Chapter 3
Knowing Myself as a Teacher: Transforming the Place of Rurality in Scottish Initial Teacher Education

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Abstract This chapter challenges the view that preparation for rural teaching is a specialist provision. We explore rural teaching as a meaningful place-mediated identity through analysis of a one-year Initial Teacher Education programme, delivered partly through a digital infrastructure. The programme is framed around a trajectory of learning and experience that supports the development of teacher agency, and we use constructs of Activity Theory and place to analyse student engagement with the programme. We reflect on the ways collaborative programme activities and relationships empower students to work out their emerging teacher identity as it is shaped by their experiences of living in a rural area while becoming a teacher. In particular, we focus on how existing rural identities in the student community generate and use the resource of collaborative intentionality capital to facilitate the development of their teacher identities. From this we conclude that programmes preparing students for entry to the teaching profession should work with rural teaching as a place-attentive, self-expressive and embodied identity, and that rurality is important for emerging teachers as a shaping influence within their professional community. We present this as a critical pedagogy of place, nurturing the emergence of a collaborative, agentive teacher self, situated willingly as a school community inhabitant.

Keywords Activity Theory · Ecological agency · Initial teacher education · Place-attentive

3.1 Rurality in Scottish Initial Teacher Education

> I am beginning to understand myself as a teacher and I can't wait to try that out in school.

The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is the only Scottish University to offer Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in rural regions of Scotland. UHI is locally based in nine colleges and four research centres across the north and west of Scotland and uses an established digital infrastructure to connect virtually between and

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across all of the study locations. ITE is strategically important to UHI and to the geographical, cultural and linguistic communities it serves. The University offers one-year postgraduate programmes for primary and secondary teaching, in English and Gaelic Medium, in partnership with local education authorities. The provision of ITE across the region provides local access to teaching qualifications and newly qualified teachers for local schools, meeting the needs of individuals and communities. This enacts through ITE the mission statement of the University, "To have a transformational impact on the prospects of our region, its economy, its people and its communities" (University of the Highlands and Islands, 2015, p. 8).

Rurality is defined by the Scottish Government (2018a) through an *Urban/Rural Classification* based on population and accessibility to urban centres. As experienced in other countries (e.g. Roberts & Green, 2013; Greenough & Nelson, 2015), the Scottish policymakers define rural as *not urban* and through distance from urban centres. This classifies the regions supported by UHI on the continuum from "very remote rural, with a drive time of over 60 min to a settlement of 10,000 or more" to "other urban areas, as settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people" (Scottish Government, 2018a, p. 2). In a physically small country like Scotland, it is the distribution of population rather than distance that is a key part of the definition of rurality. UHI serves a region that covers 58% of the Scottish landmass but has only 17% of the population (Scottish Government, 2018b). The same *Urban/Rural Classification* is used to determine which schools in Scotland are rural. This is identification was established by an *Act of the Scottish Parliament* in 2010 in order to protect rural schools from closure (Redford, 2013). The legislation, and the *Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education* in 2011 that proceeded it, were introduced in response to community action to retain schools and to address national difficulties in recruiting teachers to posts in rural schools. The Commission report to Government in 2013 included the following recommendation in relation to ITE, "Local authorities, the Scottish Government, teaching institutions and trade unions should work together to explore innovative solutions to reduce the barriers to teaching in remote areas" (Scottish Government, 2013, p. 7).

In Scotland, schools, teachers and ITE are managed through local and central government, with all teachers required to pass a recognised initial teaching qualification, undergraduate or postgraduate, and register with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). There is a two-part qualification structure with graduates evidencing the Standard for Provisional Registration (SPR) by the end of their university programme and then the Standard for Full Registration (SFR) at the end of an induction year, their first year of employment as a teacher (GTCS, 2012). The Scottish Government oversees the number of student enrolments in ITE programmes each year and the recommendation above led to an expansion of Teacher Education provision for rural areas. While the 2013 Commission report reiterated the *Urban/Rural* divide in Scottish education policy, it also provided an opportunity for UHI to introduce ITE programmes that were designed to work with the rural and local place of the University. UHI first offered a one-year *Professional Graduate Diploma in Education* (PGDE) for Primary teaching in the 2013–14 academic year. This chapter will focus on the 2018–2019 Primary programme.

