants in the research. The strategy in learning how to critically analyse students' feedback before reacting to them was a good strategy to deal with situations like these, to safeguard their self-confidence and status.

One participant in this research experienced the frustration of "feeling 'stupid', like 'an idiot'", having ***to conform to "expected norms"*** (Green and Myatt 2011, p.38). Due to being new and foreign, she found herself becoming a "novice" or a "learner" (Trowler and Cooper 2002, p.226) within her new culture, having to conform to and learn the established local ways of her co-teaching team, who were predominantly British, even though she had had experience in the past designing and planning teaching units. Sensing that if she expressed resistance or rejection in doing so, there would be trouble

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to fit into the new regime, she reluctantly complied (ibid). This finding has indeed raised questions on the degree of interaction and sharing of ideas and best practice between “local” and “international staff”, especially the “lack of recognition of the previous experiences of international academic…staff” (Clifford and Henderson 2011, p.109) and confirmed what Kreber and Hounsell (2014) had previously found in their research – “the vast majority of respondents felt it was mostly local practices and traditions that were favoured” (p.23) and that the university was not interested in tapping into the prior experience of international staff members, despite the gains and benefit that the IAS bring to the table (Guerin and Green 2016). This finding has also brought to the forefront the current mismatch between what key literature (UK Universities 2007; Dandridge 2010; Altbach and Yudkevich 2017; Minocha et al. 2019) has highlighted in terms of the prestige and talent brought by the IAS as opposed to the actual value and recognition that the host institutions and their members have placed on the knowledge and expertise of these IAS on the ground level (Bailey et al. 2021).

Subjects in Clifford and Henderson (2011) also observed that “integration was seen as the job of the immigrants, not something that the ‘majority’ of staff needed to put effort into” (p.112), echoing the thoughts of the participant above who felt she had to conform to the norm. Using international student experience as a proxy, Bailey et al. (2021, p.360) blamed this shortcoming on the expectations from the institutions on newcomers “to adopt to the institution rather than institutions making changes and addressing the cultural differences” (ibid), exposing the negligence of HEI in assuming that IAS would automatically assimilate to their new cultural norms on their own; and that integration into the new environment and society would happen organically and automatically through “exposure to the same transition processes as domestic academic staff” (ibid). This also signified the difficulty for participants in the research in achieving *academic acculturation* proposed by Jiang et al. (2010).

Citing Lai, Li and Gong (2016), Bailey et al. (2021) agreed that the difficulty in achieving academic acculturation for some newcomers to an environment was due to being unfamiliar with “the cultural context and norms” (Bailey et al. 2021, p.350), and the sense of “powerlessness” (ibid, p.350) as a result of that, with an acute awareness of the “limited agency” (ibid, p.350) that they possessed to enable them to “positively influence things within their HEIs” (ibid, p.350). In the context of this research, the sense

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of powerlessness in my research participants stemmed from a perceived “limited agency” (Bailey et al. 2021, p.350) caused mostly by age, gender, and ethnicity. Archer (2008), in highlighting Bourdieu’s (2001) point about how age “can constitute a potent principle of division and hierarchy and can be an object of considerable conflict” (p.392), revealed that the younger women academic in her research admitted that a “youthful (female) appearance” (ibid, p.392) compromised their position in being regarded as authentic academics, and they resorted to various tactics to address that, much like the sentiment expressed by the female participants in this research with one especially contemplating adopting a mean persona so that she could garner more respect.

Regarding gender, like Archer (2008), ***challenges encountered due to gender issues*** were raised by both male and female in this research. However, the issues were felt more acutely by the females, with male participants generally showing a lack of awareness, understanding or empathy for gender-related issues affecting their female colleagues. This has confirmed that as Asian women, participants in this research experienced greater barriers than Asian men (Li et al. 2005). Challenges associated with the perceived lack of authority and respect in ‘young Asian women teaching white men/ students’, were challenges that all female participants in this research had to contend with. All three female participants felt acutely aware of either their age, gender, and/or ethnicity when in front of students at some point in their teaching career, especially during the early days; causing them to experience a strong sense of inadequacy. This highlighted the challenges in being perceived as “’other’…young [and] inexperienced [therefore “incompetent”]” (Boyd et al. 2010, p.18).

When Li and Beckett (2005) spoke of Asian female scholars in the US having to subsist in the shadow of the traditional stereotype of the “submissive and nonconfrontational” (p.2) Asian women, they also revealed that these Asian female scholars had to navigate through the “disrespect for their research, teaching, and leadership” (p.2). For Fang, being young and female and who was not a male professor was problematic for her in asserting herself as an authoritative figure in front of her postgraduate students. This strongly echoed the story told by Eunai Kim Shrake (2005) of how being a minority female faculty member in a university in the US, she had had to experience having her power and authority as a teacher undermined “by existing racial and gender stereotypes…thrust open [her] by both…colleagues and students” (p.180), and this had sadly also forced her to "operate within certain boundaries that limit [her] freedom" (ibid, p.180) to assert herself, also like Fang.

Even worse for Fang, was the sense that she experienced gender discrimination more from her peers than her students, signalling a lack of collegiality and support from her male colleagues. Fang had observed that one of the main reasons she had benefited through her mentorship from senior management, which had provided her not only with the much-needed support but also research project collaborations and joint publication opportunities, was because both mentors were female! The benefit from mentorship for Fang was in part in line with what Green and Myatt (2011) have also documented in their research, an example of how appropriate guidance and mentorship can positively impact on a new international academic's transition process. It also supported Keiko Komiya Samimy's (2005) conclusion of the importance of providing mentorship from senior faculty to "women faculty of color" (p.116) so as to provide them with the much needed "structured, systematic feedback…on an ongoing basis" [Tierney and Bensimon (1996, p.131) cited by Samimy (2005, p.115)]; in an academic community which was still "based on male chauvinism" (Samimy 2005, p.112), helping "female faculty of color" (ibid) to overcome the numerous cultural barriers that they had to overcome was crucial. Furthermore, where the mentorship between Fang and her female managers was fruitful and successful, it was due to the symbiotic nature of the relationship, where Fang was also actively contributing to the relationship, and growing "long-term professional alliances" where the "collaboration is mutually beneficial and enriches research experiences of both" (Rong and Preissle 2006, p.284).

One gender-related issue raised by both male and female was the perceived missed promotional opportunities, either unconsciously or deliberately, like in Archer (2008). Both male participants in my study and Archer's (2008) study felt side-lined for promotional opportunities due to an active drive to promote more females. Although Archer's (2008) participant did not indicate if the female was deserving of the promotion, the male participant in this research definitely expressed his doubt that the appointed female was suitable for the job. Samimy (2005, p.116) strongly justified her position that as the current academic community was still very much chauvinistic, as "female faculty of color" and in position of power, these women should advocate "an equity-oriented institutional ethos" (p.116) and actively become "catalysts to create 'women-affirming cultures'" [Tierney and Bensimon (1996, p.94) cited in Samimy (2005, p.116)]. Tales from female faculty members, both international and domestic, voicing their dissatisfaction and the unfairness over the likelihood of men in gaining promotions and success in their career (Archer 2008; Johansson and Sliwa 2014; Kreber and Hounsell 2014; Bhopal 2016; Welikala 2018) were consistent with findings from this research, as well as the wider literature highlighting how women were still underrepresented in the academic community and that gender gap was a major issue for concern (Knights and Richards 2003; Lin et al. 2005; Samimy 2005; Barry et al. 2006; Johansson and Sliwa 2014; Ferrero Unknown). Despite equal opportunities policies and initiatives (Johansson and Sliwa 2014; Casad et al. 2021) the problem of gender inequalities, especially in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) remains largely the same to date, with very little understanding of this core issue. Under such circumstances, proactive measures to help females to achieve better successes on the ground level, as observed by the participant in this research, seemed a logical and crucial step in attempts to achieve equity at the workplace, especially in a HE environment.

Fang's case was a typical product of a "gendered organisational structures" which produce both "privileging" or "marginalizing" consequences (Johansson and Sliwa 2014, p.33) – when a less qualified male colleague got to teach the masters unit that Fang had desperately wanted and asked for; and when Fang asked to be the unit leader, her husband who was "white, tall with deep voice" was appointed instead. Highlighted by Johansson and Sliwa (2014), in reference to Bagilhole and Goode (2001), suggested that there seemed to be a set of underlying standardised ideas of what constitutes an academic career, which unsurprisingly follows a "masculinist norm" (Johansson and Sliwa 2014, p.23), and which women were considered as not suited for. Worse, citing van den Brink and Benschop (2011), Johansson and Sliwa (2014, p.23) also suggested the process of evaluating merit in UK academia seemed to also include "a tacit dimension of assessing individual qualities such as physical appearance, self-presentation and personality" (p.23), which Rose in Archer (2008, p.394) also noticed and highlighted. Fang was a young Asian female lecturer with a bubbly and friendly personality, and who was not a white, male professor with a beard or with a deep voice; based on that, the society – her students and staff around her, decided that she did not merit the authority, respect, and recognition that she deserved as an academic. This was in line with the white, male-dominated gender ideology currently existing in UK HEIs as highlighted in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

5.1.1.2 Sense of self, identity and belonging

One of the earliest works in exploring IAS' sense of themselves in their new environment was conducted by Clifford and Henderson in 2011. Other research exploring the sense of self, the identity/ies, the identity construction or reconstruction specifically in IAS has remained limited and scarce, since then. Most research conducted in and around IAS primarily focused on their experience, challenges and issues faced, and rarely on close examination of their sense of self or identity/ies.

Despite the challenges described in the previous sections, participants in this research revealed themselves as established individuals with ***high levels of self-esteem***, and who saw their position as equal to their local counterparts, specifically for male participants. Participants spoke of being very assured of their professional identity – their role, position and important contribution and achievements within the institution, signalling a sense of belonging in their new environment (Kaur 2019). In Clifford and Henderson (2011), the researchers talked about their participants having arrived at the "'enthusiastic/mastery' phase of the culture shock cycle" (ibid, p.115), having been assured by the participants of their "embe[d]dedness" (ibid, p.115) within their new culture and environment. However, less known or explored by the researchers, was the participants' sense of self, their value and contribution, or indeed their true sense of belonging within their new environment. The researchers did label their participants as "confident, independent, adventurous, high achievers" (Clifford and Henderson, p.115) but that sense of self was referring to their act in actively seeking to move from their previous establishment to the UK, therefore not an appropriate representation of their sense of self upon adjustment to life in the UK; as the researchers themselves revealed, their participants did not have a great understanding of their new educational culture and that they had unfortunately developed an "uncomfortable identity as an 'outsider'" (ibid, p.115). This highlighted a mismatch between their troubled identity in relation to their perceived (successful) acculturation stage as projected by the researchers. This was justified by Clifford and Henderson (2011) to be the over-positive views from the participants so as not to portray their host institution in a negative light.

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Henry Asei Kum (2018), a Cameroonian lecturer in the UK revealed, “international academics are…driven by a desire to become a successful ‘insider’ in their profession in the new setting” (p.40). To become an “insider” (ibid) and feel like they belong, IAS need to have the strong sense that they are successful. Using students’ sense of belonging as guidance suggesting that the ***sense of belonging*** is positively and intrinsically tied to academic success, achievement and motivation, and satisfaction (Wentzel 1998; Freeman et al. 2007; Ahn and Davis 2020), to look at IAS’ sense of belonging, we will need to delve into their sense of achievements and/or contributions; and their sense of value in the workplace. Participants in this research spoke highly of the wealth of their subject knowledge and the skills developed; their involvement in research and publications as well as the positive feedback received from their students; their sense of achievements in their new environment; the advantages, knowledge and experience attached to being global citizens; their contribution towards the institution and their teaching experience, and their establishments within their community of practice – signalling their strong teacher identity (van Lanveld 2017) and confirming their high sense of achievement and belonging in their workplace. Kum (2018) also explained, one aspect which he thought was important for IAS to consider in their new environment was the ability to “engage in reflective practice” (ibid, p.40). Like Henry, participants in the current research are assured of and recognise their own strengths; they build their confidence on that basis, and they “recognise [themselves] as…valuable member[s] of a community of practice” (ibid, p.40).

By delving into participants’ sense of value, contribution and sense of belonging in their work environment, this research provides an added dimension of examining and understanding IAS’ sense of self and the construction of identity in their new environment, which Clifford and Henderson (2011) and other literature weren’t able to offer.

The contributions and value brought by the highly skilled IAS community make them valuable assets to the institutions that hire them (UK Universities 2007; Dandridge 2010; Altbach and Yudkevich 2017; Minocha et al. 2019). Pat Thomson (2014) talked about how the IAS community enhance the student experience linguistically and culturally; how also IAS bring “competitive advantages” through bids, citations, and research esteem which transfer into currency for improving HE quality; and also how previous

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local knowledge, contacts and networks formed can be useful to their new institutions, all of which are qualities demonstrated and echoed by participants in this research, supporting claims that IAS are assets for their host universities (Foote et al. 2008; Sanderson 2011; Svetlik and Braček Lalić 2016; Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020). Unlike the female participants in the research and in other literature (Liang 2005), who were stigmatised for their language and accent, where some of the male participants in this research felt they were lacking in linguistic advantages for being non-native speakers, they promptly dismissed this and highlighted their other professional qualities instead such as their subject knowledge and their established status in strengthening their sense of self. This confirmed research findings on gender differences in self-esteem and self-confidence, pointing to men having the tendency to have higher self-esteem than women both universally, and cross-culturally and it was suggested that this in part, could be due to the "universal sociocultural factors…that transcend culture and context" (Casale 2020).

As Wenger (2000) explained, "a strong identity involves deep connections with others through shared histories and experiences, reciprocity, affection, and mutual commitments" (Anwaruddin 2012, p.13). The concept of *affiliating* and *belonging* (to a community or society) was central in understanding the notion of "identity". When one participant in the research spoke of being recognised (by the British) for doing a good job after two years, that signified a ***firm entry to the community of practice*** (Wenger 1998); and in Bourdieu's concepts of "habitus", "fields" and "capital", this also meant acceptance into the "habitus", upon gaining the appropriate "symbolic capital" (1977b, 1987, 1991, 1993). For some participants however, their community of practice was regarded as an entity which was "desired yet refused" (Archer 2008, p.385), signalling a troubled sense of belonging and identity, and this was definitely true in Fang's case where her "race", "gender", and "age" seemed to be preventing her "legitimate peripheral participation" (p.387) into her community of practice (CoP).

In their new environment, there is a sense that firm membership to their international CoP was equally important, if not more. There was a sense that participants felt more comfortable and supported through their international CoP, which also reinforced what Kreber and Hounsell (2014) have found in their research – "IAS felt that the presence of other international staff aided collegiality" (p.26). This was further helped by a shared

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subject or discipline field. Observed by Luxon and Peelo (2009, p.650), it is common for international academics in the UK system "to develop a profile within an internationalised discipline field". International academics who share the same subject discipline, will "find their place" and come together as a *community of practice* [Lave and Wenger (1991) cited in Luxon and Peelo (2009)] mainly through shared "focus on the content of the subject" (ibid, p.650). This was evident in participants in this research where their shared discipline and environment has provided that strong sense of CoP either organically, or out of necessity. This confirmed what Jiang et al. (2010, p.163) have highlighted regarding the importance of disciplinary identity which appeared to first enable IAS to "gain entry" to their current position, but also to ensure an immediate common ground with others (also international) in the host group. What Jiang et al.'s (2010) research also revealed was the Chinese participants in their research were restricted to their social circle consisting of other Chinese people due to having difficulty making friends with British people. This could also be the case in this research due to the difficulty in participants integrating into the local networks, as mentioned.

The way participants understood and regarded ***their professional roles as academic members*** within the institution was also strongly connected to participants' sense of assurance of their establishment as explained by Billot (2010) regarding the connection between academic and professional identities.

Participants who displayed a sense of assurance in their current position spoke of their roles as constituted of their expert subject and global knowledge and their teaching experience and abilities *("professional values")*, teaching and building positive relationship with students *("academic values, beliefs and practices")*, conducting research and producing publications (with colleagues) alongside teaching *("professional role")*, and their sense of belonging in the community of practice *("professional location")* (Billot 2010, p.471). Participants demonstrated that they understood the values, beliefs, and practices as well as their roles within their host institution and that they were able to strike a balance across all the elements that made up their academic and professional identities. Part of understanding their professional identities in the UK HE environment as shown by some participants, was also the changing of their teaching pedagogy towards a student-centred one, by bringing spontaneous teaching materials and by being able to think on their feet so that they could engage in discussions with students.

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This echoed Chloe Shu-Hua Yeh's (2018) quest to understand her professional identity. In evaluating if she was a good lecturer, she realised that she had to change her teacher-centred approach to a student-centred one to "support students' development" (ibid, p.82) and to "encourage students to become independent in their pursuit of knowledge" (ibid, p.82), which was more suitable to the UK HE context (Yeh 2018, p.82). However, for some participants where their academic and professional identities could be influenced or limited by ***their cultural identity and agencies***, things could get slightly muddled and this consequently caused their sense of self-esteem to become unstable. Lamont and Nordberg (2014, p.7) observed, where individuals were working in a new place or starting a new role, they found themselves "negotiating a balance between their occupational and personal identities". Despite having a clear understanding of the values, beliefs and practices that underpinned their academic identity and the professional roles expected of them, due to their perceived limited agency, one participant felt she would never be a good public speaker due to her personality; and resorted to relying on a teacher-centred approach in the class; while other participants when comparing themselves to their native counterparts, feared that lack of linguistic and cultural agencies meant that students would always prefer to be taught by British lecturers. Hsieh (2011) had also revealed confessions from young Chinese lecturers that students appeared to prefer seeking advice from European lecturers and "have classroom interaction with experienced lecturers rather than young Chinese lecturers" (p.112).

This research also found – "***confidence*** was regularly described in relation to an individual's perceived content and pedagogical knowledge" (Sadler 2013, p.163). Participants in this research strongly felt that their confidence level was closely linked to having the necessary subject knowledge and expertise. The relationship between subject knowledge and confidence displayed by participants in this research mirrored what was found by Sadler – "confidence and content knowledge" – the higher the perceived level of content knowledge, the higher the confidence (p.163). There was a strong sense from participants that if all else failed, their subject knowledge and expertise would be strong qualities that they could fall back on.

One participant noted that due to his confidence in his subject knowledge, having a good grasp of the language became secondary. Other participants mentioned that their ***level***

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of confidence stemmed from ***how much easier they now found language use to be***, compared to before. Previously literature has identified the challenges faced by IAS of having to teach and conduct discussions with students in English. However, less explored was on how IAS grew their confidence over time, especially in relation to language use, as the data from this study suggests. On closer inspection, this increased confidence in language use in participants in the research was also found to contribute towards changing classroom pedagogy – by adopting a more impromptu approach in the use of teaching materials, and gradually moving away from relying heavily on prepared materials; and the ability and flexibility to be spontaneous in the use of their teaching material, was a marker to indicate their confidence level. This was something not previously explored before as previous literature tended to concentrate on IAS language use in relation to understanding hidden cultural signals and connotations, or on IAS becoming confident due to personality change in values, views, and perceptions. In previous work, "the development of confidence" was rarely explored. For example in Sliwa and Johansson (2013) where a growth in participants' self-confidence due to acquiring linguistic capital was observed, what was different about confidence in relation to language found in this research, was that language proficiency, pronunciation or accent may not have changed; rather, the confidence and the ease with using the language has, either through conscious efforts and strategies to gain more exposure or through reinforcement; and this was also connected to their confidence with using the language to influence their pedagogy, to make lessons more interesting for students. As Gardner (1985) observed, "self-confidence arises from positive experiences in the context of the second language" (p.54). Unfortunately for Ding, he did not have this opportunity and this lack of access to *capital* and his perceived lack of *affordances* had both influenced negatively on his "sense of agency" (Darvin and Norton 2015, p.50).