All ITE programmes offered by Scottish Universities must be GTCS accredited (GTCS, 2019) to enable programme graduates to progress into their induction year post. At the time of writing, we are working towards the first GTCS reaccreditation of our programmes and engaging with a new, national self-evaluation structure for ITE (Education Scotland, 2019). In both situations we are struggling to find a vocabulary to answer set questions about our digitally connected model in a way that demonstrates what we know ourselves to be: a successful rural ITE provider whose graduates are teaching in schools across all of our partner local authorities and beyond. We use this chapter to evidence rural ITE provision as a "dwelt-in place" (Mannion et al., 2013, p. 794) and to claim our deepened understanding of the foundational significance of place (as rural, local and digitally connected) in our Scottish PGDE Primary programme as transformative.

3.2 How Rural and Local Place Informs the PDGE Primary Programme

The PGDE Primary programme is offered in nine of the University colleges and two learning centres, each based in a village, small town or one city in the region (University of the Highlands and Islands, 2019), and in partnership with each local education authority as school placement (or practicum) hosts. The majority of our students are recruited from, and live near, one of the University colleges, with some who have chosen to move to that area. In offering a programme and placements locally, our PGDE students are, in the main, intrinsically motivated to become a teacher *here,* ether capitalising on our programme as the means to study within an established local home life, or accepting the requirement to have an address in the vicinity of the college they enrol with for the duration of the programme.

They are supported and taught by a tutor in that college, who also observes them on school placement. Each college cohort has a minimum of three students and connects into a programme cohort and wider tutor team via a blend of digital tools already constituent to the university infrastructure. Therefore, as in UHI as an institution, each annual iteration of the PGDE community—students, tutors and host schools—can be situated somewhere on the continuum of rurality framed in Scottish policy (Scottish Government, 2013, 2017). Thomson (2011) allows this rurality to be viewed as a multivocal embodiment of a foundational identity, while Kerkham and Comber (2013) allow for an ontological conceptualisation of our local and digitally connected model through the lens of place. The writers are part of that rurality, living and teaching in two different regions serviced by UHI. The first author, Morag Redford, joined UHI in 2014 to lead the development of ITE, a role which allows her to retain a narrative overview (Kearney, 2003) of the programme. The second author, Lindsay Nicol, has worked with the PGDE Primary programme from the start, and now enacts the programme leadership role for UHI, while teaching locally and digitally as a tutor.

As the University of, for and in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland (University of the Highlands and Islands, 2015), and as an ITE provider working through partnerships with rural local education authorities, we are inherently rural, located *here,* not *there.* This means our understanding of rural lies with our already "rural lives" (Howley et al., 2005, p. 1) and for all of us in the programme community in any given year, this is "real" not imagined (Green & Reid, 2014, p. 28). Cloke (2006, p. 18) defines rural as encompassing "space, place and society", and we utilise a digital dimension (Hibbert, 2013) to socially construct and connect spaces that support the development of individual teacher identity across UHI and in what education policy defines as rural schools (Scottish Government, 2017). In this understanding we acknowledge the work of Gruenwald (2003) in raising awareness of place conscious education and recognise that the programme works with a pedagogy of place (Wattchow & Brown, 2011; Mannion et al., 2013). As this chapter will show, the students, tutors and programme exemplify Heidegger's idea of relationship to place by "dwelling authentically in place" and "taking responsibility for place" (Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p. 54).

In this chapter we used the theoretical framework of Engestrom's (2008) Activity Theory to analyse the structure and integrated activities of the PGDE Primary programme in 2018–2019, to illustrate how our programme deploys its continuum of rural identities as a means to enable collaborative student engagement in ITE. The chapter demonstrates that our students draw on their concurrent lived experiences of being rural and becoming a teacher, generating their own place-attentive (White & Reid, 2008) embodiment of the teacher identity expressed in the SPR (GTCS, 2012). We conclude that our UHI PGDE programme frames rural teaching as a meaningful place-mediated identity, rather than as a specialist material provision and resists the Scottish policy construct for rurality as "distance from an urban centre" (Scottish Government, 2017: 4).

We present our analysis from the perspective of an individual engaged student teacher in the following steps

- Establishing the metaphor used with students of journeying on an agency trajectory (Priestley et al., 2015) into the Scottish teaching profession.
- Construing our programme ethos of teacher identity construction and participation through Engestrom's (2008) Activity Theory as the collaborative working out of a possible self (Markus & Nurius, 1986).
- Exploring programme activities as local, digital and rural through Wildy's (2010) detailed rural framework of place, system, people and self.
- Critically reflecting on a systemic analysis of collaborative activity within PGDE to deepen our understanding of how the rural place of students informs their identity as a teacher.

3.3 Establishing the PGDE Primary Programme as a Trajectory into Teaching

The structural design of the PGDE programme is based on the theoretical constructs of the ecological framework for teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2015). This framework emphasises agency as an emergent quality of dynamic engagement with iterative, projective and practical-evaluative contexts as shown in Fig. 3.1.

The students enter the programme with their life and professional history (Iterational) which establishes their starting point as an emergent teacher. The programme content and contexts address the cultural, structural and material aspects of becoming a teacher (Practical-evaluative) and enable each student to enact the individual agency that mediates their emergent understanding of what it means to be a teacher. This supports the students as they work towards a short-term aim of passing the PGDE programme at the end of the academic year, and the majority towards the longer-term aim of employment as a teacher in their locality (Projective). Students are introduced to the ecological framework (Fig. 3.1) at the beginning of the programme and are actively encouraged to develop their capacity, "to act reflexively … to effect change" (Priestley, 2011 p. 16), to act with moral purpose (Begley, 2010) and to engage directly with the SPR (GTCS, 2012) as they construct their own professional identity. The programme is taught and experienced cumulatively in college and school blocks, with 18 weeks of study in college interspersed with four blocks of school

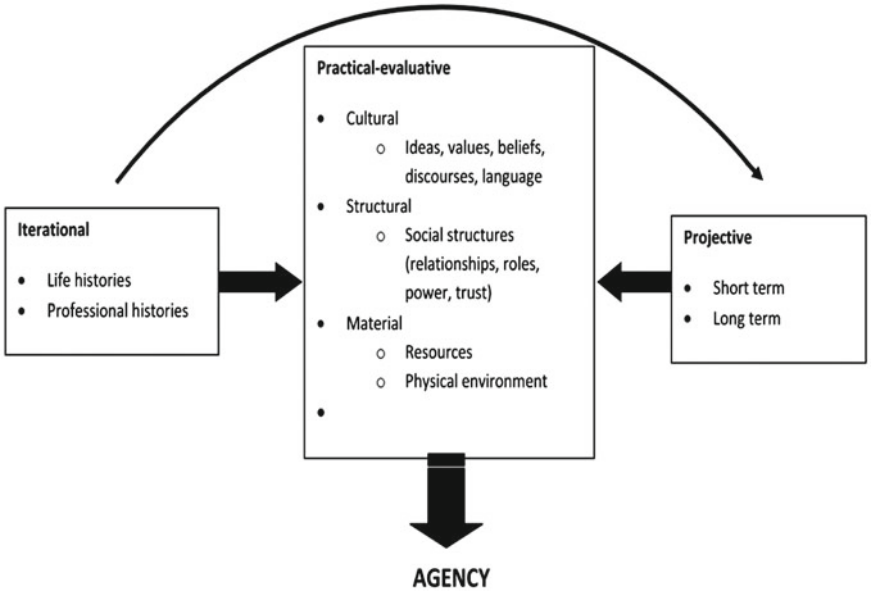

Fig. 3.1 Ecological framework for teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2015, p. 30)

placement providing 19 weeks of experience in up to three schools. These alternate periods of time structure a student journey of repeating short-term cycles of the ecological framework (Fig. 3.1) as interim opportunities for assessing progress towards meeting the SPR (GTCS, 2012).