Although issues of racism did not come across directly as major concerns for participants, "a thriving body of research has insisted that Western universities are characterised by institutional and everyday racism to such an extent that ethnic minorities often experience campuses as hostile environments in which they have to develop strategies of survival to cope within" (Moosavi 2021, p.3). Perhaps the reason it has not been brought up explicitly was linked to the challenges and difficulties in identifying and addressing microaggressions in everyday life (Lander and Santoro 2017). As Fang

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revealed, when she felt that she was being marginalised, she feared she was causing unnecessary issues or over-reacting. She therefore did not pursue the issues officially, to avoid negative implications (Bhopal 2016; Welikala 2018). Under such pressures, ***resistance against unfair stereotype and stigmatisation*** as Asian academics came across strongly when participants discussed feeling confident. There was strong resistance for their professional identity to be linked to or be defined by their national or cultural identity when participants stressed that their confidence did not relate to their national identity; and when others judge (their) confidence, it should be evidence-based and not based on a "gut feeling". This strongly suggested that participants themselves may have been subjected to biased judgements by others purely because they were Asian instructors operating in a Western environment. Arday (2018) has confirmed that the "persistent and operant nature of Whiteness within the Academy", which is inherent in UK HEIs and is "enduring" (ibid, p.141), portrays "faculty of colour" (ibid, p.141) as lacking in proficiency or being incompetent, and that "disrupting the normativity and fluidity of Whiteness has historically proved to be challenging" (ibid, p.141); owing to that, "establishing professional legitimacy for faculty of colour in the guise of normative Whiteness will always remain problematic because of the subordinated view of people of colour" (ibid, p.156). This was evident in the participants' experience.

Previous literature has also failed to pay attention to and to illuminate the ***strong sense of pride*** felt by the IAS community, of their contributions, status and their achievements and establishments in their workplace. The conclusions drawn by prominent scholars in this under-researched topic on IAS quite often leaned towards negative themes such as "challenges", "obstacles", "tensions", "problems", "negative experiences", "negative feedback" and "difficulties" (Luxon and Peelo 2009; Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010; Hsieh 2012; Pherali 2012; Kreber and Hounsell 2014) and rarely on the celebration of triumph and achievements. Although in Green and Myatt (2011) the scholars spoke of IAS resolving challenges faced through time and developing a sense of belonging, there was no record of the gratifying feeling from IAS having arrived in that "third space" (p.40). Participants in this research spoke proudly of their heritage and global experience, and the added edge that this gave in terms of knowledge, language and culture possessed compared to their British counterparts; of feeling of *superiority* over their fellow

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countrymen or even over native counterparts due to their proficiency, experience and position in the UK; of the professional qualification and status which they worked hard to attain, which also confirmed their sense of establishment; of working hard and breaking through expected cultural norms (Jiang et al. 2010) to gain leadership position to be recognised; and of conquering previous fears in public speaking, becoming a speaker at external events, among other things. These stories of triumph and accomplishments by IAS in this research not only exposed the positive outcomes from their adjustment previously not explored, they also disproved claims that the "experience of expatriates" was a "passive state" and that IAS were submissively suffering the anxiety brought by their mobility (Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020, p.80). Although Bhopal and Jackson (2013) argued that the HEIs themselves did not recognise and may not even value the unique background, styles, expressions, diverse ethnic identities and different cultural capital offered by IAS which could severely impact on their self-esteem, it is evident that IAS themselves however recognised and appreciated their own strengths and have harnessed from such qualities to enhance their position, their self-esteem and self-worth, much like what Henry Asei Kum (2018) has advocated.

Darvin and Norton (2016) suggested – ***"identity remains a site of struggle"*** (p.26).

Clifford and Henderson (2011) also noted that "transitioning to a new identity is not unidirectional or exclusive, being multi-layered and fluid" and this was confirmed by Welikala's (2018) own account; she concluded that her identities were "multiple and fluid", and which also gave her the power to "negotiate and sometimes resist the challenges encountered within her new context" [Bennett (1993, p.128) cited by Welikala (2018, p.69)].

This was true for participants in the research who suggested identity to be a constantly shifting quality, depending on situations and contexts. Like in Jiang et al. (2010), one participant in this research regarded retaining her national identity as important. However, unlike the students in Kaur's (2019) research and the participant in Jiang et al. this participant saw her desired habitus – to be "as good as British" and to not be treated "any less than any British" in direct contradiction to the maintenance of her national identity. Seeing herself as equal to her British counterparts and working hard to lose her Chinese accent, she feared losing her Chinese identity. Despite having links with her native country through research and project collaborations, she feared her professional identity which she took 14 years to develop, was beginning to threaten her national identity.

Participants' struggle with identity seemed to be simultaneously threatened and enhanced by the understanding of a perceived lack of "cultural" and "symbolic capital" (Bourdieu 1991) or agencies – "…personal trait[s] that operate outside of culture and [are] designed to liberate the individual from cultural constraints" (Ratner 2000, p.413).

One Chinese participant expressed the desire to be a leader, but the lack of the appropriate personality or agency ("human and symbolic capital") had stopped him from being a leader. Whilst another Chinese participant also recognised the cultural capital required to be a leader, something that was apparently not inherent in the Chinese culture (Gao, p.16), worked hard to accumulate those cultural capital through attending personal development courses which enabled his entry to the desired habitus and gave him the power to resist the challenges encountered (Welikala 2018, p.69). This identity crisis seemed consistent with what Fu et al. (2007, p.904) had found –

> *"Chinese society is going through unprecedented changes. Though traditional values are still highly respected, and constantly pull back Chinese organizational leaders and urge them to conform to the traditional values [which emphasised collective ownership], their internal desires to become competitive and the external pressure to do so are all pushing them toward modern Western ideologies, encouraging them to challenge the norms."*

One female participant admitted to having to juggle multiple, conflicting identities in the workplace. Portraying herself as friendly, warm, and approachable, she wanted to gain trust and have collegiality with her students; however, that very same disposition caused her to be subjected to power dynamic issues with her co-teaching team and led to a deep-set sense of inadequacy, a lack of respect and authority from her peers and dissertation level students. In her undergraduate classes, the participant took the effort to introduce herself in a fun way, using the latest pop culture; and students liked that, and they liked her. For some male participants, although they spoke of students enjoying their classes and providing them with positive feedback, they did not seem to resort to such measures. Could this echo Anderson's (2010, p.462) observation that "warmth and availability seem to be particularly important dimensions for women professors" (in Anderson and Smith 2005)? This was also linked to one study which also "found that women professors earned higher student ratings if they were friendly, whereas ratings of men professors were not affected by this dimension" [Kierstead et al. (1988) cited by Anderson (2010, p.462)], suggesting that as female academics, being warm and friendly was a requirement to get students to rate them highly.

Having high self-esteem came across as a strong theme in participants' sense of self, especially those who felt their position equal with native counterparts; however, there were also strong indications that there may be conflicts, especially when participants confessed to feeling that given all other conditions were equal, students would always prefer to be taught by native speakers, most likely due to their pronunciation and accent. This was echoed by Archer (2008) regarding academics' participation and membership to a community of practice – that it cannot be assumed to be a one-way process and that the "permanence" (ibid, p.387) of such professional status was short-lived (cited from Colley and James 2005). Sliwa and Johanssen (2013) also agreed – "in the case…where one does not consider oneself to be a sufficiently competent 'player', it is possible for non-native English-speaking academics to develop a sense of inadequacy and intellectual inferiority compared with their native English-speaking colleagues" (p.92).

5.1.1.3 Of survival and resilience

What this discussion aims to highlight is the admirable quality of resilience and perseverance showcased by participants in the research in their adaptation process. In a similar vein to giving voice to IAS in narrating their experiences and encounters, the research aims to do them justice by highlighting their efforts as active agents working towards changing and improving their situations, and in developing coping strategies to navigate through uncharted territories that appeared at times both challenging and testing; and how those challenges overcome had made them resilient and tenacious, much like Welikala (2018).

The high self-esteem quality and the feeling of self-confidence and strong sense of pride that participants had proudly and humbly revealed was the result of a transitioning process; from feeling unsure of themselves to building resilience and perseverance and feeling positive and proud of their achievements and accomplishments. As Welikala (2018) disclosed, from a "fragile identity", she became "resilient" through "unpredicted challenges" (p.67). This confirmed Green and Myatt's (2011, p.40) observation of the

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dichotomy of “a sense of inadequacy” vs “a fierce determination to survive” as a recurring theme in their participant narratives, before developing a sense of belonging. The stories again validate that the “experience of expatriates” was not a “passive state” as claimed (Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020, p.80).

Findings from this research supported Green and Myatt’s (2011) observation that “**critical reflection**” (p.41) was fundamental to the process of “transformative practice in higher education” (p.41). Participants in this research adopted critical self-reflection during and after lessons as coping strategy. Previous literature confirmed reflection to be closely related to the construction of professional identity (Trede et al. 2012; Körkkö et al. 2016; Engelbertink et al. 2021; Protassova et al. 2021). In this research, participants talked about observing students’ behaviour in class and their reaction to the lessons, consequently reflecting and adjusting the pedagogy and approach in terms of the delivery and content to help students’ learning process and to increase engagement in future lessons. Participants spoke about learning from students’ feedback and reflecting on the delivery of their lessons; and reinforcing the changed behaviour in the classroom to achieve better outcomes, a capacity central to teacher development (Zwozdiak-Myers 2012). This closely mirrored Hughes’ (2013) description of her professional identity construction through critical reflection .

It was the process of “reflection-in-action” and “reflection-on-action” (Schon 1983; Hughes 2013) which was central in how participants in this research “deal well with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict” brought by the loss of stable state (Schon 1983, p.49-50/p.276), and in navigating their way through their new environment.

Like Hsieh (2011, p.114) participants in this research also found adopting “**reflective thinking**” helpful in adjusting their teaching methods and skills. Citing Chan and Fai Pang (2006) and Putnam and Borko (2000), Hsieh explained, “continuous learning and evaluation” (p.114) were considered to be ways “to achieve sustainable and generative qualitative change in…teaching” (p.114) for teachers, which were qualities displayed by the research participants.

Apart from highlighting that **student-teacher relationships** could create anxiety for IAS and that communications with students could be problematic due to language barriers, there was little focus prior to this study on the potential for building and maintaining positive student-teacher relationships, or how they could be harnessed to overcome challenges. One participant in this research spoke of the importance of building trust in students – to show genuine professional interest and care for them; and to demonstrate to students that they took care, attention, and efforts in managing their expectations and enhancing their classroom experience. This correlated with Yeh's (2018) personal narrative which revealed that building positive experiences between herself and students outside of formal teaching and learning contexts could help eliminate negative attitude and bias from students. In realising that, she worked hard not only to develop her "academic expertise, such as language competence and subject-related knowledge, but [she] also value[d] opportunities to have informal interactions and conversations" (p.83) with her students to gain more understanding of them, which my participant also took efforts to do. This was in line with what Hsieh (2011) found – "when students and lecturers become familiar with each other, students generally found it easier to trust the professional knowledge of lecturers" (p.113). The participant was happy to disclose that he had scored highly in a recent student feedback exercise, showing that all the efforts taken to build positive relationships with student were impactful.

Some participants spoke of adopting more relaxed and friendly approaches with students; and through the relaxed style of communication and through feedback given from students, they were better able to understand and gauge their needs and expectations, and to tailor the content and pedagogy of their lessons to suit. One participant disclosed when in the past he had trouble managing his lessons due to a tendency in fitting as much content as possible; through feedback from students, he now felt confident and comfortable removing some of the content to help students focus and learn better. The most rewarding part from this positive student-teacher relationship was seeing students react to their funny actions and to see on students' faces how much they were genuinely enjoying their lessons. Part of developing and maintaining a teacher identity involves "a sense of appreciation, a sense of connectedness [and] a sense of commitment" (van Lankveld et al. 2017, p.333) which participants in this research had worked to achieve through their efforts in building positive relationships with students and improving the teaching and learning experience with and for students. "[C]ontact with students" (p.333) was definitely regarded by

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participants as one of the strengthening factors on university educators' teacher identity (van Lankveld et al. 2017).

Relationship and network building with peers was another important strategy and key to 'survival' for some participants, especially during the early stages in adjusting to their new environment. One participant spoke appreciatively and even with a hint of nostalgia, of how he was surrounded at work by people who were also *foreigners*, who became firm friends and helped guide him through the initial challenging period. This "collegiality and the international character of the academic unit" proved "helpful" to the participant and provided him with a "good feeling" (Kreber and Hounsell 2014, p.25).

This was especially crucial where the participant felt it was difficult to build bonds and seek guidance from his British counterparts; his international CoP became his pillar for support. Developing kinship with other IAS in the department who arrived during the same time helped too, much like in Kreber and Hounsell (2014). Their research participants tended to gravitate towards people with "similar experiences, who understood the issues they were going through, both within and outside of the academy" (ibid, p.24) – signalling the importance of such relationships in both their professional as well as social settings. One noteworthy aspect in the relationship-building strategy adopted by one participant in this research was how he was able to learn from a native colleague that he was partnered with for a research project. His language skills improved significantly simply through everyday conversations with the native; and that the native counterpart also took care to speak clearly, in easy-to-understand speech. Referring to Haigh (2005), Luxon and Peelo (2009) suggested that "everyday conversation" provides great context and foundation for professional learning and development and even more so, within the framework of international academics arriving to a new environment (p.654). This also supported Pherali's (2012) observation on the gains from personal relationships built between friendly colleagues at a local level. The same phenomenon was observed by Bailey et al. (2021) where the participants admitted to relying on "willing and supportive colleagues" (p.359) to provide them with the much needed informal support. Bailey et al. (2021) blamed a lack of institutional initiatives as one of the potential barriers to cultivating healthy interactions between students and staff, and amongst staff; but as shown by participants in this research, building network and relationships with students and other staff was something that was within their own control, which they took their own initiatives to develop, albeit not necessarily with native or local staff. Pherali (2012, p.328) did make a point to note that this however was conditioned upon an individual's "personality and ability to make friends". "[O]pen-mindedness" (Parker and McEvoy 1993, p.361), being flexible and adaptable are certainly important qualities in intercultural adjustment (Parker and McEvoy 1993) proven by participants in this research who took the initiatives and efforts to build local networks of support with others and kept an open mind in finding opportunities to learn and gain support from. One participant revealed that her lack of a network of support during her early days was due to the lack of other IAS in her immediate circle; she also confessed to having trust issues with colleagues outside of her department, which contributed to a troubled adjustment period where she felt unsupported. This was in support of Smith's (2010) research exploring the identities and experience of probationary lecturers in the UK, who noted that participants in a "supportive, collegial department" (p.583) had identity which was "untroubled" (p.583). Citing Knight, Tait and Yorke (2006), Smith argued for the importance and value of "informal learning" (p.589) to academics new to their environment as it was found that research participants who were in departments that lacked "collegiality" (p.589) found themselves experiencing "a very stressful transition" (p.589), as did my participant. This confirmed the lack of professional socialisation opportunities as an issue. However, it may not have stemmed from issues with differing individual personalities. Citing Clark and Corcoran (1986), Samimy (2005) highlighted that opportunities for socialisation were seen as extremely important in developing successful professional academic careers for women. Yet, Samimy also observed that "generally minority women have fewer opportunities for professional socialization opportunities in graduate school in comparison to majority women" (p.107) and referring to Turner and Thompson (1993), she also highlighted that "in comparison to majority women, minority women were [also] reported to have fewer opportunities in apprenticeship, mentoring, and support networks in the department they belong to" (p.107). This could have contributed to the troubled adjustment period experienced by the participant in this research, starting as early as her doctoral journey.

Participants in this research also revealed that a key quality in successfully handling a class, was **knowing how to be prepared for and to handle students' questions**, which some participants had admitted, could be intimidating, stressful and daunting (Jiang et al. 2010; Walker 2015), even after a considerable amount of time teaching in the UK. However, none of the existing literature seemed keen to explore how IAS would attempt to conquer such anxiety. Walker (2015) claimed that IAS were severely lacking in confidence in handling students' questions, unlike UK academics. Walker explained that IAS feared students' questions and lacked confidence in telling students "Let me think about that" (Walker 2015, p.68). The strategies and approaches adopted by participants in this research on handling students' questions disproved this claim; and exposed some of the 'behind the scenes' approaches and initiatives taken by IAS to address these related issues. Relationship-building with students was one of the strategies employed by participants in improving their pedagogy, teaching experiences, and outcomes. As an extension to that, through that positive relationship built, one participant found that instead of feeling anxious and worried about not being able to answer students' difficult questions, they adopted the technique of asking questions of students to seek further clarifications on the original query asked. The participant no longer felt anxious about students' questions; he enjoyed them, and this seemed to have boosted his confidence in class too.

Previously not revealed, was that through time, experience and reinforcement, one participant was able to build the kind of confidence that Walker (2015) claimed was lacking in IAS, to tell students "I will get back to you later on that!" (Eng, p.4). The participant felt that the cumulation of this knowledge and experience, through an "iterative process" (Eng, p.4), had helped build up such confidence. Admittedly, Walker did note that her research subjects were newly appointed IAS (although she did not specify the exact length) to the UK HE environment compared to research participants in this study. However, it was still an unfair judgement, which was weak, baseless, and unfounded. Such stereotyping and assumptions could potentially be misleading, not to mention the fact that they could also give an inaccurate representation of how IAS were benchmarked against their native/UK counterparts. As noted by Shaikh (2009, p.26), "attempts to analyse and compare professional performance for local and immigrant tutors…are simply not viable".

Negative feedback from students especially on their language and pace, had prompted participants to take immediate actions and to adopt various strategies to improve situations. Green and Myatt (2011), citing other sources, suggested that difficulties with language was one of the most significant sources of stress that could damage new staff's ability to work efficiently and affect their progress in adjusting their teaching with local pedagogic practices. Through "self-awareness" and "acceptance", two fundamental keys in academics negotiating through teaching and learning in a new culture [Sanderson (2008) cited in Green and Myatt (2011, p.40)], participants in the current research showed this not to be the case. When one participant realised that near-native speaker level was unattainable and that attempts to master the language to the native level did not solve the issues he had in class, he quickly resorted to other strategies – 1. by working on conveying his messages across clearly and effectively and not using too many technical jargons; 2. by not using "big words" (Eng, p.4) that he found difficult to pronounce; or even 3. by preparing his lectures in advance, visualising his lessons, and choosing his vocabulary carefully. This finding correlated with what Daly and Davy (2018) found with their participants – as a result of carefully chosen and prepared vocabulary and grammatical structures, students could understand non-native instructors more easily, compared to the "less carefully monitored native speaker discourse" (p.70). Other participants in the research also spoke of explaining technical jargons to students in plain language to overcome issues associated with it.