Programme engagement in a typical college week uses the University technologies to establish different peer groupings, enabling participation through synchronous and asynchronous digital tools from college, online or personal (home) learning spaces. The PGDE community of students and tutors use the digital interface to cross the spatial and temporal boundaries of each college and create a virtually connected partnership of local groups, founded on individual starting identities. Each of these peer groups is a different collection of students, sometimes located in the same college, sometimes between colleges, all of them, "located somewhere" on our rural continuum, "but nowhere in particular" (Dee, 2018, p. 6).

Coker (2017) examined the student teacher agency development in the college-based weeks on the programme and characterised this trajectory as "inward" (p. 61), guiding the individual from a peripheral position in teaching through registration into the profession. Through independent study, collaborative dialogue within and between college-based groups, and structured discussions with school-based mentor teachers and placement-supporting tutors, students are required to collate and self-report evidence of their journey through an e-portfolio, presentations and written assignments. In their final placement they take full responsibility, as a member of the school staff team, for pupil learning and well-being over ten consecutive days. The programme design as a journey supports each student teacher to acquire individual knowledge and skills, but also to foster and develop collaborative working practices, which are a key policy focus of Scottish education (GTCS, n.d).

3.4 Construing the PGDE Primary Programme Using Activity Theory

Students are selected onto the PGDE Primary programme as *possible teachers*, having demonstrated the potential to engage in a collaborative pursuit of this future *local-self-as-teacher* that they, and all programme participants, can only initially envisage in very generic terms. This fits well with Engestrom's (2008) construct of a "runaway object" (p. 227), which he proposes embeds "interagency" (p. 225), as the capacity and motivation for work across all contextual interfaces. These alignments enabled us to engage with his concept of "knotworking" (p. 196), where collaboration is "a partially improvised orchestration" (p. 194) with an evolving "locus of initiative" (p. 194). Our programme requires collaboration to be increasingly student-led and involves different groupings and varying modes of participation, both locally based and digitally connected. Engestrom, (2008, p. 194) refers to this as an "unstable knot", worthy of being analysed to understand the contributory activities.

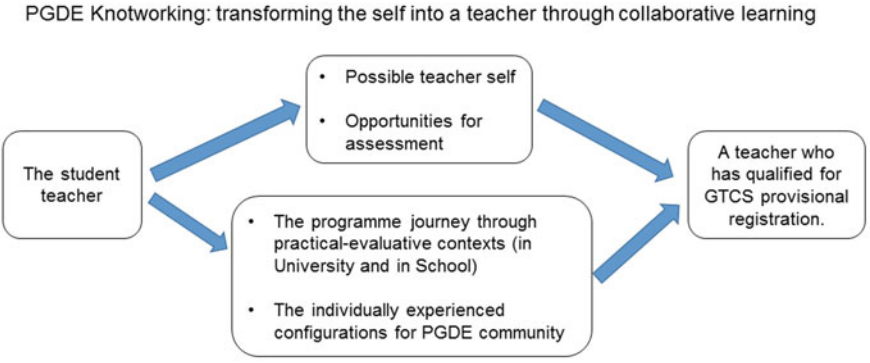

Fig. 3.2 PGDE primary programme activities as agentive identity construction

We used these definitions to characterise how programme engagement operates as student teachers gradually take ownership of the responsibilities of being a teacher by collaborating through learning activities with different programme actors. Engestrom (2008) locates knotworking within these changing "co-configurations" (p. 195) as gathering necessary intelligence from those who are impacted by the outcome of the work being undertaken. He also models that we can create a framework for analysing programme activity by construing it as "systemic activity" (Engestrom, 2008, p. 27) for becoming a teacher. We illustrate this systemic provision of our inherent rural multivocality (Thomson 2011) and the ecological contexts for achievement (Priestley et al., 2015) as mediating resources to draw on, in Fig. 3.2.