One commonality across almost all participants was that **preparation was seen as key** to successful execution of lessons. The degree of preparation may vary; however, it was still central, even to IAS who considered themselves experienced and knowledgeable. Luxon and Peelo (2009) claimed, IAS with low confidence in themselves and their proficiency of the language, relied on PowerPoint slides to provide them with the added security in the classroom; and that "preparation for slides can assume marathon proportions" (p.655) not just on teaching and learning activities, but on deflecting student input. Participants in this research however revealed that there were more complexities behind the preparations made before class. Instead of being an avoidance tactic, preparation was seen in part, as a coping strategy and an assurance to boost their confidence in the classroom and to establish themselves as "credible professionals" (Liang 2005, p.97). Some participants in the research explained that being prepared meant that they had more confidence in dealing with students' questions; being prepared meant that they ensured they had good pedagogy; and that they could be assured that things would go well in class. To participants in this research, preparation before lessons was not regarded as means to deflect student input as claimed in previous studies; but rather, as boosters to their self-confidence and assurance in class.

Like Yeh (2018), participants in the research recognised the importance of developing students as independent learners; and those participants with more confidence showed they were able to gradually move away from their prepared materials to allow students opportunities to interact, thus enhancing students' learning experience.

One participant however revealed that the only way to teach, was "to teach what [she] had to" (Cing, p.5) and there was no other way, leaning towards a teacher-centred approach. It is worth mentioning that the same participant also thought that there was nothing she could change if students were not happy; and that teaching did not suit her personality, and she preferred research. This participant was an example of an academic forced to embrace a professional identity which she saw herself ill-equipped with and consequently found herself lacking in confidence and indeed the enthusiasm to improve herself, her pedagogy or even relationship with students. As described by Lamont and Nordberg (2014) and Delanty (2008, p.126), the complexity surrounding academic roles, and the conflicting academic pressures, external priorities and expectations, have put Cing in a vulnerable position and her "identity is perceived as in crisis"!

Participants in this research spoke proudly of their **sense of resilience and persistence**, as IAS in the UK. One Chinese participant thought her first year was akin to being "thrown into a frying pan" (Ing, p.3) – it was a struggle. However, she also confessed that there were definite benefits to the struggle, and credited them to her perseverance, determination, persistence for success and her refusal to give up. This theme of persistence was observed by Jiang et al. (2010) in their research participants – "even though certain elements of Chinese academic culture hindered academic acculturation into UK practice, essential qualities such as consistency, persistence and a responsible attitude towards work were highly valued and appeared to play a more significant role in the acculturation process" (p.164). The same participant in this research believed that though her struggles had brought positive outcomes, she did not recommend that "everyone should go through that" (Ing, p.3). Green and Myatt (2011) who recorded the "immense resilience and strengths" (p.36) of the narrators in their research, also

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thought that the process in resolving and overcoming problems and challenges encountered were at great personal costs to the IAS in their research.

The resilience and persistence shown by participants also resonated with Welikala (2018), who spoke of developing a sense of resilience and perseverance, and the instinct for survival through overcoming “unpredicted challenges” (p.67). Refusing to conform to the standard norm of the negative experience encountered by IAS to a new overseas institution cast in key literature (Welikala 2018), participants put enormous efforts into negotiating and resisting the challenges encountered in their new environment. They took proactive measures and initiatives to commit time and efforts, and sometimes money in improving themselves and their situations with a view to positively impact on their professional proficiency. Like Kum (2018), participants signed up to speech training and elocution courses; took up opportunities in peer observations; reading extensively and even joining a Shakespeare reading class, all in attempts of the betterment of themselves through more practice and exposure to the target language.

5.1.1.4 On further developing themselves and seeking support

Literature on foreign lecturers’ teaching abroad experience has rarely explored the adaptation processes of IAS in adjusting to their new environment (Jeannin 2017), let alone any motivation for or initiatives taken in further improving and growing themselves professionally. In this section, we will examine the participants’ personal aspirations, in connection with efforts taken or support sought to further themselves in pursuit of those desires. Although gallant attempts will be made to relate and situate the findings within relevant literature in the fields, I am cautiously reminding the readers of the scarcity and paucity of the existing literature in this under-explored field, a gap which I hope to address through this research.

When reflecting on their current and past selves in connection with their knowledge and experience, teaching skills, practices, and position, participants also spoke of personal aspirations to improve in the future. These desires revealed by participants included possessing more advanced language skills to be spontaneous and humorous in class; the desire to be in leadership positions, and connected to that, one participant saw having better interpersonal and communication skills in the target language as a requirement. He wanted to possess those skills but was adamant that the desire for better structure

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of his content and speech was separate from his linguistic ability. One other participant desired to have more authority and respect from students and peers; while as previously mentioned, there were participants who wished to have the skills and abilities to speak eloquently like native speakers; whilst some expressed the desire to excel constantly for positive student feedback. However, when participants elaborated on how invested they were in further initiatives taken to attain these personal goals, there were perceived barriers in some participants taking actions to achieve those personal desires.

Both Ang and Ding had expressed the desire to be spontaneous and humorous in class to make lessons more interesting for students. However, only Ang revealed efforts put into learning and memorising items of vocabulary, new idiomatic expressions and proverbs and imagining such skills will eventually bring spontaneity and humour to his lessons, stimulating the atmosphere during particularly slow lessons with dry content. However, the opportunity to incorporate the learned items of vocabulary or the new idiomatic expressions in class had so far never presented itself to the participant. As observed by Sliwa and Johansson (2013), this mastery of the language that both participants were referring to, was a “way of communicating that only those of native speaking status seem to achieve” (p.86). For both participants, the lack of such verbal communicative competence could be due in part to a lack of opportunities to communicate in the target language with native speakers. For Ang, this could also be linked to over-reliance on his subject knowledge. This lack of proficiency in English and the loss of communicative skills seem a common challenge for academic staff teaching in a non-native language. Peter Daly and Dennis Davy (2018) when researching into the challenges facing non-native speakers of English teaching in business schools in France also highlighted the loss of spontaneity when interacting with students as a main problem, along with other linguistic challenges, including the inability to tell effective jokes, anecdotes, or failing to use humour and irony in class, which both Ang and Ding had also desperately hoped to be able to do.

Related to the lack of communicative competence, Ding also expressed the aspiration to be in a leadership position but regretted that his perceived lack of interpersonal and communicative skills in the target language and his personality were barriers to him in assuming a leadership position, despite efforts in attending various professional developmental leadership programmes. This supported Sliwa and Johansson’s (2013)

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claim that “greater language proficiency is associated with a more powerful position” (p.86). It was clear that Ding, who confessed to feeling lonely and lacking opportunities in socialisation and collaboration with native colleagues did not have much opportunity to interact and practise his communicative skills in the target language, unlike Han who felt lucky to be paired with a native post-doctoral researcher whom he had actively engaged with as much as possible and had learnt from. Muñoz and Cadierno (2021) confirmed a significant amount of evidence has been gathered thus far supporting “usage-based claims that language learning emerges from human experience with language” (p.190). Despite having high self-esteem and confidence regarding his subject skills, knowledge and his status, all of a sudden Ding felt highly self-conscious and insecure due to this lack of “human” and “social” (Spillane et al. 2003, p.3) capitals. Song (2010) also reported that despite being competent and skilful, a great challenge faced by highly skilled migrants to a new country is the lack of ability to engage in different ways of communicating and interacting, and in combining specific linguistic forms and communicative strategies. Similarly, Glass et al. (2022) also observed that “the sense of loneliness and communication challenges” impact negatively on IAS academic experiences and can lead to “diminished creativity, productivity, morale and job” (p.5) and in Ding’s case, in leadership opportunities. Although Ding had not conceded, citing multiple sources, Glass et al. (2022) noted that challenge in communication skills for IAS can lead to “a sense of being outsiders, especially in English-speaking environments” and that such language barriers can negatively influence on their professional activities, regardless of their “excellent skills and knowledge” (p.5). However, as evident from the research, apart from attending leadership training programmes, Ding had not particularly felt invested in taking the initiatives to further improve his linguistic proficiency, given that it was seen as irrelevant and unproductive, as he believed that his biggest limitation to this goal was his ‘personality’.

Gao also expressed the desire to be in a leadership position to gain recognition and to be noticed, and he admitted that his cultural capital and existing habitus would have potentially constrained his entry into this “imagined community” (Kanno and Norton 2003). Influenced by Bourdieu, “cultural capital” as explained by Spillane et al. (2003) in the context of leadership referred to the “embodied” and the “internalized dispositions acquired through the life course and manifested in [one’s] behaviors or ‘practice’” (p.3).

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Citing Spendlove (2007), Dinh et al. (2020) noted that to be an effective leader within the current HEI setting, the individual "should possess research credibility, experience with university life, managerial skills, communication skills, and negotiation skills" (p.998). According to Bourdieu (1977a), a person's habitus is formed by the individual's earliest experiences, with the process typically beginning in the family setting. For Gao, he perceived the cultural capital in his original habitus which was developed in his country of origin as inadequate in assuming a leadership position in his new environment. Although more recent research has started to document change in some Chinese cultures, traditionally, "shyness" (Xu and Hamamura 2014, p.2) in the Chinese has been regarded as a positive trait that reflects "social maturity" (ibid), and a trait which was also "positively associated with peer acceptance, teacher-rated competence, and academic achievement" (Xu and Hamamura 2014, p.2). Gao acknowledged and accepted that common label for the Chinese culture. Also, the widespread practice of Confucianism in China, which some have described as the "centre of the Chinese culture and value system" (Tang 1995, p.270) would have meant that "collectivism" and "obedience" (Ahmed and Zhang 2019, p.111) are both qualities that are most likely ingrained in someone whose habitus is developed in China. Both originating from China, these aspects would have been what Gao was referring to in terms of his lack of cultural capital as well as what Ding would have meant by his 'personality'. The difference between Gao and Ding however was that instead of allowing this to be a barrier, Gao worked hard in his new field, dedicated time and effort attending training courses in the target language. He put himself forward and ultimately gained the appropriate social and human capitals to become a unit leader, gaining entry to his imagined community. Although Gao did not explicitly confess to having the same language issues when he explained that Chinese academics in general tended to deal with negative feedback regarding their language, there was a sense that Gao's language improvement and attainment journey over the years has not been a straight-forward one, much like his peers. In ***safeguarding for the future***, he worked hard on his personal and professional development in the target language and although Gao did not mention his linguistic competence, the level of competence clearly had no bearing on his attainment of the leadership opportunities he desired and managed to achieve. However, it is worth mentioning that throughout the interview, more than once, Gao had indicated that his

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unit may predominantly consist of other fellow Chinese colleagues, further indicating why the grasp of language was not mentioned as a potential issue in Gao's attainment.

Eng and Ing were the only participants who took active and sustained measures in attempts to further improve and develop themselves. Although both Eng and Ing were now comfortable with their status and position, at various points of their adjustment period both expressed the desires to speak like and be like native speakers, especially after receiving negative feedback from students. To present day, Eng still expressed self-consciousness over his pronunciation. Highly motivated by this desire, and much like Henry Asei Kum (2018) both earnestly signed up to speech training and elocution courses; took up opportunities in peer observations; reading extensively and even joining a Shakespeare reading class, in attempts to not only get rid of their strong accents to cope better in their environment, but also in the betterment of themselves through more practice and exposure to the target language used inside and outside of the class. However, Eng quickly found that all the effort and energy devoted to "trying to get rid of his accent" had made him realise that it was not an identity that he wished to adopt. Framing these attempts in Bourdieu's (1977; 1987; 1991, 1993) concepts of field, habitus and capital as well as Norton's (then Peirce 1995) notion of investment, it can be explained that in realising that the "investment" in time and money to attend speech training and consciously trying to get rid of one's accent did not necessarily materialise into the symbolic capital needed to gain entry into this imagined community, both Eng and Ing started developing strategies in obtaining and accumulating other forms of symbolic capital instead, through the affordances within their existing and dominant ideologies in their habitus – utilising techniques and strategies that they were familiar and comfortable with, they started to build other forms of communicative strategies, and learnt to critically analyse students' feedback as well as build their confidence through practice and exposure to the target language. Although both initially struggled with their identities, they were able to still gain entry to their imagined communities through adoption of other strategies and through accumulated skills, experience, and confidence as successful practitioners in their respective fields instead of pursuing native linguistic competence as originally desired.

Related to the desires expressed or challenges encountered, most participants admitted to not receiving any further support or even seeking this, especially formal support from

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the host institution. Although Ing and Gao had mentioned occasionally attending training programmes recommended to them by senior management, most participants had confessed that they did not feel seeking institutional support was relevant to them or even helpful; and seeking informal support from colleagues was found to be more useful than institutionally provided support, should there be any, like participants in Saltmarsh and Swirski (2010). In fact, true to what Luxon and Peelo (2009, p.657) have said about the expectation that "competent academics…should not need the kind of support offered to students", participants in the research were also adamant that they were professionals who should not need additional support. This was especially crucial from the "equal opportunity" (Pherali 2012, p.328) point of view that IAS, like any other academic, should have been appointed through "a competitive selection procedure and therefore expected to demonstrate the essential academic competence and professional standards" (Pherali 2012, p.328). However, this was in contrast with key literature strongly suggesting that in order to create an "inclusive internationalised teaching and learning environment" with the aim of "attract[ing] and retain[ing] talented professionals (Hsieh 2012, p.372), HEIs should ensure various formats of additional support to be readily available to IAS with Antoniadou and Quinlan (2020) even stressing mandatory induction programme, especially to help IAS cope. Pherali (2012) nonetheless cautioned regarding the provision of support by the institution – sometimes, the idea that IAS needed support could point to "perceived professional deficiency" (ibid, p.329); and "the tensions around the conceptualization of support involve notions of sensitivity, hesitance, discrimination, and rejection" (ibid, p.329), implying the need and awareness to be extremely cautious and sensitive in dealing with issues surrounding this topic. This was confirmed by strong feelings shown by participants in this research regarding the general hypothesis and suggestion made by the researcher, that IAS in a new environment needed help and support. The idea that IAS needed support would also contrast with what Walker (2015) has claimed – "there is an expectation…that the academic is prepared and competent to deliver the teaching and research required as set out in the role descriptor" (p.72).

Rather than being offered generic institutional support which IAS would ultimately find irrelevant or insufficient, there was a sense that like participants in Bailey et al. (2021), those in this research who "have harnessed their own sense of agency in terms of

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working towards integration and assimilation" (p.360) yearned for these "barriers to be acknowledged" (p.360) and for "norms to be demystified" (p.360) as well as better "systems to be put in place which support the movement towards integration" (p.360) so that the institution can "engage in a process which enables [IAS] to work successfully and efficiently" (p.360), whatever form this support might take. This signalled the need for host institutions to recognise IAS as strong and capable agents; whilst at the same time ensuring that any centralised professional support or development programmes offered are targeted and tailored to individual needs (Foote et al. 2008; Hsieh 2012), and with clear benefits evidenced to participants from the start, to ensure maximum efficiency of such support offered. These were points strongly echoed by participants in the current research.

Ultimately, time pressure was the main reason IAS found it challenging to commit time and effort in further improving or developing themselves. One participant mentioned that due to their busy schedule and workload, it meant that there was no time spared for any other additional activities; inevitably, engaging in professional and personal development initiatives became extremely challenging. Kreber and Hounsell (2014) and Thomas and Malau-Aduli (2013) were scholars studying IAS experience who highlighted *research pressures* and *workload* to be among the major challenges known to impact on the lives of IAS. Findings from this research pointed to a similar conclusion. Like many other institutions in the UK, the nature of this institution expected that established academic staff would be adept at education, practice, and research. Upon successful appointment, participants were immediately thrusted into roles that expected them to be competent and knowledgeable teaching staff, who were also good at engaging students and helping them achieve better outcomes and results; and excellent researchers who also published and co-published, as well as practitioners in their field, engaging with industry, businesses and healthcare providers in research collaborations and publications. Participants spoke of how precious their time was; and any time left from administrative duties, teaching and marking, was spent on doing research. Planning time for further development in their role on top of their existing busy schedule became almost impossible, even when there were clear benefits offered by the programme. Indeed, Yeh (2018) in recounting her personal journey adjusting interculturally as a Taiwanese into a UK HEI stressed the "additional pressures" (p.80)

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faced by academics in a UK university brought by the marketisation of HE as well as the increasing importance placed on students' demands, expectations and satisfaction. This meant "being an academic in the UK involves balancing multiple roles, which demand high standards of performances in many aspects" (ibid, p.80). Alongside these expectations were also the mundane but necessary everyday administrative tasks that no academic could escape from (Yeh 2018; Crowder and Mouratidou 2020). Yeh (2018) lamented that the internal as well as external pressures put on academics meant that one has to "contribute to a multitude of administrative tasks[,] produce good quality research outputs, support the university to comply with quality benchmarks and legal frameworks, create a positive student experience, educate students to become highly employable graduates, attract external research funding and so on" (ibid, p.83) – and all of these alongside developing their teaching too! As Chung (2018, p.58), also an IAS in a post-1992 UK HEI warned, all these were "tensions" which made it hard for "anyone in such a role" to excel in any of the fields. According to Delanty (2008), in today's globalised world of academia, professional life, not just for IAS, but for most academics, is challenging, fragile and in crisis due to "pressures to deliver the best" (p.126). When faced with the pressure of signing up to the intervention stage, which was the Development Toolkit (DT) phase, understandably, due to time and workload pressures, majority participants showed reluctance, reservation, and hesitation.

Although having not received or previously engaged in centrally provided institutional support, it did come across strongly from participants the significance of the informal support received from colleagues around them which had helped with their improvement process; again highlighting what Bailey et al. (2021) have said about how some participants were having to rely on "willing and supportive colleagues" (p.359) to provide them with much needed informal support. Perhaps as demonstrated by participants in the current research, the form of support that more suited their needs, was the informal support received from colleagues, rather than centrally instigated institutional support that did not support their needs or requirements.

5.1.2 On the design and execution of the Development Toolkit (DT)

During the pilot stage, it had been established that time would be the single most challenging barrier in participants' engagement and participation in the intervention stage (DT). This was further supported by key literature on academic time and workload

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pressure as illustrated. Luxon and Peelo's (2009) pilot research revealed that language courses offered as part of their research did not necessarily offer the best means of support to IAS. With those factors in mind, the DT was designed with critical "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) as a central theme, so that instead of carving out extra time to engage in the learning items, participants can engage in the different forms of critical self-reflection suggested in each learning item in their everyday practice; also, instead of focusing on linguistic forms of learning, the items of learning in the DT were designed with strong emphasis on effective learning and teaching and enhancing student engagement through the target language.

Although the self-directed learning programmes were executed weekly as planned, with evidence of participants' engagement through their recorded reflections, the dwindling participation week-on-week, coupled with the timing of the programme coinciding with the end of the semester's teaching for most of the participants, created a slight impact on the intended outcomes of the DT. These will be elaborated on further in the subsequent sections.

The focus of the intervention stage (DT) remained to create a platform to allow participants the opportunity to use critical "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" in engaging with the DT as self-directed learning resources, so that ultimately participants can share their experience, reaction, and opinion on this self-directed learning material, with potential evidence or suggestion of positive reconstruction of IAS' identity from the DT being documented. Therefore, though its execution had not fully gone to plan, the intervention stage was seen as a success because it had enabled the participants to still engage in critical "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) and in self-directed learning as shown in the table in Appendix L, and to share this valuable insights, experience and reflections with the researcher in subsequent interviews.

5.1.3 PART II

Following the execution of the intervention – the Development Toolkit (DT), in this section of the discussion, participants' opinion of and experience with the DT, and the critical exploration of the application of the DT to examine how central ideologies, patterns of control, disproportionate access to capital can position and frame IAS' sense of agency and validity in relation to the construction of identity through the Model of

Investment (Darvin and Norton 2015) will be presented. In the latter part of this section, the discussion will mostly be positioned around previous work on the notion of investment as originally conceived by Professor Bonny Norton (then Peirce 1995), as well as the Model of Investment created alongside Ron Darvin in 2015. Apart from drawing from the previous sections of this chapter, the discussions will also refer to previous work either by Professor Norton herself in collaboration with other researchers in the field, or by other groups of researchers who also based their work on Norton's notion of investment.

The answer to the following research question will be provided -

3. *How do academics make sense of a proposed online Development Toolkit (DT) as resources for self-directed learning to improve their teaching practices? To what extent can the interplay between IAS' development initiatives in the DT and/or development initiatives in general be framed around Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment with regards to the positive reconstruction of identity?*

5.1.3.1 Making sense of the Development Toolkit (DT) as resources for self-directed learning

- *Positivity*

Overall, the DT has engaged participants' attention, especially those who felt positive and open towards its learning materials and intended purposes. Participants who displayed positive and receptive attitude, especially towards the 'lifelong learning' concept were most amenable to the DT and had managed to engage the most with the programme. As observed by Wittman and Olivier (2019), one of the attributes of a self-directed learner was "joy in learning" (p.134); this was clearly evident in the research where Ang, who was especially grateful for the opportunity to engage with the DT, was also keen to demonstrate pointers learnt from it; he even spoke of using the newly learnt skill outside of the academic setting. Ang happily disclosed that the materials from the DT had also been used in enhancing an application to a fellowship.

Participants also found the DT and learning points within the programme to be relevant and useful; however, it came across clearly that the level of engagement and benefits gained correlated strongly with participants' motivation or the specific areas of concerns they had regarding their teaching and practice. This was particularly relevant in Eng's case where the importance placed on getting positive student feedback had inspired

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and propelled him to engage positively with the DT. Citing Terehoff (2002, p.74), Porter and Freeman (2020) stated this regarding self-directed professional development – "they 'learn what they think they ought to learn depending on their professional needs'"(p.38). This also confirmed the requirement for any teacher development programme to be "highly individualised" in order to motivate the learners and to make sure of its effectiveness (Wittmann and Olivier 2019, p.131) in meeting individual learning needs. Participants also strongly felt that being generally useful and relevant, the DT was suitable not just for new IAS staff, but for all staff new to teaching. Some participants however felt that the DT may only prove to be useful in enhancing confidence and skills once academic staff have had actual experience and practice in the classroom.

Participants also expressed the preference for the online DT over the conventional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) qualification – the Post-Graduate Certification (PGCert) Programme which most have had to take part in. This also echoed Adu and Okeke's (2014) point that "traditional approaches to CPD" (p.271) quite often get criticised for their inadequacy in preparing lecturers for their new role amidst the challenges and new demands of the current society. Participants have expressed preference for the DT due to the "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) components within it, which the PG Certification programme was unable to offer. Being a conventional professional development programme, the PG Cert likely resulted in "passive learning, [and] expert driven with little inclusion of teacher knowledge and realities of the classroom" [Ono and Ferreira (2010, p.62) cited in Adu and Okeke (2014, p.273)]. This not only confirmed the importance of reflection in the construction of professional identity, but also correlated with what Abu and Okeke (2014) have proposed as a constructive approach to effective CPD – learning occurs when the learner is able to interact with the learning context, and this is also affected by the individual's prior knowledge; and a favourable CPD learning environment is one which is learner-centred and allows learners (in this case, the lecturers) to interact with their existing knowledge and to be responsible for their own learning. The other positive factor which engaged participants' participation in the DT as self-directed learning (SDL) was the online nature of the programme which provided flexibility, accessibility, and ease of use of the materials and resources. This finding supported what Morris and Rohs (2021) have stated – "accessibility was the key affordance of digital technologies which supported the facilitation of SDL" (p.6).

Some participants demonstrated strong attributes and traits as self-directed learners from the DT more than others. Robinson and Persky (2020) observed that in a "well-designed SDL environment, [learners'] motivation increases, as well as their feelings of…confidence, and belief in themselves" (p.293). This was evident in participants who projected the ability to have better interactions and engagement with students and gaining students' trust and appreciation through using some of the practices found in the DT; as well as being better able to deal with student feedback, potentially obtaining better student feedback through the pointers learnt.

Citing Danis (1992), Roberson et al. (2021) highlighted that SDL was "an attractive, complex, and ambiguous concept that emphasizes human capacity, the potential for behaviour change, and self-evaluation" (p.1013). Participants who seemed to have engaged positively with the DT have certainly found the SDL programme to be an effective self-evaluation mechanism to positively confirm and reinforce their existing skills and practices.

- *Barriers*

Consistently brought up throughout this discussion, the lack of time was seen as the biggest and most challenging barrier to participants engaging meaningfully with the DT. Adu and Okeke (2014), through their research in the South African setting found *time* and *workload* to be two major inhibiting factors in lecturers participating in Continuing Professional Development (CPD); Robinson and Persky (2020) also categorised *time* as one of the challenges encountered in using self-directed learning resources; and Wittmann and Olivier (2019) noted "time constraints" to be a "major obstacle to [German SAL teachers'] professional development" (p. 129) in their research. Participants who found the DT to be engaging and positive were not able to fully complete the programme due to challenges in factoring time into their constantly busy workload. Closely related to that, was also the difficulty in sustaining and practising the learnt materials given that such initiatives were not regular everyday occurrences and that it was unsustainable and unnatural due to lack of opportunities and time to dedicate to using and practising the pointers learnt.

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Participants pointed out that the DT though useful, had not offered anything new or different to them; leading to the inevitable fact that the DT had failed to engage with the learners' creativity and excitement, at the same time limiting their motivation level for sustained engagement with the programme. *Motivation* is indeed a crucial aspect in self-directed learning (Robinson and Persky 2020). This also corresponded with what Wittman and Olivier (2019) highlighted as key attribute to successful SDL, which is "curiosity" (p.134) in the learner; and in the case of participants' engagement with the DT, some of materials which were familiar to the participants or even the intended learning outcomes, had failed to generate participants' curiosity towards the programme. A minority of participants also displayed negative feelings and attitude towards the purposes and intentions of the DT and related to that, the fear that the DT was potentially being introduced as a mandatory development programme of support for IAS brought threat; and this was combined negatively with the opinion that the DT was seen as pointless and ineffective. Going back to what Woezik et al. (2021) had summarised in an earlier chapter, these were some of the emotional affects that would have negatively influenced participants' engagement with the DT. Also confirmed by Pacheco et al. (2021), "negative attitudes regarding development and change hinder the efficacy of professional development protocols" (p.555) and that these negative attitudes displayed may have stemmed from a lack of understanding (or acceptance) for the change, as displayed by some participants regarding the purpose of the DT.

In CPD programmes, much emphasis should be placed on "participants assessing their own learning needs and planning their own learning" (Wittmann and Olivier 2019, p.135). Although designed with enhancing their teaching and student engagement practices in mind, there was a clear mismatch between participants' learning needs and what the DT was able to offer to them. Participants have expressed desires to see materials in helping them with their assessment processes, or materials to help them deal with students of varying degrees of attainment – the DT did not meet those requirements, and participants could not sense or imagine any "perceived…value-added experience" (James Jacob et al. 2015, p.25) which was a key aspect in the design of a successful professional development programme to generate positive experience and feedback. From a SDL perspective, in engagement with the DT, the participants were not given the opportunity to take "primary responsibility to direct their learning means

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and objectives in order to meet their learning goals" (Morris and Rohs 2021, p.1) with some also highlighting the fact that the materials and examples used may not have been entirely suitable or realistic in their context.

Added to that, was also participants' opinion that the overview, the introduction, and overall intention of the DT were not properly laid out or explained. This could have negatively affected participants' understanding of the skills required in engaging fully with the DT. This was also highlighted by Robinson and Persky (2020) as crucial – that the "skills necessary for SDL should be introduced and developed in the didactic portion of the curriculum" (p.292). Also highlighted by Adu and Okeke (2014) when CPD initiatives are "not well focused and structured" (p.271), this becomes an inhibiting factor in participants engaging with the programme for professional development.

These were all strong possibilities which may have contributed to the fact that participants were not able to visualise translating this new knowledge into (changed) behaviour and practice. van Schalwyk et al. (2013) noted in reflective practice, only when future behaviour is influenced can it be confirmed that true reflections have occurred. In this case, the DT seemed not to have fulfilled this role for some participants.

It is also important to bear in mind that although a SDL programme can be well-designed, some adult learners are simply not competent self-directed learners; and that not all adult learners have the competence, skills, attributes or even inclinations for SDL learning without "the presence of an educator" (Morris and Rohs 2021, p.7). This aspect was also raised by Robinson and Persky (2020) who cautioned that challenges in using self-directed learning could also stem from the "acceptance for change" and "lack of expertise by the learner" (p.295). This could be caused by a lack of understanding on the tasks as shown by participants or even the lack of comprehension of the intended purposes of the learning programme, also as demonstrated by participants in the research.

- *How the DT can be more effective*

One of the areas where the DT was clearly lacking was the collaborative learning component. This was highlighted by King (2004) who stressed the importance of the "collaborative nature of professional development" (p.29) in order to allow for and support interactions and exchange of ideas between academics, within and across

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different institutions. From a self-directed learning point of view, Morris and Rohs (2021) have also highlighted that studies have shown that "successful SDL often involved working with others" (p.1-2). This was especially crucial for one participant who saw the DT as having the potential to create opportunities for interactions and communications with other staff, opportunities which were lacking in his work environment. This supported Roberson et al.'s (2021) point, which was cited from Platt et al. (2014) that SDL had the potential to promote "conversations and collaborations in the learning community" (p.1013).

Participants also strongly expressed their opinion regarding the inappropriate timing and execution of the DT which caused participants to not be able to exercise some of the learning materials in a classroom setting. This also meant that some of the "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" were conducted outside of the classroom setting, which was less than ideal and may have contributed to the reduced effectiveness in the DT as a self-directed learning. As van Woezik et al. (2021) observed "self-directed learning is best promoted in authentic learning situations" (p.590). As such, forward-planning could have improved the execution of the DT as participants also strongly felt that for such training initiatives to be effective, they needed to be embedded at the start of the semester or academic year into the academic structure, as part of their timetable. The idea was similarly proposed by King (2004) who stated that "professional development needs to be self-directed and planned within the relevant context (institutional and personal)" (p.29) and that "professional development…needs to be considered as a normal part of professional life for all academic staff [and] should be part of institutional structures" (p.29).

5.1.3.2 Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment and reconstruction of identity

Professor Norton's (then Peirce 1995) notion of investment and the Model of Investment (2015) created alongside Ron Darvin have been covered in a previous chapter. However, as a reminder, the notion of investment in relation to the context of this research is presented again.

Transferring the notion of investment as introduced by Norton (Norton 2013b; Darvin and Norton 2016) into the context of this study, this research recognises that IAS have complex and multiple identities that are constantly changing across time and space and

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that these are reproduced in social and professional interaction with colleagues and students in the target language. When IAS are invested in improving their competence and teaching practices in the target language with a view to help them acquire the desired symbolic and material resources, it will help to increase their "capital and power" (ibid), in the classroom and at work; and as a result in their positive reconstruction of identity/ies. This "commitment" to invest is propelled by the individual's "intentional choice and desire" (Kramsch 2013, p.195) to feel "at home", belonging to a habitus (Darvin and Norton 2016, p.25); and it is this "desire" that inspires new "possibilities for the future" through the learners' imagination (ibid). As IAS work to fit into their new/current environment and through their desire to be an effective and successful academic as part of these community/ies of practice, this imagination for the future inspires them to "invest" in improving their teaching practices and communication through the target language.

Like Bonder (2017), when I first started this research, through initial review of key literature, I had imagined that IAS would face challenges and issues predominately related to language and applied linguistics, which would in turn propel the need and urgency for language learning initiatives to assert their position and identity. Therefore, any aspirations as expressed, I hypothesised would also be related to acquiring those appropriate language and communication skills. Darvin and Norton (2015) explained, in migration, "the acquisition of the host country's official language was seen as crucial to cultural integration and meaningful employment"; and this current study has hypothesised that participants who are IAS, will become "language learners [who seek] to claim the right to speak in the language of power in the host country" (p.41).

Participants have expressed multiple desires and personal aspirations to improve for the future; as expected, some of these aspirations were related to language and applied linguistics, but some were not. These aspirations included possessing more advanced language skills to be spontaneous and humorous in class; to have better interpersonal and communication skills in the target language to obtain leadership positions; to have more authority and respect from students and peers; and to have the skills and abilities to speak eloquently like native speakers; and to always excel for positive student feedback.

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Although not explicitly known to the participants, it was with these aspirations that participants took part in the DT. It should also be mentioned that although the DT was designed with the overarching aim of improving and enhancing participants' communicative and engagement skills with students in the target language, the learning materials have not been specifically designed in line with participants' aspirations, with the intention that its generic nature meant that it would be applicable to majority of participants.

Participants' engagement and commitment in the DT as well as their commitment in other general development initiatives will be discussed through the lens of Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment. Following Darvin and Norton's (2015) example, this discussion will follow the case study approach.

To put the notion of investment into practice, Darvin and Norton (2015) proposed a series of questions around investment and the most relevant to the context of this research are the following –

- How invested are learners in their present and **imagined identities**?
- What do learners **perceive as benefits** of investment, and how can the capital they possess serve as **affordances** for learning?
- What **systemic patterns of control** make it difficult to invest and acquire certain capital? How have prevailing **ideologies** structured learners' **habitus** and predisposed them to certain ways of thinking?

Most importantly, through the questions, Darvin and Norton hoped to achieve the following –

> "By raising questions about their own ways of thinking of the status quo, it seeks to enable more opportunities for reflexivity and dissent, so that learners may not only participate in but also transform the multiple spaces of their life worlds"
>
> -Darvin and Norton (2015, p.47)

The subsequent sections discussing participants' experience with the online Development Toolkit as well as their experience with other development initiatives will address some of the key questions posed by Darvin and Norton and they will also be framed around what the researchers had hoped to achieve through the Model of Investment.

Ang

For Ang who wished to possess more advanced language skills to be spontaneous and humorous in class, made special efforts to dedicate time to learn and memorise items of vocabulary, new idiomatic expressions, and proverbs. However, the opportunity to incorporate these learned items or expressions in class had so far never arisen. This could be due in part to the lack of opportunities to communicate and practise in the target language with native speakers as highlighted in the previous section, which understood in the context of the Model of Investment (Darvin and Norton 2015), can be described as his social position limiting him to an unequal access to "capital", which has in turn limited his "affordances" (ibid) and this has discouraged Ang from making further attempts at acquiring the skills to be spontaneous. Within the dominant language ideology in a UK HEI where native-speakerism constituted "linguistic superiority" (Ferri and Magne 2021, p.229), this led Ang to become over-reliant on his subject knowledge expertise due to the lack of the native-speaker ability. Within the confines of his practice, Ang regarded his subject knowledge expertise to be paramount; therefore, his linguistic ability in delivering that knowledge became less important; as a result, Ang became less invested in his imagined community. Also, the confidence in his subject knowledge and his positive relationship and rapport with students meant that he was less invested in trying to obtain the advanced language skills as desired.

Through his engagement with the DT, Ang could clearly see many possibilities for the future in using the tips and pointers that he had learnt from the DT, and in empowering him to use them to improve his interactions and his relationships with students in the future; even in outside of the classroom settings such as during interviews and social events outside of work. Although Ang had thought highly and positively of the DT and its content, it was challenging to consider any reconstruction of his identity from the perceived benefits because he saw the DT as a tool in reinforcing and refreshing his existing skills, and not a tool capable of earning him new capitals to become more powerful in resisting his "systemic patterns of control" dictated by his dominant ideology. There was no evidence from the interview that the DT had improved his spontaneity in class. This also combined with the fact that although the DT had

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enhanced his self-confidence in his register and his voice projection, his existing capitals were not sufficient in giving him the affordances and his sense of agency were limited by his dominant ideology, contributing towards his lack of "investment" in entering his desired "imagined community" (Darvin and Norton 2015). Comparing himself with his native peers, Ang sensed that there were differences in skillsets and capitals possessed; and although he had imagined this desired community of practice, to be spontaneous and humorous, it was difficult for him to have a clear idea of the benchmark in which to measure himself against. This makes it difficult for him to acquire the capitals required before he was able to join this community of practice (CoP). For Ang, his strong professional identity with regards to his subject knowledge also meant that he became less invested in his other imagined identity and community. To Ang, the DT was useful and relevant, however, it did not meet his needs and it had not contributed to the reconstruction of identity.

Ding

Like Ang, Ding also desired to have better and more advanced language skills in order to possess better interpersonal and communication skills in the target language, with an aim of obtaining leadership positions. Like Ang, Ding saw many possibilities for the future and a sense of empowerment from possessing more 'tricks and skills' through using the DT. However, when he viewed the DT from the perspective of enabling him to improve his language and communication skills and reconstructing his identity, he was less positive and thought that the perceived benefits from engaging with the DT did not translate to positive change in practices given that he had already done the best he could. He felt that the DT was unlikely to be able to change that, and there was no sense in trying. This could also be strongly related to his limited sense of adequacy and agency in his language skills; and the fact that Ding thought that the DT served as compensation to that lack of language skills and levels, rather than power to enhance his communications skills. Like Ang, Ding's chances for practising these skills in the target language were also constrained by a general lack of integration and communication opportunities between himself and his native peers, as he had outlined which signalled an unequal access to capitals.

Sharing similarities with Ang's case, Ding's ability to enter into his imagined CoP was also limited by his existing habitus and structured and constraint by the dominant language

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ideology in a UK HEI (Darvin and Norton 2015), which in turn resulted in the poor currency of his existing capitals – his shy personality and the perceived lack of inter-personal and communicative skills in the target language – which Ding considered to be barriers to him in assuming a leadership position. As the DT was also seen as a tool to compensate for the lack of such skills, he was less invested in attempts to use the DT to gain entry to his imagined CoP. To Ding, there were no perceived benefits in the DT as a valuable or suitable tool in accumulating the capitals that he needed to become the leader he wanted because he believed that language proficiency was not his main issue; and along with such perspectives, the (un)willingness to invest any extra time and effort could also be influenced by his identity and current positioning, and the systemic patterns of control imposed by his dominant language ideology, which he had no power to resist in order to gain the desired capitals. Like Ang, Ding seemed to be comfortable with his professional and academic position; there was a possibility that he too, was not as invested in the imagined community due to this.

Fang

Fang had a strong desire to be unit or programme leader, and to have more respect and authority from peers and students. Having had extensive experience in the US and in Macau, and Fang was confident in her language use.

Sliwa and Johansson (2013) proposed that the effective use of the dominant language by a "non-native English speaking academic" (p.80) in an English university, would not only impact positively on the person's capacity and capabilities to carry out their professional duties, but also help construct his or her identity in such a way to allow the enactment of the desirable habitus.