3.5 Exploring Programme Activity as Local, Digital and Rural

To undertake our analysis of programme functionality and progress towards demonstrating that our student teachers are transformed into place-attentive selves (White and Reid 2008), we worked from the starting points of place established in Figs. 3.1 and 3.2 above. We explored the unstable continuum of rural identities that is available to students across the University and the programme through:

- Our system of alternating practical-evaluative contexts in college and school as salient co-configurations of local.
- The affordances for collaborative relationships.
- Assessment artefacts requiring students' expression of their current possible self.

This encouraged us to draw on Wildy's (2010) detailed consideration of rural encompassing place, people, system, and self to allow us to understand the programme actors and the activities contributing to identity construction as collaborative and at least partly facilitated by our integral digital connectivity.

In a focus on system (Wildy, 2010), our programme journey metaphor alternates the provision of Practical-evaluative contexts in college and in school contexts as a systemic cycle of agency-generating activity which shapes, and is shaped by, each individual student's iterative and projective identities as emergent (Fig. 3.1). The necessity for us, as for any Scottish PGDE programme, to embed at least ninety days of placement experience (GTCS, 2019), establishes contextual boundaries between University and placement schools which are local to the student, as organisers for becoming a teacher. Student engagement through digital tools in a typical college week, allows for participation in and from physical and virtual learning spaces. At any point in their journey, the student is positioned within a collaborative professional community of student teachers, or teachers in school, with a mandate to evolve their current teacher identity based on the situated knowledge and learning made possible. This interplay is conceptualised for Teacher Education by Knight et al. (2018) as being attentive to their current place.

Engestrom (2008) construes the agency developed as "interagency" (p. 225), an intrinsically motivated capacity to transition between available learning spaces. Our students achieve this by alternately transcending the spatial and temporal boundaries for studying *here* by digital means, and grounding themselves in role enactment and identity evidence-gathering in schools. By working with partner staff in schools and across the University PGDE tutor team, the students access a multivocal continuum of rural identities throughout the programme, which provides each of them with a meaningful co-configuration of local. We effect a trajectory of interagency development orientated inwards (Coker, 2017) through the programme ethos of becoming a teacher who meets the SPR (GTCS, 2012). The shifting positionality and community configurations render such interagency as inherently collaborative (Engestrom, 2008) and place conscious (Gruenwald, 2003). This is further nuanced by the time-bounded liminality of each Practical-evaluative block of place-based identity work (Green & Reid, 2014).

For the developing interagency to be individually transformative, it must be mediated by dialogue-based relationships (Lipponen & Kumpulainen, 2011). The programme provides such dialogue by focussing the relationships onto a narration of the emerging self (Lumby & English, 2009) to achieve a sense of coherence and worth. This is supported by the range of local influences we configure as students articulate their developing sense of self as teacher *here.* The people (Wildy, 2010) providing these influences, validate the individual, which is central to constructive formative self-assessment (Coker, 2017).

Two key programme relationships which facilitate identity rehearsal as a co-construction of meaning and sense of self (Thomson, 2011) are the placement mentor–student relationship and the college seminar peer-group relationships. It is through engagement with mentor teachers and seminar tutors that we build a capacity for collaboration during each phase of the PGDE journey and enable students to inhabit our expectations for becoming a teacher. Over the course of the three school placements comprising the professional practicum component, each student works closely with four volunteer mentors. This affords access to place-based (Green & Reid, 2014) expertise, and to pupils and classrooms as constituents and mediators

of *teacher-identity-being-locally-enacted*. As their role responsibility builds over the year, from taking individual discrete lessons, to acting-in-lieu of the mentor teacher to showcase their teaching as meeting the SPR (GTCS, 2012), the situated intelligence needed by students for role efficacy increases. As role model and performance observer, the mentor is the key enabler for rehearsal, through debrief and feedforward, as dialogue in school with the student effectively generates a script (Lumby & English, 2009) for how to teach *here.*

In the college-based weeks, programme activity is organised thematically, with an engagement structure which builds pedagogic content knowledge and orientates it towards individual experiential use during the next placement. Tutors facilitate weekly seminar discussion between student peers, within groups engineered as cross-university, via a synchronous digital tool. This gives students access to examples of emerging possible teacher selves (Fig. 3.2), and a tutor with PGDE journeying expertise who works with an awareness of place across the programme. It facilitates practice focussed dialogue between multi-located peers as "site-specific work for what can be recognised as site-specific lives" (Dee, 2018, p. 12). Engestrom (2008) allows for this digitally engineered social context to creatively co-construct a meaning for each student as *the teacher I know I am becoming*, which is inherently multiply influenced by the collective experience and knowledge base.