However, in Fang's case, it was not her language abilities but her perceived lack of agency and legitimacy due to her gender identity that rendered her powerless and unable to join her desired CoP. Using a particular learning resource as an example, Fang had concluded that no matter how good the DT was, and how hard she tried to engage, practise and utilise the points from it, it will not change the fact that she was an Asian female – and that she will never gain the respect and authority that she deserved from her peers.

Fang felt constraint and suffocated by the perceived lack of personal agencies and legitimacy, determined and controlled by the dominant gender ideology that she found herself operating within as someone who was young, Asian and female. Fang was confident in front of her female line managers because she did not feel like she was being marginalised; with her co-teaching team however, she felt she had no "right to speak" (Darvin and Norton 2015, p.47) because they had no respect for her and that she did not have the capital or power needed to influence decisions within the team, and to resist the "systemic patterns of control". Like what AlRasheed (2018) had found in her research participants, Fang's "gender identity" has "limited her freedom of speech and ability to express her thoughts and opinions" (p.53). Like Ding, Fang felt powerless in resisting the systemic patterns of control which were the by-product of the dominant gender ideology that she found herself in – one which was "constructed and imposed by structures of power", and of "dominant ways of thinking", and which also determined "modes of inclusion and exclusion, and the privileging and marginalization of ideas, people, and relations" (Darvin and Norton 2015, p.44), and in this case, the exclusion of someone who was not a "bearded, middle class, white [and] middle aged man", as observed by Rose in Archer (2008, p. 394).

Like Bonder (2017), when I started this research, I imagined that IAS would have challenges and issues predominantly to do with language which would in turn propel the urgency and need for invested language learning initiatives – however Fang's case has indicated strongly that language is not always the dominant issue in identity and power. Although not in applied linguistics terms, Darvin and Norton's Model of investment (2015) has shed light on Fang's perceived barriers and "systemic patterns of control" (ibid) in gaining the capital and power she needed to claim the right to speak, and this has led to the conclusion that the DT was not the suitable form of "investment" she needed in her case, and that language learning and acquisition was not the central issue. Fang recognised her "systemic patterns of control" (Darvin and Norton 2015); and her lack of affordances to challenge or overcome this dominant ideology; and she concluded that time and effort spent in the DT would not have contributed to changing her situation or gaining any forms of capital to allow her to gain entry to her imagined CoP. Citing Canagarajah (1996) and Casanave (2002), Chang (2011) had noted that learners, with different learning expectations and desires, "may…resist participation [in

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investment] because their positioning, desires, and expectations are in conflict with and/or discriminated by the ideology, structure, and practices of their learning community" (p.215).

Eng

At one point during his early adjustment period, Eng wished to speak eloquently like his native peers. More recently, Eng expressed the desire to always excel; and getting positive student feedback was very important to him. When Eng recognised his "systemic patterns of control" imposed by the dominant language ideology and his perceived lack of capitals to achieve native speakerism to speak eloquently like his native peers, he quickly shifted his strategies in obtaining and accumulating other forms of symbolic capital instead through the other types of affordances in his existing capital and habitus – utilising techniques and strategies that he was familiar and comfortable with, he started building other forms of communicative strategies instead, and accumulated his sense of agencies and power through practice and exposure to the target language. Darvin and Norton (2015) stated that for Bourdieu (1986), "capital is power". Unlike Fang, Eng recognised the many other forms of psychological capitals (Luthans et al. 2007) which he possessed which included his high self-esteem, his sense of superiority, his appreciation for his sense of competitiveness, the recognition for his knowledge, experience, and his education credentials. All these forms of psychological capitals became affordances in Eng's quest to gain entry to his imagined CoP and he felt a sense of superiority over his native colleagues. He also took efforts in committing in various other initiatives including speech lessons, reading, talking to people, and through all that he also gained various other forms of symbolic capital. Although initially struggling with his identity and his sense of insecurity regarding his pronunciation, he was able to still gain entry to another form of imagined CoP that he was happy with through adoption of other strategies and through accumulated skills, experience and confidence as successful practitioner in his respective field instead of pursuing native linguistic competence as originally desired. This was similar to Chang's (2011) study on non-native English-speaking doctoral students where it was found that "rather than trying to overcome barriers…the students are able to exert their own agency to selectively invest in areas that would most likely increase their…value" (p.213).

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Operating within the neoliberal ideology that most modern-day HEIs in the UK is structured by, adopting the same principles and following the same pattern, Eng was able to utilise what the DT had to offer, and again through his existing affordances and personal agencies to contribute towards a positive outcome. Recognising the importance of obtaining positive student feedback in enhancing his position as a successful academic within this neoliberal environment, he was able to engage with the DT in a meaningful way to enable him to accumulate better capitals to positively develop and reconstruct his identity. This meant that he could envisage positive outcomes and benefits through sustained engagement with the DT, to become an even better academic and to excel. Mirroring what Darvin and Norton's (2015) had found in one of their participants, Eng's possession of these "cultural and social capital and his identity" all helped to "position" himself as a "legitimate participant and contributor in the different…spaces he occupies" (p.50).

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 Synthesis of findings and discussion

IAS in this research navigated through some challenging times, including dealing with issues caused by accents and pronunciation, contending with negative feedback from students, having trouble penetrating the local system and forming meaningful networks and relationships (especially with native colleagues), and facing gender related issues.

Despite the challenges and negative encounters, the IAS in this research asserted themselves as established and successful professionals with high levels of self-esteem and on equal standing with their native counterparts, especially for the male participants. There was a consensus that they brought valuable contributions, knowledge and expertise to their workplace, with the male participants especially compensating for their lack of linguistic skills with other professional qualities. This signalled a deep sense of belonging in their workplace.

Whilst participants found it at times challenging to form networks with their native counterparts, in some cases, the relationship and kinship formed with other foreign academics had provided invaluable network of support in helping them cope and thrive, socially and professionally.

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For some, their confidence level was closely linked to their subject knowledge expertise and this meant a good grasp of the language became secondary whereas for others their level of confidence stemmed from how much easier they now found language use to be. This increased level of confidence also contributed towards confidence in changing and improving their classroom pedagogy to better suit the local context – by being able to be spontaneous and impromptu and relying less on their prepared materials.

Previous literature failed to draw attention to the strong sense of pride felt by the IAS community of their contributions, status and achievements in their workplace as scholars and the mainstream media tended to concentrate and report on negative experiences. These stories of triumph and accomplishments by IAS in this research not only brought to light the positive outcomes from their adjustment previously not explored, but they also disproved claims that IAS were submissively suffering the predicaments brought about by their mobility and incapable to be their own agents of change.

Despite their feelings of assurance, the IAS demonstrated identity to be a site of struggle, with some participants feeling limited and constraint by their perceived lack of agency and capital, as dictated by their habitus and cultural identity.

This research also highlighted the admirable quality of resilience and perseverance showcased by participants and the various coping strategies developed to become tenacious. Adopting critical reflection, building positive rapport and relationship with students, networking with peers (and learning from them), and learning to deal and students' questions were some of the coping strategies employed. Most importantly, almost all participants placed importance on preparation before lessons and they saw that as a key to successful execution of a lesson and a strategy to boost confidence.

The IAS in this research spoke of different desires for the future – possessing advanced language skills to be spontaneous and humorous in class, being in leadership positions, harnessing authority and respect from students and peers and being always excellent in class. However, when participants elaborated on how invested they were in further development initiatives taken to attain these personal goals, there were perceived barriers in some participants to achieve those personal desires. Participants admitted to not receiving institutional support during their arrival or feeling the need to seek such

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support; to some the informal support from peers were invaluable. The IAS in the current research strongly opposed to the idea that IAS needed extra help and support with one expressing the strong opinion that it could be mistaken as a suggestion of lack in proficiency. Time pressure was the biggest barrier in initiatives to further improve themselves. Participants spoke of how precious their time was; and any time left from administrative duties, teaching and marking, was spent on research. Allocating time for further development in their role on top of their existing busy schedule was almost impossible, even when clear benefits can be seen.

Participants who took part in the online Development Toolkit were generally positive about the idea and potential of the DT with some expressing preference for the DT over other more conventional CPD; and the DT being easily accessible online was a definite bonus. Time pressure was a recurring theme and obstacle to participants engaging fully and meaningfully with activities in the DT. Although for some participants the DT was able to offer positive tips and pointers, it was felt that the benefits were unsustainable due to the lack of opportunities, time and natural occurrences to use and practise the points learnt. Some participants felt that the DT was not exciting or motivating as it had offered nothing new; and some displayed negative perceptions and attitude towards the DT due to a lack of understanding for their objectives and purposes. There were areas where the DT could be improved upon to garner better engagement from participants.

Participants' engagement and commitment in the DT as well as their commitment in other general development initiatives were also discussed through the lens of Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment and following Darvin and Norton's (2015) example, the discussion followed the case study approach.

Darvin and Norton (2015) proposed that "recognising that they have the agency to assert their own identities, learners are able to negotiate symbolic capital, reframe relations of power and challenge normative ways to thinking, in order to claim the right to speak" (Darvin and Norton 2015, p.47). As demonstrated, Eng showed the abilities to recognise, identify and subsequently reject his systemic patterns of controls, and using his affordances and his power, to gain control to take the initiative in accumulating other forms of capital to join his imagined CoP.

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In proposing the Model of Investment, Darvin and Norton (2015) also stated that learners "[raise] questions about their own ways of thinking of the status quo" so that more opportunities for reflexivity and disagreement can be created. The immigrant women in Norton's (Peirce 1995) study were marginalised and discriminated upon and they saw themselves as "'illegitimate' speakers of English" (p.23); hence they were motivated to learn to communicate better in the native language and "claimed the right to speak", becoming "multicultural citizen[s] of Canada" (p.25). The difference between the immigrant women in Norton's study and Fang was that Fang was highly aware of her status quo, of how she was being marginalised by her co-teaching team for being young and new; but she felt powerless; and the ability to speak and communicate in the native language did not change the situation as they did for the immigrant women in Norton's study. Though both wanted to have better communicative skills in the target language, Ang had a strong subject disciplinary identity and Ding had a strong professional identity; in that sense, there was no urgency and motivation for them to "claim the right to speak", unlike the women in Norton's study.

What Darvin and Norton (2015) had hoped to achieve through the Model of Investment was "a space in which learners are not by default marginalised or resistant, but where they have an agentive capacity to evaluate and negotiate the constraints and opportunities of their social location" (p.47). Ang, Ding and Fang showed that they were able to recognise some of these "constraints", especially Fang who felt strongly about being marginalised and constrained by the dominant ideology; however, the DT also had not been suitable in enabling and empowering them to act as agents with capacities to negotiate those constraints.

Eng on the other hand, consistently feeling conscious about his pronunciation and of students' potential negative perceptions, was able to recognise his systemic patterns of control and had the power to reject them; utilising all the positive qualities and affordances that he possessed including being positive even in the face of negative student criticisms ["the status quo" as described by Darvin and Norton (2015)]. Being resilient, competitive, and proactive, Eng demonstrated the ability to make use of the DT through self-directed learning in ways that benefited him and transformed the way he constructed his identity in his space. This correlated positively with what Bhat et al. (2007) had acknowledged as important aspects in self-direct learning – "the subject

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matter; the social, cultural and educational setting; past experiences; self concept and relevant study skills all influence the extent to which self-directness is possible" (p.1; cited in Greveson and Spencer 2005).

Through the lens of the Model of Investment, we were able to better understand the interplay between IAS' experience and engagement with the DT – specifically their willingness to engage with the DT based on their position and identity; the barriers in stopping them doing so; and the potential impact or changes from dedicating time and efforts in the DT, especially with regards to their learning in the target language and their identity construction. The DT was designed with the overarching aim of participants enhancing and improving their teaching and student engagement practices through the target language in mind; feedback from participants strongly suggested that the DT was relevant, accessible, engaging, well-designed and easy to use. However, the case studies of Ang, Ding and Fang have confirmed that for learners to positively reconstruct their identities and to gain legitimate membership to their desired CoPs, first and foremost, choosing the right form of development initiatives is crucial. The DT which was designed as online resources to suit the group of participants turned out not to be a suitable programme of learning in catering to individual needs. Tying this to what we have previously found about the DT and its general suitability as resources of self-directed learning for professional development, it has been confirmed that for any professional development programmes to be effective and relevant, the materials and intended learning outcomes must fit in with the learners' professional needs. Additionally, identifying potential systemic patterns of controls and learners' predisposed way of thinking and habitus based on their existing ideologies (Darvin and Norton 2015) are also important aspects to consider in steps to overcome potential barriers and difficulties for learners to engage in professional development initiatives.

5.2.2 Contribution to knowledge

The use of IPA as a research strategy in the context of analysing the lived experiences, the sense of resilience and perseverance of IAS in the UK HEI environment, is unusual. Through the IPA lens, I was able to engage with the participants, and to understand and make sense of their personal lived experiences which were previously unexplored. This would not have been achievable through other methods of enquiry.

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The use of Darvin and Norton's Model of Investment (2015) in framing and understanding the interplay between IAS' development initiatives and the positive reconstruction of identity has also never been done before, making this research a new academic contribution to knowledge. The findings and the new angles of research discovered through this novel application of the Model of Investment, will open new possibilities for the model to be applied in other new areas of focus never done before.

5.2.3 Implications

This research has generated rich data from a deeply situated study and has yielded findings which cannot be generalised from, given the highly specific context. However, the findings from it do provide new knowledge about the lived experiences of IAS and a few key implications can be drawn in the context of the current literature.

First, this research enriches and adds substantial weight to the very limited and under-researched area of exploring the lived experiences of IAS in their host institutions, especially from the perspective of an IPA methodology. It has also brought new dimensions and perspectives with regards to the exploration of IAS identity and identity construction as part of their adjustment and assimilation processes. New and original research is also created through utilising Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment in understanding IAS' experience, engagement, and development commitment in a proposed self-directed learning programme as well as development commitment in general; all this in relation to the positive reconstruction of their identity/ies.

In 2011, Green and Myatt (2011) called for the "resilience, adaptation and highly developed coping strategies" of IAS to be emphasised and explored; and recently, Bailey et al. (2021) also highlighted the "unanimous call for these barriers" encountered and conquered by IAS to be acknowledged. Where previous literature has described and portrayed IAS as passive sufferers of challenges in their new environment (Antoniadou and Quinlan 2020), this study has not only highlighted their strong sense of resilience, perseverance and instinct for survival, it has also illuminated their strong sense of pride, the sense of achievement, and the high self-esteem felt by the IAS community. Whilst previous literature has always cast them in a negative light, IAS in this research have portrayed themselves as strong agents capable of empowering themselves in adapting to and thriving in their new environment. These stories of triumph and celebrations have appeared few and far between in previous literature, and this needs to change. IAS themselves feel strongly against being cast in the stereotypical perspective of having trouble adjusting and functioning in their environment. Their strong resilience, perseverance and positive contribution towards their host environment certainly needs to be highlighted more. Mainstream media and scholarly works have the responsibility in changing the society's mindset and perspective – as long as the IAS are cast in a negative light, they will never be treated as equal and respectable members of academia, capable of leading positive change and innovation.

Academics themselves, especially IAS need to recognise and draw from their own strengths. To safeguard their self-esteem and self-confidence, IAS need to develop critical self-reflection and analytical skills; and relationship building, formal or informal, with peers and with students, is regarded as key aspect in helping IAS to adjust and perform better. As Welikala (2018) has put it, academics, especially women, need to be "thick-skinned and ruthlessly competitive" to survive.

Although issues pertaining to intersectionality in academia have previously been explored, this research has served as further indicator that it is still a prevalent and dominant issue in academia despite widespread campaigns and efforts to address such issues. This current study has further contributed to the body of research in highlighting how much more challenging it is as female faculty, especially of colour trying to gain equal standing with their male counterparts; it has also highlighted the lack of understanding that male academics have towards issues on gender.

One other key implication from this research was the immense pressure and burden felt by the modern-day academics, not just by IAS who must navigate through different cultural, educational and linguistic settings, but by all academics who have to juggle multiple roles and responsibilities whilst expected to hit multiple targets and KPIs. All of this is impacting negatively on academics' sense of self, well-being, and opportunities for further development.

Although participants have showed themselves to be positive self-directed learners who were keen to explore and learn; unfortunately, the DT was insufficient to fulfil their learning needs and requirements. The implication is that the design of a professional

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development programme should involve the learners having control over their learning needs and in deciding their learning objectives and intended outcomes, so that they can reap benefits from the programme. This can be time-consuming; however, the return from such efforts would be worth-while in encouraging professional development in staff to maintain performance and quality.

In the design of professional development programmes offered to academic staff, it is important that the perceived benefits and returns from engagement in the programme are structured and laid out to engage maximum participation from learners, especially when time is such a valuable commodity. To ensure uptake and success, the learners should be given the freedom to select the different elements that they wish to engage in. The collaborative component, along with the element of self-direction are seen as two important aspects in boosting the successes of professional development programmes.

5.2.4 Recommendations

From the implications above, several key recommendations on practice can be suggested.

Host institutions and departments should recognise and be sensitive to the immense pressure placed on newly arrived academic staff, especially if they are new to teaching or to the culture, and to ensure that an adjustment period of at least six months is given where their workload is considerably lighter while they adjust and assimilate to their new surroundings. Findings from the research have strongly suggested IAS are strong agents capable of change and coping strategies; however, reasonable time is still needed to adjust. According to the personal account of Yeh (2018), “generally, it takes at least three years for new academics to establish strong professional identities” (p.75).

Instead of concentrating on reporting the negative challenges and encounters faced by IAS in attempts to better understand the issues and to support them, researchers and scholars should shift this focus to documenting the resilience and coping strategies as portrayed by IAS instead, so that success stories can help inspire and empower other IAS. More research on IAS coping strategies and resilience needed to be undertaken and published; and more research and reports on the positive contribution of IAS within

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their environment and community, regionally, nationally, and internationally, should be highlighted and published.

Newly arrived IAS may not engage in or benefit from support in the form of conventional induction training programmes or language courses. Instead, host institutions should concentrate on creating conducive settings and environments that would facilitate better and easier integration of IAS into their communities or departments. Findings from the current research have pointed strongly to the benefits from informal relationships built with colleagues – as such, host institutions should consider organising fortnightly or monthly work social functions to allow new and local staff the opportunities to network and socialise in an informal setting. IAS themselves especially when they have just newly arrived in a new institution, should seek every opportunity to build networks and relationships, with both staff and students, as such relationships have been suggested to not only help with better adjustment into the new environment, but they can enhance teaching and learning in the classroom too, helping to combat the feeling of nervousness and anxiety. As Yeh (2018), a Taiwanese lecturer in the UK has advised, "teacher and student relationships are vital to teaching and learning quality and experiences. It is therefore very important to develop better teacher and student relationships…and for IAS to be "as genuine and authentic as possible" (p.88) during formal and informal interactions with students.

Findings from the research have shown that it is challenging to produce sets of developmental programmes that could cater to all individual learning needs. When learners cannot sense perceived benefits from engaging in a development programme, engagement automatically stops. In the planning of professional development courses, especially for academic staff, instead of enrolling cohorts of learners in conventional and traditional CPD programmes, education development committees should consider a more one-to-one consultancy or coaching approach in empowering their learners first of all, to identify their own individual learning and professional needs and objectives; secondly, to identify the most suitable modes of learning and resources towards those developmental goals, with the level of support from facilitators being determined by the learners themselves. With the advent in technology, there are many opportunities and incentives to drive innovation and creativity in the design and execution of staff development programmes to aid learners' sustained motivation, engagement with and

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attainment from such programmes. A collaborative learning approach is also an important element to consider as part of staff development programme. Even though individual learners may have different learning goals, as part of the learning process, they should still be given the opportunity to form networks with other learners, even if it is on virtual platforms as the exchange of ideas and progress is an important part of professional learning and progress. With the technology that augmented reality tools can offer, this can be both exciting and innovative. Fundamentally, for academics to benefit from any professional development programme, having a receptive, positive, and open mindset is important.

Mentorship schemes have also been indicated to benefit new staff, especially IAS; however, it is recommended that host institutions should employ more creative ways in pairing up mentors and mentees. For example, they could be paired or grouped according to similar research or subject interests to encourage mutual collaborations, to foster active and sustained mentorships.

In addressing issues on intersectionality, key resources (Davies 2016; Stevenson et al. 2019) have suggested initiatives including using positive action approaches, cultural awareness campaigns, equality and diversity training, having robust national policy documents, and departmental action plans across institutions etc, in attempts to tackle and overcome such challenges. However, instead of being typically top-down, wider engagement initiatives should be from bottom-up. As evident from the research, minority groups, especially IAS may not necessarily wish to be singled out and treated differently, and that such positive actions are in danger of being misconstrued as indicating professional incompetence. All students and staff should be encouraged to have open dialogues regarding issues and themes about intersectionality. Instead of institutions driving positive action approaches and regarding minority groups as requiring special treatments (Davies 2016), volunteers from these minority groups should be invited to all forums to share their views on such matters, formally or informally – a culture change towards openness and acceptance is needed where minority groups should not feel stigmatised or sensitive about sharing their experience and views; and that dominant groups should feel free to express their curiosity and ask appropriate questions in an open forum. From there, a deeper appreciation and

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understanding of hidden issues can be built, and a change in action and behaviour can then happen and be embraced naturally.

5.2.5 Limitations of the research

Due consideration and efforts were taken throughout the research to ensure its validity, rigour, and quality. I have also addressed issues pertaining to the quality of this research by assessing its validity and reliability, following guidance from Yardley's (2000) good qualitative research criteria as recommended by Smith et al. (2009) as illustrated in Chapter 3. Some of the potential limitations to the current study were also previously covered in the same chapter, especially with regards to language and the transferability of research knowledge and findings.

These issues are revisited here again, but this time with a more in-depth understanding and appreciation for those issues especially after having gone through the processes of analysing and discussing the data.

IPA research is typically conducted on small sample sizes because it is an "idiographic approach, concerned with understanding particular phenomenon in particular contexts" (Smith et al. 2009, p.49). Given this, "the representativeness and transferability of findings" (Noon 2018, p.81) from this research may come under question. Nevertheless, drawing and applying general conclusions based on findings from this research has never been the main aim; rather, it is hoped that through this research, we can have a better understanding and appreciation for IAS and their experiences, through the stories that they have told. As noted by Alase (2017), it is important to understand that the essence of IPA research is fundamentally to "understand, interpret, and amplify the 'lived experiences' of the research participants and make their experience a meaningful and dignified one!" (p.18)

As highlighted by Noon (2018), the key to conducting IPA research is language, as it provides "participants with the necessary tools" (p.81) to express their experiences. However, as in the present study, when English is not the participants' first language, this can lead to the participants having difficulty in expressing themselves, articulating their experiences or even comprehending the questions appropriately. This happened particularly with Ang and Gao where it had been noted in the RRL of the attempts in repeating and paraphrasing the questions, along with excessive use of probes and prompts during the interview process; or even the tendency for the researcher to finish participants' sentences. This resulted in interview transcripts that were "sparser" as it was more challenging for the researcher "to access the respondents' experiential worlds" (Noon 2018, p.81). This could lead to limitations in the research due to the likelihood of these experiences "being dismissed", missed or misinterpreted. The issue with poor language skills has also contributed further challenges to the data transcription, analysis and interpretation processes, which in its own right were already daunting and stressful (Smith et al. 2009); this made said processes more time consuming, exhausting and complex than they needed to be because the researcher had to first of all accurately transcribe the audio recordings of the interviews, then decipher meaning from incomplete utterances that were not structurally sound, before any interpretation processes could begin. This inevitably meant that the overall interpretation process of such scripts may not have been as robust as the others. However, to overcome such limitations, the audio recordings were played repeatedly, and the scripts analysed multiple times to ensure key points had not been missed.

An early hypothesis made in this research through initial reading assumed that IAS would predominantly encounter issues related to language and identity; therefore, the introduction of an online Development Toolkit (DT) would be seen as appropriate resources to help IAS develop their linguistic competence as a coping strategy. Findings from the research showed that some of the issues encountered did not relate to language and identity; this meant that framing participants' engagement and experience with the DT became less relevant in some cases. The adoption of Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment was specifically planned for the context of language learning and language acquisition in relation to identity. When it was discovered that the participants' desires, intentions, and issues were beyond language learning and acquisition, it was risky to still attempt to contextualise participants' experience of the DT around the notion of the Model of Investment. Although the Model of Investment appeared relevant and insightful in understanding participants' engagement and experience with the DT, and with other development initiatives in general, consequently the researcher pondered if the framing of the participants' experience with the DT and with other development initiatives in general would have

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been stronger and more robust, had the context been more related to language learning, acquisition, and identity.

The overall timeline of the doctoral degree meant that the execution of the DT had been less than ideal. When it was executed, some of the participants had concluded teaching activities for the semester. This would have potentially affected the outcome on participants' full engagement with the DT given that some participants did not get to experience the reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action approach in the classroom teaching setting and in practice. However, some participants revealed that they had creatively adopted the techniques during seminar sessions or in one-to-one meetings with students, or even outside of the teaching settings. Furthermore, the fact that only two participants were able to complete all the weekly activities within the DT could have also affected the overall impression that the participants had for the DT. However, participants were still able to contribute rich and meaningful data in the post-Development Toolkit interview; this suggested that reduced participation did not significantly affect the data collection process.

5.2.6 Future research

First and foremost, through feedback received from participants on the potential of the DT being most relevant to academic staff new to teaching, I am naturally keen to have the opportunity in the future to introduce and trial the DT out with this group of academics, incorporating all the other suggested improvements to the programme. This includes having a better framework, structure, and introduction; allowing learners to decide their own learning needs and requirements; and introducing the collaborative learning element into the programme. This is also a fantastic opportunity to test the use of various learning technology tools in enhancing and sustaining learners' motivation and interest. However, retaining the "reflection-in-action/reflection-on-action" (Schon 1983) element may be challenging due to the lack of teaching experience that the potential participants can draw from. Further consideration will be needed in that aspect.

Another potential area for future research is to conduct a comparative analysis between IAS with different variables including age groups, gender, and marital status in relation to their adjustment and experience. It is anticipated that given some of the gender and

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age-related issues highlighted in the current research, a more in-depth and extensive exploration into such factors on their adjustments and experiences will again provide additional dimensions and perspectives in understanding the experience of IAS in their environment.

Due to the limited scale of this doctoral study and in an attempt to create "homogeneity" (Smith et al. 2009, p.49) for better focus, the participant recruitment was confined to academics of Far Eastern heritage. In future research, I would like to include participants globally, so that the data collected can be richer and more multifaceted, including responses and stories from other Asian, Middle Eastern and European perspectives, with an aim to enrich the understanding of academic mobility in the HEI environment.

5.2.7 Final thoughts

When I started this research, I had not anticipated that I would end up talking about the strong sense of pride and resilience felt through IAS' stories and narratives. This research has certainly cast a more positive light on IAS' sense of self, their values and contribution, and their identity. It is also hoped that the research will become a source of motivation and inspiration for IAS themselves; and to assure them that any challenging transitional phases encountered will pass, and that they have the power to control or reject those challenges. This research has achieved the main aim that was set out – to give voice to IAS on their lived experiences. As a by-product of that, their voices as strong, proud, and resilient individuals, deserving of recognition and respect came through loudly, clearly, and luminously.

I sincerely hope that I have done them justice.

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Appendix A

Overview of the various studies on the internationalisation agenda and strategies in the UK and their brief descriptions

Authors	Year	Title and description
De Vita and Case	2003	**Title:** Rethinking the internationalisation agenda in UK higher education -a critique of HE internationalisation in the UK
Robson and Turner	2007	**Title**: ‘Teaching is a co-learning experience’: academics reflecting on learning and teaching in an ‘internationalized’ faculty -a report on a study of the internationalisation experience at a UK university which had undergone a radical restructure
Caruana	2008	**Title:** Internationalisation of HE in the UK: 'Where are we now and where might we go?' - a literature review of the UK literature on internationalisation of HE
Carey	2009	**Title:** Internationalisation of higher education in the UK - Towards a sustainable model - an exploration of the reasons and implications of the marketisation discourse as the dominant discourse in the UK HE;
Maringe	2009	**Title:** Strategies and challenges of internationalisation in HE - an exploration of the strategies and challenges of internationalisation of HE in six UK universities
Warwick and Moogan	2013	**Title:** A comparative study of perceptions of internationalisation strategies in UK universities -a comparison of the internationalisation strategies of two groups of UK universities and the views of staff groups
Bennett and Kane	2009	**Title:** Internationalization of U.K. University Business Schools: A Survey of Current Practice - a study investigating the levels and motives for the internationalisation activities undertaken in the business schools of sixty-five UK universities
Humfrey	2011	**Title:** The long and winding road: a review of the policy, practice and development of the internationalisation of higher education in the UK

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		- a review of the policy, practice and development of the internationalisation of HE in the UK
Guion Akdag and Swanson	2018	**Title:** Ethics, power, internationalisation and the postcolonial: a Foucauldian discourse analysis of policy documents in two Scottish universities **-**a critical discussion of internationalisation in HE, in uncovering the investments in power and ideology in the context of four strategic internationalisation documents in two Scottish HE institutions, as part of a study into the ethics of internationalisation
Woodfield	2018	**Title:** International HE in the UK: leveraging the policy-institution-expert nexus in uncertain times -a look at the link between the internationalisation of UK HE goals and strategies and governmental policies
Trahar and Hyland	2011	**Title:** Experiences and perceptions of internationalisation in higher education in the UK - a focus group study of staff and students from five UK universities where internationalisation was the topic for debate to examine participants' perceived "culturally mediated approaches" to learning
Chankseliani	2017	**Title:** Four Rationales of HE Internationalization: Perspectives of U.K. Universities on Attracting Students From Former Soviet Countries **-** an exploration of the rationales of HE internationalisation in the UK, with a particular interest in the recruitment of students from former Soviet countries.

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Appendix B

Pertinent literature and research on IAS experience

Authors	Year	Title	Brief Summary
Relevant to the UK setting			
Jiang et. al.	(2010)	Becoming and being an academic: the perspectives of Chinese staff in two research-intensive UK universities	An interview study investigating the acculturation experiences of a group of Chinese academic staff (including doctoral students) in two research-intensive UK universities
Luxon and Peelo	(2009)	Academic sojourners, teaching and internationalisation: the experience of non-UK staff in a British University	This paper highlighted the mismatch between local practices and the international nature of academia; drawing on the experiences of 32 academics, key issues for international faculty arriving to teach in UK HE were identified and practical steps were recommended to enable UK HE to benefit from the prior teaching experience of international faculty and to facilitate transnational adjustment to teaching in universities
Antoniadou and Quinlan	(2020)	Thriving on challenges: how immigrant academics regulate emotional experiences during acculturation	A phenomenological study investigating immigrant academics' acculturation process with suggestions for ways to support immigrant academics' acculturation being proposed
Sliwa and Johansson	(2013)	Playing in the academic field: Non-native English-speaking academics in UK business schools	This paper drew on Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus and capital to explore the ways in which working in English as a non-native language influences foreign academics' performance of academic habitus and the level of their symbolic capital necessary for the achievement of success within UK higher education.
Pherali	(2012)	Academic Mobility, Language, and Cultural Capital: The Experience of Transnational Academics in British Higher Education Institutions	An in-depth phenomenological hermeneutic approach study into the experiences of seven international academics in five different British HEIs

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Hsieh	(2012)	Challenges facing Chinese academics staff in a UK university in terms of language, relationships and culture	Eight Chinese ethnic academic staff in a UK university were interviewed separately in Chinese to understand challenges they face in the university
Walker	(2015)	The globalisation of higher education and the sojourner academic: Insights into challenges experienced by newly appointed international academic staff in a UK university	An action research with an ethnographic focus on newly arrived international academic staff in an inner city London university
Bailey et al.	(2021)	Transformational, inclusive, and multicultural or empty rhetoric? Perceptions and experiences of international academic staff	An analysis of the intercultural experience, especially the lived experience of international academic staff in the UK HE using a "bi-dimensional, fourfold model"
Hosein et. al.	(2018)	Academics' International Teaching Journeys: Personal Narratives of Transitions in Higher Education	A collection of personal stories of nine international social sciences academics in foreign countries as they adapt and develop their teaching and career
Kreber and Hounsell	(2014)	Being an international academics: A phenomenological study of academic migrants adjusting to working and living in Scotland	A qualitative study involving 40 international academics, who within the past five years had moved to the UK, specifically Scotland, to join a research-intensive university. The aim of the project was to identify the challenges and opportunities these international academics perceived, as well as the contributions they saw themselves making to the host institution and society
General and Outside of the UK			
Green and Myatt	(2011)	Telling tales: a narrative research study of the experiences of new international	A narrative research study exploring the experiences and perceptions of eight international academic staff at a large, research intensive university in Australia

		academic staff at an Australian University	
Guerin and Green	(2016)	Cultural diversity and the imagined community of the global academy	Exploring issues of transnational academic mobility from the perspectives of research degrees supervisors with focus on “imagined community” and “cosmopolitanism” concepts in an Australian research-intensive university
Collins	(2008)	Coming to America: Challenges for Faculty Coming to United States’ Universities	A survey conducted to address experience of foreign-born faculty both inside and outside the classroom; their perceptions of support offered by institutions and their perceptions of students; this was then compared with a previous student survey conducted on students’ perceptions
Alberts	(2008)	The Challenges and Opportunities of Foreign-born Instructors in the Classroom	Through data collected from students and professors, the author identified main problems student experienced with foreign-born instructors, and the main challenges faced by foreign-born instructors in adjusting to the US education system; recommendations at improving classroom interactions were also proposed
Foote at al.	(2008)	Foreign-born Scholars in US Universities: Issues, Concerns, and Strategies	A paper summarising challenges and issues raised by foreign-born geography scholars in the US in a symposium
Saltmarsh and Swirski	(2010)	‘Pawns and prawns’: international academics’ observations on their transition to working in an Australian university	Drawing from previous data, interviews were conducted with 12 participants who were international academic staff in one university; the participants’ accounts of professional and personal transitional experiences were explored
Thomas and Malau-Aduli	(2013)	New International Academics’ Narratives of Cross-Cultural Transition	A small-scale narrative study employing focus group interviews to explore cross-cultural transition experiences of international academics in a university in Australia
Li and Beckett	(2005)	“Strangers” of the Academy: Asian Women Scholars in Higher Education	A collection of essays depicting the personal of professional accounts and stories of Asian, foreign-born, female faculty members to the world of the Western academy

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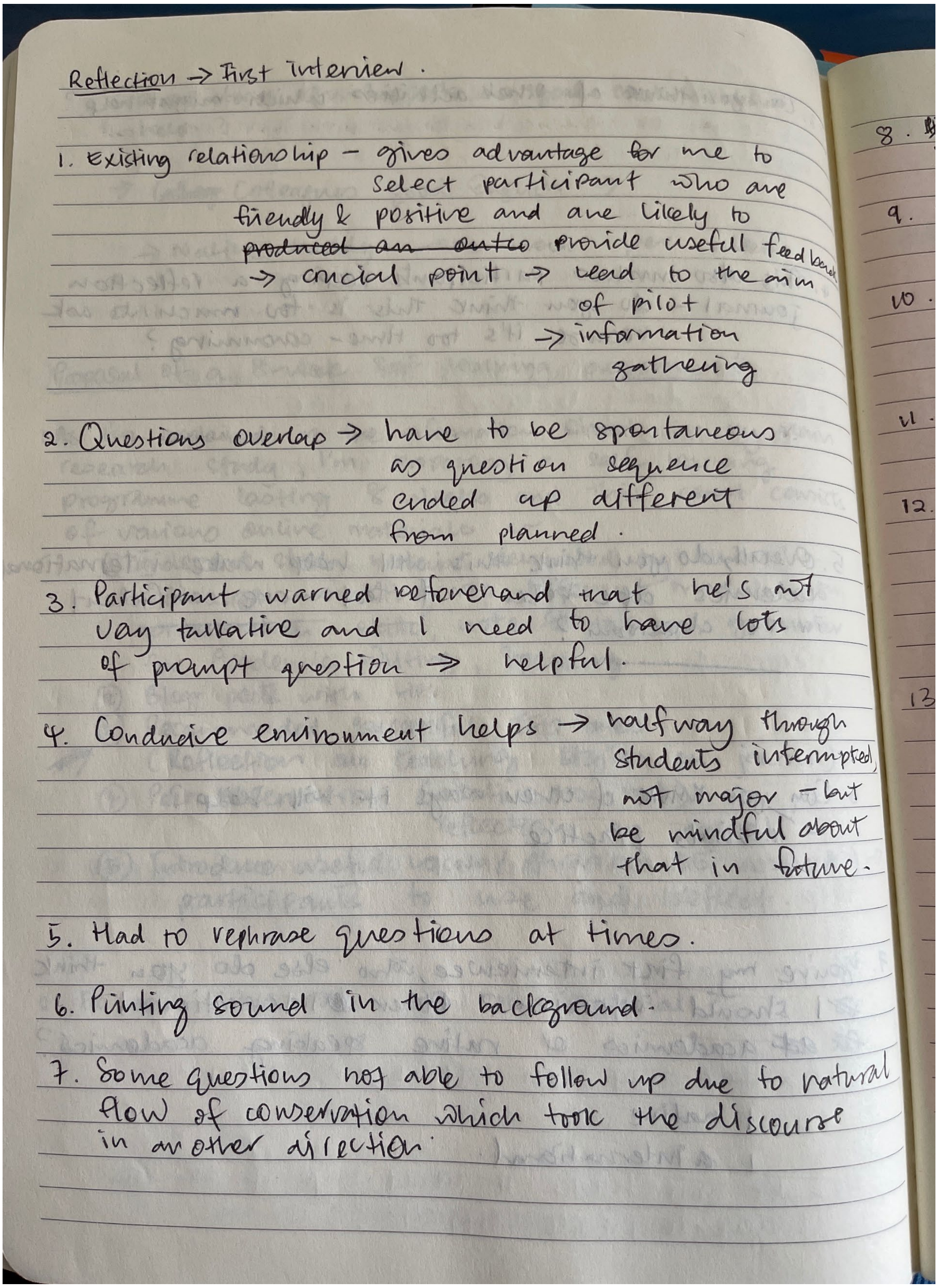
Appendix C

A snapshot of the Researcher Reflection Log (RRL)



Reflection → First interview.