The programme engages the students in discussing how they understand their emerging teacher self through their local identity. They then collaborate digitally as a group of emergent teachers to learn about different situated teacher identities. Being "nowhere in particular, but somewhere" (Dee, 2018, p. 6) activates Knight et al.'s (2018) intentional noticing as an imperative to rework self by an "allegiance to perspectives and practices" (Dinkelman, 2011, p. 321, in Knight et al. p. 10) that feel most immediately salient. The structured journey of alternating college and school blocks keeps the next enactment of that emerging teacher self in clearer focus than the end of PGDE teacher-self. Engestrom (2008) models that the interagency will similarly be intelligent and adapting.

To focus our analysis through self (Wildy, 2010), we then worked with two central programme artefacts, the PGDE residential and the student e-portfolio. These artefacts value local enactment as an expression of the emergent teacher self, and so contribute to the knotworking (Engestrom, 2008) to ground it. In the first of these artefacts, the PGDE residential, the whole PGDE community of staff and students meet in person on two occasions in the programme year, staying together away from home for three days off-campus in the rural Scottish Highlands. In Induction week, we build and enculture our community through social and participatory activities which mirror indicative programme engagement, establishing relationships within groups who will work together in our digital learning environment. At the end of the college block just prior to the final placement, we return to the same location for student-led learning planned with particular habitat affordances in mind. This culminates in an assessed collaborative group presentation, framing a creative professional response to experiential learning outdoors, as a justification for, and a commitment to a place-based (Green & Reid, 2014) disposition. Such activity aligns fully with

Wattchow and Brown's (2011) signposts for a pedagogy of place, and both residential experiences centre on locating the self, intentionally and for positive affect, on the journey as it is currently understood.

Engestrom (2008) allows for activity system artefacts to be used in different ways and our programme orientates the use of residentials by the student towards making sense of the *teacher-I-am-becoming.* The first builds vocal capacity as participatory presence, while the second legitimises the teacher self presented as a hybrid of leader, learner and performance artist. Each generate confidence to express that self from within the multi-local "patterned ground" (Dee, 2018, p. 1) we uniquely call into being as this year's PGDE community. Each serve to affirm an already credible possible future self (Markus & Nurius, 1986), by affording a coherence from being expressive together, which Mabey (2018) suggests moves the self beyond its own envisioning.

The second artefact we used to examine the dimension of self is an e-portfolio the student completes throughout the programme to practise a narration of *self-as-local-actor* in which the seminar tutor becomes their invited audience. Lipponen & Kumpulainen (2011) show that this digitally interactive space is potentially transformative, when owned by the student as primary "accountable author" (p. 813), and while distributing the agency work of becoming a teacher. In presenting examples from practice and reflection in their own words as episodes in the "flow of situated practice" (Lipponen & Kumpulainen, 2011, p. 818) they experience on placement, students prompt dialogue with the tutor to interpret them as a situation of self.

3.6 Deepening Our Understanding of How Rural Place Informs Teacher Identity for Our Students

Our exploratory analysis of local, digital and rural demonstrated that students on the programme typically participate as collaborative agents within an evolving professional community. In order to understand rurality as a place dimension of the programme, we returned to Engestrom's (2008) studies of systemic activity and his concept of "collaborative intentionality capital" (p. 200). Collaborative intentionality capital (CIC) is generated in collaborative activity where the intentionality for success is collective and agency is distributed across organisational interfaces, as in our ecological and inward trajectory knotworking model (Engestrom, 2008). Acknowledging the value in simplifying the complex knot of variables involved for the purposes of critical analysis, we followed the advice offered by Yamagata-Lynch (2010) to identify microcosmic systems of activity within the boundaries of very specific settings. The analysis could then focus on the impact on constituents, or tensions, from any contradictions introduced by changes in the bounded system. The contradictions provided a starting point for working with our expectation that the rural continuum of each PGDE community functions as a generator of CIC as a critical place-attentive resource.