1. Existing relationship – gives advantage for me to select participant who are friendly & positive and are likely to ~~produced an outco~~ provide usefull feedback
→ crucial point → lead to the aim of pilot
→ information gathering

2. Questions overlap → have to be spontaneous as question sequence ended up different from planned.

3. Participant warned beforehand that he's not very talkative and I need to have lots of prompt question → helpful.

4. Conducive environment helps → halfway through students interrupted, not major – but be mindful about that in future.

5. Had to rephrase questions at times.

6. Printing sound in the background.

7. Some questions not able to follow up due to natural flow of conservation which took the discourse in another direction.

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8. Interview ~~exp~~ was a great learning experience → Some of the answers have not been anticipated.

9. Some of the proposed ideas in the ~~ideas~~ investment model came through.

10. A very successful first interview, very positive → reinforced my thinking of selecting positive individuals.

11. Interviewer ended up talking about herself during the interview → negative aspect

12. Interview questions – in general, works, but participant answer at times cover the next questions → have to be spontaneous to adapt. – useful to have a schedule to follow.

13. Cutting participants off / make agreeing noise/fillers → bad move.

Appendix D

Participant Information Sheet

Full title of project:

International academic staff coping strategies in the UK teaching environment: investment, identity and subjectivity

Name, position and contact details of researcher:

Pengpeng Ooi, CEMP Ed D Cohort 2, [redacted], tel: [redacted]

Name, position and contact details of supervisor (if the researcher is a student):

Professor Julian McDougall, Director of CEMP, [redacted], tel: [redacted]

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

I am a third year CEMP Doctoral of Education programme student. This research will be conducted by myself and results from this research will be analysed and used in my main doctoral research thesis.

Research background

Current literature and research to date, have mostly concentrated on the international student experience and rarely on the experience of academic staff mobility. The limited research and literature on international academic experience suggest that life, as an international academic in a foreign institution is multi-dimensional and can be potentially challenging.

Professor Bonny Norton proposes that 'investment [in a target language] impacts on the process in which the language learner can construct and reconstruct her social identity, through 'time and space', therefore affecting 'how [the learner] understands their relations to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space and how [the learner] understands their possibilities for the future' (Norton 1997, p.410). In other words, the theory of 'subjectivity' suggests the 'multi-dimensional and inter-changeability' (ibid) of identity construction and re-construction as direct influence of 'investment' in a target language.

To put this notion into the context of this research, Norton proposes that international academic staff to foreign institutions, through conscious or subconscious investment in

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the native language, are able to positively reconstruct and improve their sense of identity in their surroundings and subsequently, alter their experience as an International academic staff and help them cope better in their new environment.

The main focus of this research is to first explore the teaching experience of international academic staff in a UK university in particular the identity and self-awareness they bring into the classrooms. This is followed by the development of a self-learning programme based on Darvin and Norton's 'investment model' (2015) and its impact will be explored at the end of the learning programme.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been selected as a potential research participant because of your background and experience, which fit in with the target research group I aim to investigate for this study. Your participation in this research will add great value and direction in the analyses my main study, and it will help contribute to the current (and limited) body of literature in investigating international academic staff experience in the UK teaching environment.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a **participant agreement form**) and you can still withdraw up to the point where the data are processed and become anonymous, so your identity cannot be determined, without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to in any way. You do not have to give a reason.

What would taking part involve?

I hope to engage up to 8 international academic staff in this study. As a research participant, you will first be interviewed individually, for no longer than an hour each time. You will then be invited to join the 8-week self-learning programme; and after the programme, you will then be interviewed again individually, for no longer than an hour. All interviews will be arranged on campus at a time convenient for you (or off-campus should you prefer).

I hope to conduct this semi-structured interview in a quiet environment because an audio recording will be made so that a transcript of the interview can be produced. The questions will likely involve finding out about your experience in a UK university as an academic; and your teaching experience as a lecturer in a UK university.

The audio recordings made during this research will be used only for analysis and for illustration in conference presentations. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

It is hoped that the interview will be conducted in a semi-formal session and you can share your experience in an informal and relaxed environment.

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What are the advantages and possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?

It is not expected that any of the semi-structured questions will cause any form of discomfort or sensitivity. However, as stated previously, if you do feel reluctant to answer any of the questions, you can choose not to answer them.

It is hoped that through participation in the 8-week self-learning programme, some benefits will be gained by you at the end of the programme. Also, through dissemination of the research outcomes, it is hoped that this work will add value and knowledge to its existing field and enrich understanding of the experience and the identity(ies) of international academic staff working in a foreign university.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications.

BU requires data to be retained for a minimum of five years, after which they can be deleted.

Contact for further information

I can be contacted at any point and please find below my details:

Name: Pengpeng Ooi

Email add: [redacted]

Telephone number: [redacted]

Please note that any complaints which you may have can be made to the Deputy Dean of Research and Professional Practice of Faculty of Media and Communication, Professor Iain MacRury.

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and, if appropriate, a separate signed **participant agreement form** to keep.

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Appendix E

Participant Consent Form

Full title of project:

International academic staff coping strategies in the UK teaching environment: investment, identity and subjectivity

Name, position and contact details of researcher:

Pengpeng Ooi, CEMP Ed D Cohort 2, [redacted], tel: [redacted]

Name, position and contact details of supervisor (if the researcher is a student):

Professor Julian McDougall, Director of CEMP, [redacted], tel: [redacted]

Thank you so much for taking the time to read through all the information of the research on the participant information sheet.

	Please Initial or Tick Here
I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above research project	
I confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask questions.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary.	
I understand that I am free to withdraw *up to the point where the data are processed and become anonymous, so my identity cannot be determined*	
During the task or experiment, I am free to withdraw without giving reason and without there being any negative consequences.	
Should I not wish to answer any particular question(s), I am free to decline.	
I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the outputs that result from the research.	

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I agree to be featured in any audio recordings taken during the project	
I agree to take part in the above research project.	

Name of participant:

Date:

Signature:

Name of person taking consent:

Date:

Signature:

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Appendix F

Phase One interview schedule – themes and questions

Background -

1. How many years have you been in the UK for?

2. I presume it must have been a major shift moving to the UK? Can you tell me more about that adjustment period in general?

3. Would you class yourself as a highly confident individual?

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your level of confidence, 10 being extremely confident?

Teaching -

1. How many years have you been an academic/ lecturer at a UK university?

2. How do you find teaching in general?

3. Do you find it easy stepping into the classroom,
   or are you nervous? – probing question
   Why? – prompting question

4. I'm now going to take you back in time.... Can you recall your early teaching experience? Was it an easy or stressful/ difficult experience? – probing question
   What made it easy/ difficult? – probing question

5. Do you think one of the contributing factors could be because you do not speak the native language?

6. Compared to when you first started teaching, do you find the experience much easier now?
   What made it easier? – prompting question
   What made you coped so well? – probing question
   What do you think were your coping strategies? – probing question

7. Have you ever felt self-conscious about how students might perceive you or your teaching in the classroom?

8. Do you think you'll feel the same if you were teaching in your native country?

9. Do you have actual teaching experience in your native country which you can compare with your current experience?
   Can you tell me about the differences or similarities between the two experiences?- probing question

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10. Do you and your colleagues exchange teaching experiences in an informal setting?

11. Do you think they find it easy or difficult in general?

12. Do you sense that being a male academic has given you an advantage or disadvantage adjusting/ coping, compared to your female counterparts?

13. Have you ever observed other international colleagues teach in class?
    What did you observe? – probing question

14. Have you ever observed native speaking colleagues teach in class?
    What did you observe? - probing question
    Was there anything to learn/ gain? – probing question

15. If you have not had the opportunity to do so, is this something you're interested in doing?

16. How do you see yourself compared to other native speaking lecturers?

17. How would you describe your identity as an international teaching staff in the UK?

18. Have you ever struggled with using English to teach?

19. Do you find yourself constantly finding ways to try to improve yourself?
    What are some of those initiatives? – probing question

20. Has the university provided any form of support to help you to adjust as a teaching academic?
    What were they? – probing question
    Have they been effective/ useful?
    Do you think it would have helped if the uni were to provide more/ better support?
    What form of support do you think would help?

Programme

1. As explained in my email, I'm proposing a 6-week self-learning programme that will hopefully potentially benefit you in teaching. What do you expect to see as part of the programme?

2. What would help to engage you in the programme?

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Appendix G

Full suite of the Development Toolkit – all six weekly self-learning materials

<u>Week 1</u>

In the article attached, researchers in Liverpool Hope University, UK conducted research with 100 undergraduate students and found the following qualities to be what students perceive to be teaching excellence:

1. Being authoritative and expert in knowledge and skills; being able to apply knowledge to real-life scenarios
2. Being a good communicator
3. Being good at using educational technologies
4. Having a sense of humour
5. Being able to interact with students
6. Being a reflective practitioner
7. Being passionate and inspiring
8. Being supportive
9. Being able to facilitate students' independent learning
10. Being approachable
11. Being able to provide timely feedback

Thinking point (please write your reflection below and email this document back to me):

1. Do you agree with these?
2. How many of these qualities do you practise in your teaching?
3. Do you always do them?
4. Do you do them well?
5. What other qualities do you have that is missing from the list?
6. Practise some of these qualities with your students and let me know how you get on!

Your reflection:

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The current issue and full text archive of this journal is available at
www.emeraldinsight.com/2050-7003.htm

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What makes a good university lecturer? Students' perceptions of teaching excellence

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Week 2

Watch this short video clip (one of the most watched TED videos on YouTube) –

https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_how_to_speak_so_that_people_want_to_listen?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare

Thinking point (please write your reflection below and email this document back to me):

1. Did you find it interesting?
2. What made it interesting?
3. Can you adopt some of his delivery style? – body language, hand gestures, the use of the right visual aid at the right time; using pauses; humour; using questioning?
4. Can you adopt some of his suggestions? Using the correct register; tone? Pace?
5. Pick a couple of his techniques that you have never used before and try them with your students and record your reflection below:

Your reflection:

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Week 3

The Teaching and Educational Development Institute at The University of Queensland has developed a framework for effective teaching practice (attached) consisting of 10 useful pointers as listed below:

Consider each pointer and the accompanying suggestions and incorporate these in your next session with your students.

1. Variety/ variability

- Research indicated – adult learners have attention spans of a maximum of 15 minutes. It is important to vary all aspects of your performance as a teacher

Suggestion – build your presentation around blocks of different activities lasting approximately 15 minutes each block. e.g. individual tasks followed by sharing of answers with class; group tasks and discussions, followed by presentations; individual task based on video clips; individual task based on audio clip, etc.

Suggestion – consider variation in your teaching strategies – changing the tone and volume of your voice; changing the usual structure of your lecture; consider walking up and down the size of the classroom while maintaining eye contact, consider using new technologies or web tools.

2. Audibility

- Ensure your students can hear you

Suggestion – get a colleague to stand at the back of the lecture before a class to test your volume; enunciate as clearly as possible; use a variety of volume; invite students to speak up if they can't hear you.

3. Pace

- Monitor the pace of your delivery – too fast or too slow, students will lose interest.

Suggestion – Pay attention to students' reaction to gauge your pace. If you feel your pace is too quick, take deep breaths and slow down. Make use of different paces to make important points.

4. Pitch

- Pitch is the musical quality in your voice – it can go high, it can go low. Using different pitches can add effectiveness of your presentation.

Suggestion – Pay attention to your pitch at different points of your lecture; make use of slightly higher pitches when making strong and important points; change your pitch when making a new point.

5. Articulation/ pronunciation

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Suggestion – attempt to pronounce words correctly; look up unfamiliar pronunciations before going into the class.

6. Emphasis

Suggestion - Use emphasis in your voice to signal important concepts; use verbal markers to signal important points, e.g., "now this is important", "this is a difficult idea to grasp".

7. Pause

- Silence is an effective method of capturing student attention; pause to give students time to think.

Suggestion - try using subtle pauses before important points: use pauses when you feel students are losing interest; avoid using vocal pauses like 'uhm', 'you know', 'like'. Your audience will be distracted by overuse of these words.

8. Energy and enthusiasm

- Inject physical and mental energy into your presentation - students will find themselves caught up in the energy and enthusiasm.

Suggestion – use strong and firm voice; use hand and body gestures; use active language rather than passive.

9. Eye contact

- Maintain eye contact with your audience so that you can establish a relationship with them

Suggestion – avoid staring at the back wall; allow your eyes to roam the room and look into individual students' eyes; divide a large lecture theatre into sections and move your eyes from section to section.

10. Gestures and movement

- Non-verbal behaviours have a powerful impact in the classroom. Use them in a natural way to assist in conveying your meaning.

Suggestion – use non-verbal communication to complement and not contradict your verbal communication; avoid gestures or mannerisms that are repetitive as they are distracting. Invite a colleague to sit in on one of your lectures to monitor for potential irritating habits.

Thinking points:

1. Did you get the opportunity to adopt any of the pointers and suggestions?
2. If you have not, please explain why?
3. If you have, did they work? In what way did they work or not work for you?

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The University Of Queensland
Australia

Teaching and Educational Development Institute

Presentation skills for teachers

Texts obscured due to copyright. Resource available at -
http://www.finchpark.com/courses/tkt/Unit_15/presentation_skills.pdf

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Week 4

Learning by observation and reflection

Leeds Metropolitan University produced a compendium on 'Using peer observation to enhance teaching' and here is a list of why peer review is beneficial:

- Providing lecturers with opportunities, both through observing and being observed in teaching sessions, to reflect on and review their teaching skills with the assistance of colleagues
- Identifying good practice, and needs which lecturers can address, to ensure ongoing personal and professional development
- Helping lecturers to continue to learn from each other, towards developing shared understandings of best practices in assessment, learning and teaching
- Allowing lecturers to gain from mutually beneficial learning experiences through the processes of observing colleagues and being observed themselves
- Helping lecturers to learn new tricks from one another
- Identifying generic development needs, to feed into ongoing and future staff development activities.

The suggested activity this week involves peer observation. Identify a colleague that you would like to observe and request to be able to observe them in the classroom. You can choose to observe the entire lesson; or you can choose to observe just 15 minutes. This is optional, but it is suggested that after the observation, you conduct a post-observation discussion with the colleague you have observed.

Thinking points:

6. What have you observed? Are there prominent points from the observation?
7. Have you learned any new techniques or tricks you can adopt in the classroom yourselves?
8. What would you avoid doing?
9. Did you have a post-observation discussion with your peer? If you have, what did you discuss?

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Week 5

Responding constructively to student feedback

Just as students benefit in their learning from receiving your comments on their papers and assignments, you may find it beneficial in improving your teaching to receive feedback from your students. The more information that you gather about your teaching the more you can make informed changes that will be beneficial both to your students and to you as you develop as a teacher/ lecturer.

In my understanding, it is quite common to receive both positive and negative feedback from students. However, have you approached the student feedback you've received from a structural point of view?

The University College Dublin has produced a resource on 'Student feedback: Responding Constructively'. The table below from the guide can be used to help with prioritising comments, establishing which are relevant and constructive, and help to consider possible responses.

Example Student comment (s)	Affective Responses (How you feel about the comment)	Productive response (How you could use the comment)
Unrelated Comments "I wish you would have occasionally worn something other than blue"		
Mixed Reaction Comments Half the class wrote: "I love the small group activities"/ The other half wrote, "I hated all the small group stuff."		
Unexpected Comments You thought the class went well but student ratings and comments placed you below the departmental average.		
Teaching-Specific Comments "You went way too fast; You just read your lectures to us; You talked to the board all the time; You never really answered our questions."		

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Effort-Related Comments "You worked us WAY too hard in this class. There was too much reading and you had us write too many papers."		
Assessment-Related Comments "There was far too much assessment; We had too much to submit in the last week."		
Fairness Comments "You were completely unfair and didn't treat students the same."		
Vicious Comments "This was a complete waste of my time and money. This instructor should be fire."		

Thinking point:

1. Have you ever received student comments in the similar nature to the examples given in the table above?
2. How did the comments make you feel?
3. Can you make use of the table above in dealing with your own student feedback?
4. Did you find the exercise useful?
5. Yes – why?
6. No – why?

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Week 6

Professor Laura Edelman and Professor Kathleen Harring of Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania conducted a survey on students at the college asking what they liked and didn't like about their professor's PowerPoint presentations. They discovered the following:

Dislikes:

- Too many words on a slide
- Clip art
- Movement (slide transitions or word animations)
- Templates with too many colours

Likes:

- Graphs increase understanding of content
- Bulleted lists help them organise ideas
- PowerPoint can help to structure lectures
- Verbal explanations of pictures/graphs help more than written clarifications

The TED Blog published a blog post listing 10 useful tips on how to make better slides to communicate your ideas.

Read the blog post and tell me what you think in the 'Thinking point' section below.

Thinking points:

1. Have you ever reflected on the effectiveness of your PowerPoint slides in communicating your ideas to your students?
2. Is this something you consider to be important in your lessons?
3. Do you agree with the tips in the TED blog post?
4. Are you open to trying out some of the tips from the blog post and incorporating them in your PowerPoint presentation slides?
5. If not, can you explain why?

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Week 4 – Learning by observation and reflection (modified and used in Week 6)

Leeds Metropolitan University produced a compendium on 'Using peer observation to enhance teaching' and here is a list of why peer review is beneficial:

- Providing lecturers with opportunities, both through observing and being observed in teaching sessions, to reflect on and review their teaching skills with the assistance of colleagues
- Identifying good practice, and needs which lecturers can address, to ensure ongoing personal and professional development
- Helping lecturers to continue to learn from each other, towards developing shared understandings of best practices in assessment, learning and teaching
- Allowing lecturers to gain from mutually beneficial learning experiences through the processes of observing colleagues and being observed themselves
- Helping lecturers to learn new tricks from one another
- Identifying generic development needs, to feed into ongoing and future staff development activities.

The suggested activity this week involves observation of a lesson online. Please click on the link below to access the video –

https://www.coursera.org/learn/advanced-neurobiology1/lecture/0K4ta/10-2-animal-models-in-neurological-research

Thinking points:

1. What have you observed? Are there prominent points from the observation?
2. Have you learned any new techniques or tricks you can adopt in the classroom yourselves?
3. What would you avoid doing?
4. Did you think that was a good or bad lesson?
5. Why?

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Appendix H

Email to participants introducing the Development Toolkit

Dear Colleague,

Thank you again for agreeing to be part of this six-week learning programme. At the beginning of each week on a Monday for the following six weeks (20th March; 27th March; 3rd April; 10th April; 17th April; 24th April), I will send you an email with suggested materials/ activities to look at. They will be short and will not require much of your time but they will require you to experiment them in the classrooms/ with students as much as possible.

The main aim of the programme is to encourage you to reflect on your teaching practices and hopefully enhance your existing skills and knowledge. The content might offer things you already know and do; or you might find it offers something new and useful. In any case, it would be helpful if you could follow the programme, complete the 'thinking points' at the end and provide your feedback to me in order to help with this study.

Thank you again for your time and I look forward to hearing from you at the end of the week.

Regards,

Peng Peng

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Appendix I

Phase Three interview schedule – themes and questions

Process

1. Were you able to complete all the suggested activities?
2. How many out of the 6 were you able to complete?
   Can you elaborate on the factors behind that?
3. Can you tell me about the challenges you faced (if any) while attempting to complete the activities?
4. What made you lose motivation?