To analyse the use of existing student rural identity we brought together three bounded activity sets: the work by seminar groups at the second Residential, the mentor–student relationship over all three school placements, and student work from the final placement which is self-reported in the e-portfolio at the point of completing the programme. Table 3.1 shows the contradictions involved from introducing the following changes:

- Being digitally connected
- The rural continuum as a given
- Work happening ecologically

Two further contradictions emerged from considering our ontology overall in terms of the raison d'etre for the programme as place-based in a rural setting: that we are not only a provider for entrants who already live in one of our rural areas, or for those who wish to teach here as an a priori decision; and that the journey is mediated holistically by the individual students surrounding personal ecology, by influences whose negative affect cannot necessarily be fully mitigated by people in the programme. These are shown in Table 3.2.

The reality of our integrated programme is that activities do not happen discretely and the impact from contradictions becomes an overall programme dynamic, experienced by anyone in the programme albeit to a different extent, and in a different way. So, we also reflected on the tensions commonly felt by students which centre on accountability, identity, presence and role efficacy as potential system contradictions.

Table 3.1 Contradictions from changes to the use of our rural continuum as a place-attentive resource

Bounded activity set	Contradictions
Seminar Groups presenting at Residential 2	• Participation is not mediated by the usual technology • Group function is visible to all • Group work is centred on response to, and is subject to, a particular rural habitat • Multivocal dialogue has to reach consensus
Identity work with mentors in each of the three school placements (as an inward trajectory of agency)	• Digital connectivity is not needed • Each placement configures "rural teacher" as a short-term situated enactment (a continuum location) • Mentor relationships are not a match to current trajectory location • Each experience of trajectory is different
Final placement work	• Embodiment of self (as evidence) is needed and becomes subject to a sufficiency judgement by others • Teaching in this place has to become teaching in any place • Achievement has a national construct (not an ecological one)

Table 3.2 Contradictions from our place-based setting as rural

The programme as a setting	Contradictions
Becoming a teacher through the UHI PGDE	• *Being rural* is not part of what motivates
Staying on the intended journey	• The outcome of *becoming a teacher* (the trajectory as designed) is not solely a programme construct

Our analysis of systems of activity (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010) revealed that:

- CIC is available as a resource in the programme, and can be further generated in situ, by place-based activities.
- CIC is an emergent dynamic of relationship and individual affordance sometimes subject to conditions set by others.
- Programme-based outcomes confront individual actors with a place conscious sense of self as a collaborative agent and an explicit power differential positions the student as responsible for enough CIC.
- Place-based activity which affords socialising in a professional context supports CIC continuing beyond the programme.
- The use of, and requirement for, CIC surfaces the affective and cultural dimensions of how the programme is currently configured as a PGDE community.

Engestrom (2008) models production, distribution and exchange as constituent work processes which contribute to the impact of CIC in systemic activity. He shows that we can claim to have resolved the tensions resulting from these contradictions if the CIC generated in programme activity facilitates our object work of producing teachers in, of and for, our rural localities. To arrive at a deeper understanding of these CIC processes as contributory to place-attentiveness as a programme resource, we considered the use of CIC, how it involved other people and the flow of CIC. This analysis demonstrated that:

- The net effect of agentive collaboration within programme relationships for the student is empowering.
- These relationships safeguard the student journeying as an inward (transformative) trajectory to teaching (Coker, 2017).
- The rural continuum is kept available in all programme contexts.