Content

1. What did you think of the content of the programme?
1. Did you find the programme useful/ helpful?
   How? Could you elaborate on that please?
   In what sense were they helpful/ no not?
2. Did you find the suggested activities practical/ easy to follow? Easy to complete?

Reconstruction of Identity

2. Do you think these activities have helped strengthened your position as an international teaching academic?
   Can you elaborate please?
3. Do you think they have the potential of changing your relationship or the dynamic between you and the students?
   How about between you and your peers?
   Could you please explain?

Future

1. Do you think this programme would benefit newly appointed international lecturers at a UK University?
   Why?
2. Do you think it will help boost confidence?
   How?

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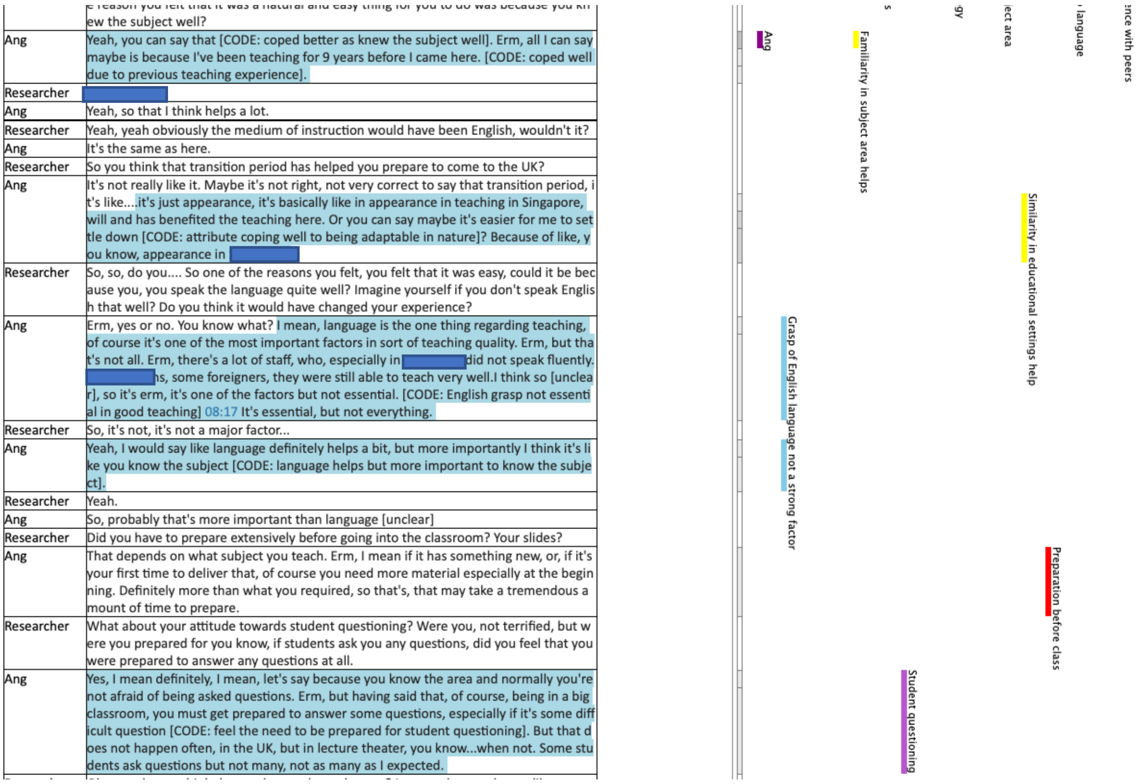
Appendix J

A snapshot of the data analysis structure on NVIVO



	e reason you felt that it was a natural and easy thing for you to do was because you knew the subject well?
Ang	Yeah, you can say that [CODE: coped better as knew the subject well]. Erm, all I can say maybe is because I've been teaching for 9 years before I came here. [CODE: coped well due to previous teaching experience].
Researcher	[redacted]
Ang	Yeah, so that I think helps a lot.
Researcher	Yeah, yeah obviously the medium of instruction would have been English, wouldn't it?
Ang	It's the same as here.
Researcher	So you think that transition period has helped you prepare to come to the UK?
Ang	It's not really like it. Maybe it's not right, not very correct to say that transition period, it's like....it's just appearance, it's basically like in appearance in teaching in Singapore, will and has benefited the teaching here. Or you can say maybe it's easier for me to settle down [CODE: attribute coping well to being adaptable in nature]? Because of like, you know, appearance in [redacted]
Researcher	So, so, do you.... So one of the reasons you felt, you felt that it was easy, could it be because you, you speak the language quite well? Imagine yourself if you don't speak English that well? Do you think it would have changed your experience?
Ang	Erm, yes or no. You know what? I mean, language is the one thing regarding teaching, of course it's one of the most important factors in sort of teaching quality. Erm, but that's not all. Erm, there's a lot of staff, who, especially in [redacted] did not speak fluently. [redacted]s, some foreigners, they were still able to teach very well.I think so [unclear], so it's erm, it's one of the factors but not essential. [CODE: English grasp not essential in good teaching] 08:17 It's essential, but not everything.
Researcher	So, it's not, it's not a major factor...
Ang	Yeah, I would say like language definitely helps a bit, but more importantly I think it's like you know the subject [CODE: language helps but more important to know the subject].
Researcher	Yeah.
Ang	So, probably that's more important than language [unclear]
Researcher	Did you have to prepare extensively before going into the classroom? Your slides?
Ang	That depends on what subject you teach. Erm, I mean if it has something new, or, if it's your first time to deliver that, of course you need more material especially at the beginning. Definitely more than what you required, so that's, that may take a tremendous amount of time to prepare.
Researcher	What about your attitude towards student questioning? Were you, not terrified, but were you prepared for you know, if students ask you any questions, did you feel that you were prepared to answer any questions at all.
Ang	Yes, I mean definitely, I mean, let's say because you know the area and normally you're not afraid of being asked questions. Erm, but having said that, of course, being in a big classroom, you must get prepared to answer some questions, especially if it's some difficult question [CODE: feel the need to be prepared for student questioning]. But that does not happen often, in the UK, but in lecture theater, you know...when not. Some students ask questions but not many, not as many as I expected.

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Appendix K

A snapshot of the colour-coded data analysis overview master spreadsheet

G	H	I	J
Teaching and Coping			
Navigating challenges	Coping strategy	Preparation is key	Conscious about students' perception
Lack spontaneous and advanced language skills when content dry	Seek advice from native	Preparation before class helps	Great overall feedback from students
Lack skills for spontaneous humour in class	Learn from professional	Preparation makes going into class less challenging	Keen to know student's perception on his lesson - speed and clarity
Having no authority as a lecturer	Talking to students, build rapport,	Mentally visualising next class	Student feedback is annoying
Male students show lack of respect	Self-reflection from previous class helps	Anticipate students' questions	Students will complain if programme not enjoyable
Challenge in deciding and planning teaching content	Learning from others, and from feedback	Teaching is easy as long as you prepare	Master students expect to be taught by native
Always nervous at the beginning of teaching	Better time management	Need to prepare for student questions	When students are unhappy, they will always be unhappy
Anxious about covering as much as possible	Being part of a supportive network	Extensive preparation and rehearsal of whole lesson before class in the early days	Self-conscious as a foreigner, and not being a native speaker - strong accent
Time management issue in the past	Relationship building as coping strategy	Still need preparation -Needs to prepare to avoid panicking	Negative feedback from the past on accent
Hard to judge speed and speech (not being native)	Self-reflection to improve	Does not thrive well with preparation - Thrived on last minute preparation	Happy when student feedback came back positive
Marginalised during promotion	Being 'kiasu'		Motivated by positive student feedback
Wished to have pronunciation ability and skills like native speakers	Learnt to be spontaneous		Negative student feedback received for Chinese colleagues

Ang | Beng | Cing | Ding | Eng | Fang | Gao | Han | Ing

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Appendix L

Participants' responses to the weekly self-directed learning activities

Week 1

Week 1	Participants read an article on research conducted with 100 undergraduate students on qualities perceived to be teaching excellence and provide their reactions to the thinking points and their reflection					
No of participants who completed this activity	6					
Participant names/ Thinking Points	**Ang**	**Beng**	**Ding**	**Eng**	**Han**	**Gao**
Do you agree with these	yes, though it would be challenging to possess all these qualities.	Mostly agree.	I agree with these points.	Yes, very much.	Yes, fully agree.	1) I agree with the most of findings except item 4 (having a sense of Humour). However, I do agree it is better to avoid dull session. In my practice, I would apply different means to engage with the students during the lecture i.e., ask question etc.?
How many of these qualities do you practise in your teaching	8 ~ 9	Most of them though it is up to the students to judge how well.	I have the qualities and always practise all these points, but I feel item 9 (facilitating independent learning) could	Almost all of them.	1,2,4,5,7,8, 10, 11	2) I practise all of it except item 4 in my teaching

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Do you always do them?	yes	I try to.	be a bit tricky sometimes, especially in large classes. I could give them some work to do independently, but it would be hard to check the progress. Over the years, I progressed particularly with the humour and interaction skills. I also have a different/diverse cultural background that can be used in our international setting on some topics, such as cross-culture psychological phenomenon “linguistic relativity”. Being different in fact is my strength rather than limitation.		Yes	3) Always
Do you do them well	yes, to quite a extent.	It is up to the students to judge.		Yes, amongst those qualities listed above, being good at using educational technologies might be less often. What sort of educational technologies do you refer to?	Yes, pretty sure.	4) I think I did well
What other qualities do you have that is missing from the list	no, the list covers all.	Being fair and consistent.		I would like to think so as my MUSE for the taught units is between 1.6 and 1.8.	Being effective on the help. The student become quite excited when they see the problem solved “magically”.	I think the list includes most of it. Can’t think any
Practise some of these qualities with your students and let me know how you get on	I don’t have many students or opportunities to practice them at this moment. However, I believe applying these will enhance the quality of teaching, and very likely receive good feedback from students.	Not much feedback. I only have limited contact with students this week though from MUSE, I got a “Wei made the lecture interesting” comment.		Being Compassion, it might be a facet of Being Supportive. I think this quality is particularly desirable when teaching international students whereby English is not their first language and studying in a UK HE environment for the first time.		6) I might to learn some jokes before I practise it.
Your reflection	As said earlier, it would be hard to apply all these qualities into practical use, depending on a		Unfortunately I am not teaching at the moment, therefore cannot try things out.		I think timely feedback and effective support is more important. Humour/passionate will make the lesson more interesting instead of feeling tired to	

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	lecturer's skills and personality. However, being a good teacher, he/she must be passionate about what he/she's doing, and be supportive and approachable to students. Nowadays, students who pay high tuition have very high demand on the quality of teaching. So, I am not surprised about the outcomes of the survey done by this paper.				taking in so much knowledge in one lesson.	

Week 2

Week 2	Participants watch a short TEDtalk video clip and provide their responses to the thinking points and reflection					
No of participants who completed this activity	6					
Participant names	**Ang**	**Ding**	**Eng**	**Fang**	**Han**	**Gao**
Did you find it interesting	yes, but the first half which talks about the bad habits is not as much as the second part.	A very good and interesting talk.	Very interesting.	Yes.	Really interesting talk about the sound, and how that affects people listening	1 It is an interesting video in terms of how to position yourself in front of audience.

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what made it interesting	the way he speaks, and the way he demonstrates the theory (like those in the Toolbox)	The speaker used his voice well. He also used examples and metaphors.	The seven deadly sins of speaking, the four foundations for effective speaking, and the tips for warming up your vocal before speaking.		The reason for interesting, it discuss something I noticed and but never really think about it	The analysis of human behaviours is accurate. Surely, in our daily life, we should avoid some negative attitudes and act more proactive. The control of the voice is very important such as volume and tone etc. Totally agree with the suggestions.
can you adopt some of this delivery style	Yes. Before listening to this talk, I have applied a few from his Toolbox: pause, body language, hand gestures, volume, prosody, pace. What I am really interesting in trying is the 'register', which seems most of people overlook.	The exercise can also be very helpful. I have been trying to improve my use of voices (e.g. the right visual aid, humour, funny demonstrations).	Yes, his hand gestures, using pauses, humour, using questioning, and pacing your speech.	– body language, hand gestures, the use of the right visual aid at the right time; using pauses; humour; using questioning? I think I have been already using all these. Ihe is a (well-respected) tall white male speaker whilst I am not. I am wondering how this difference can change the speech delivery effectiveness.	Delivery style: I like Pause, leave a moment for studen to think about what I just said	
can you adopt some of his suggestions? Using the correct register; tone? Pace?	Yes, as said earlier, 'register'.	I did not try them for this study, but I received feedback from the past saying my demonstration was funny/interesting.	Using the correct register; tone? Pace? Certainly, I'm aware that I tend to speak more speedily when I'm nervous or excited. I don't use pauses enough in my speech.	All are useful, but nothing new.	I really like the pace of his talking, slow and slow, it seems much easier to get the attention of listeners	
Pick a couple of his	I'd like to give a try in my			In fact, he doesn't	I like the practice to	

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techniques that you have never used before and try them with your students and record your reflection below	lecture which will only start until this Sep. However, I will try applying the 'register' for one to one conversation.			speak too much about what I didn't know about… but a good reminder.	warm up. Because my work is facing computer all the time, siliently of course. Sometime when I start my lesson, I feel my mouth and tongue doesn't work quickly enough like my mind. It is really annoying. I will try that	
Your reflection	yes, but the first half which talks about the bad habits is not as much as the second part.				to be a powerful talker, you don't need to raise your voice and speak louder	

Week 3

Week 3	Participants read and consider 10 useful pointers in a framework for effective teaching practice by the Teaching and Educational Development Institute at The University of Queensland and provide their reflection				
No of participants who completed this activity	5				
Participant names	**Ang**	**Ding**	**Fang**	**Han**	**Gao**
Did you get the opportunity to adopt any of the pointers and suggestions?	I don't have a good opportunity to apply these pointers at this moment.	I have considered and used all of these points in the past.	The pronunciation point was useful.	Yes	Very detailed article. The suggestions are very useful. I was aware of the suggestions from the

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					programme I participated in the past. I apply it regularly during my teaching, tutorial etc. Certainly, the changing of the delivery means will alert students and make them paying more attention.
If you have not, please explain why?	I am not lecturing this semester.				
If you have, did they work? In what way did they work or not work for you?	I did apply these suggestions before. What I feel most powerful or beneficial includes (1) pace: the adjustment/variation of speed of talking/presentation may attract/bring back students' attention; (2) eye contact: instead of paying attention to just a few students, it's better to move eyes around everyone in the class; (3) hand gesture: this could be very useful when diverting students' attention to some important points or emphases; (4) enthusiasm: I believe this is essential to students – lecturers must be enthusiastic to what they deliver/teach or students may lose interests. "Enthusiasm is the key to success!"	Most of them worked well for me. The first point (variety) can be tricky sometimes because some materials need intensive discussion and may be hard to change in the format of delivery. All other points really improved student engagement and feedback. Pace was particularly an issue when I just started teaching (not just for non-native speakers; my British colleagues had the same issue) because there were so many stuff to cover in an hour. But when I became more confident, I cut	I did a lecture combined with talking, discussions, pictures and a short video clips. I also let students write/draw key words in big blank papers and this helped students' engagement. I think that also helped students' attention.	Certainly, these are very valuable key points for teaching, especially eye to eye contact, it will help to get feedback from students that your teaching is interesting or boring. Pacing is also very important, leave enough time for student to think and digest the knowledge you delivered My teaching is on Monday, I have already finished my task this week	

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		down the materials (thus slowed the speed) and made the lectures easier to follow.			

Week 4

Week 4	Participants consider a resource on 'Student feedback: Responding Constructively' by The University College Dublin and provide their reflection to the thinking points	
No of participants who completed this activity	2	
Participant names	**Ang**	**Ding**
Have you ever received student comments in the similar nature to the examples given in the table above?	not really…	I never received feedback irrelevant to the teaching and learning activities. And I never received very harsh comments.
How did the comments make you feel?	interesting…	Some negative feedbacks made a bit nervous, and good ones were very encouraging
Can you make use of the table above in dealing with your own student feedback?	maybe, if similar comments come up…	I think this is a good structure to analyse comments: affective + productive. I can use it in the future.
Did you find the exercise useful?	a bit… it does help reflect how we may respond to students' comments.	Yes the mock exercise (thinking about these comments as an outsider) was helpful.
Yes - why?		

Week 5

Week 5	Participants read about students' likes and dislikes of their professors' PowerPoint presentations from a survey conducted in Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania and a TED blog post listing 10 useful tips on how to make better slides to better communicate ideas and provide their reflection to the thinking points	
No of participants who completed this activity	2	
Participant names	**Ang**	**Ding**
Have you ever reflected on the effectiveness of your PowerPoint	Yes, I do, and I always think it's important to get the ppt right.	Yes I always think about and then reflect upon the effectiveness of my slides.

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slides in communicating your ideas to your students?		
Is this something you consider to be important in your lessons?	yes.	Appropriate visual aids, especially the usage of videos, were suggested to me.
Do you agree with the tips in the TED blog post?	yes.	I agree to most of them except Big picture 1. It may work well for social media or production advertising events, but won't work well for scientific lectures and talks. Key facts and figures should always be present on the slides. Also, I use the processing of writing slides as a way to sort my ideas. It means I think about my lecture contents and slides at the same time. There is no need to think about the slides last.
Are you open to trying out some of the tips from the blog post and incorporate them in your PowerPoint presentation slides?	yes. For example, do not use autoplay for audio.	I particularly like the ideas of panning large landscape pictures and masking. Will try them. Reproducing simple charts and graphs may also be tried in certain situations.
If not, can you explain why?		

Week 6

Week 6	Participants read points from a compendium on 'Using peer-observation to enhance teaching' produced by Leeds Metropolitan University and then observe a lesson online before responding to the thinking points with their reflections	
No of participants who completed this activity	2	
Participant names	**Ang**	**Ding**
What have you observed? Are there prominent points from the observation?	The lecturer seems not quite exciting about his delivery. Overall, the presentation is a bit boring – the language skills play quite a big role.	The lecture was about using model animals in neurological research. The English ability of the lecturer could be improved. Also, the lecturer sometimes stayed on a single slide for too long.
Have you learned any new techniques or tricks you can adopt in the classroom yourselves?	The ppt is not bad – using pictures or images helps a lot.	No.
What would you avoid doing?	too much/long pause – should be more fluent in terms of delivery too 'shaking' – should be standing more firmly, and pay attention to eye contact.	I would avoid talking through the slides in such as dry manner with a monotonous speed throughout. I would avoid staying on a single slide for too long, or talking about studies without any visual aid. Others can be found below.
Did you think that was a good or bad lesson?	a boring lesson, I would say.	Generally the lecture was good. But it should provide more information (e.g. the key references, the key points,

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		graphs from publications and other sources), and it could be improved on visual aids and the language. Some funny visual aids can also be used as it apparently is a lecture for starting undergraduates.
Why?	As said earlier, the overall quality of delivery is not up to standard.	The lecture used a very traditional teaching technique (lecturers go through materials and students take notes), and did not benefit from the modern teaching research. Many types of materials, such as bullet points, funny cartoons, figures and results from publications, online videos, could be used but were not. With a blackboard available, there were also opportunities to engage students with interactive activities (but was not used in the lecture). I think a short online survey can also help by the end of the lecture.

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