White and Reid (2008) model that empowerment comes from being admitted into the school as a participant in the life there and being enabled to draw on the insider expertise as a capacity for being successfully place-based in future. We promote this by according the school-based actors foundational respect as consciousness expanders and allowing the students to rehearse what it takes to join in a school community as a successful collaborative agent. Sometimes an individual journey has to be extended into extra placement, but so far in our six-year history, all who stay on the journey have been sufficiently empowered to complete it. Engestrom (2008) aligns this with successful improvisation, worked out collectively through interagency, and the PGDE frames the student as the locus for the initiative and

responsibility needed. In the programme, the seminars and e-portfolio foreground the sense of self the student chooses to present to the tutor and seminar peers, and their skill in articulating that. These supporting programme actors work with an enacted teacher self at face value, but also develop the capacity for individuals to ground themselves by being part of the collective dynamic for engaging with an increasing experiential evidence base within the SPR (GTCS, 2012). As current and future members of the professional teaching community, themselves influenced by real teaching in predominantly rural schools, they offer the intelligence to be "adaptive" which Engestrom, (2008, p. 195) models as a key knotworking resource. The activity system outcome of the end-of-programme teacher accepted into the profession, embeds student motivation in that envisaged possible self, and it is the affective dimension of community participation that has the most impact on this.

Our analysis revealed the salience of the university and programme digital infrastructure as affording access to rehearsal opportunities (journeying expertise) and building a capacity to have and use a professional voice. By varying the configurations and purposes of connecting virtually with other UHI programme actors on our rural continuum, different rural influences are accessible by the transcending self without particular reference to local or school contexts as scripts to effect identity rehearsal (Thomson, 2011). Digital tools render voices temporarily disembodied and location ambiguous, which foregrounds individual style and creative authorship (Thomson, 2011), but also requires a deepening commitment to individual development, as in Lumby and English's (2009) communicative performance. The programme assessments are timed and designed as integral to the journey, but the logic and relevance will only be perceived in hindsight once the intended capacity building has taken place. Our activity systems thinking designs this as Engestrom's (2008, p. 129) "how, why and where to" artefactual uses, allowing students to merge all the intelligence they have gathered collaboratively to date as an expressed construct for their current teacher self. Professional autonomy and confidence are built discursively (Ajayi, 2013) through programme engagement with many voices. As the group assignment at the second Residential reveals each year, this can also afford very creative expression of what we have come to characterise as the community spirit of the PGDE. It is a permission for self-expression as a rural disposition shaped by collaboration with other members.

As a programme located in rural Scotland, we include two days each week of individual study as spaces to personalise work on the possible teacher self and to enable realistic grounding within ongoing personal lives. While the net effect is empowering enough, we have to accept that by standardising efficacy through an overall orientation towards meeting the SPR, we have to let the student control their own programme of study, and it will not be transformative in every case. Engestrom (2008) models it as potentially "emancipatory" (p. 227), but students report it as feeling inconsistent at times. A relational trajectory, construed as we have shown in Fig. 3.1 as multiply mediated, can only ever be effected by agency as a negotiated communicative engagement (Engestrom, 2008) and it is the student as future *teacher-as-collaborative-agent* who has to own the logic for how best to use our infrastructure affordances. This is a collective intention for empowerment which we safeguard on

our part as keeping a rural continuum and CIC available in all contexts, but it imposes a dynamic of accountability which positions each student as the individual author for any use of it to story themselves (Lipponen & Kumpulainen, 2011).

There is a discernible shift in the flow patterns of CIC as the programme year unfolds and students establish their own networks of support from peers, mentors and school-based colleagues. This analysis highlighted mentor willingness as pivotal to trajectory and empowerment. Positive affect for students came from sensing fit and acceptance: feeling like a teacher and being observed as a credible embodiment of that in the particular placement school. Lumby & English (2009) discuss identity fit in terms of "having learned the script" (p. 107) and presenting themselves as expected, so individuals choose an enactment that is contextually relevant. This emerged as a delicate balance between the place-based emphasis on the context as local (expected by mentors), and the shorter term place conscious sense making of inhabiting an aspirational possible self in situ (expected for this stage of the programme journey). Where place-based activities also allowed for socialising, role boundaries became less reified as *for the programme* and successful students established a professional network they can continue to access. However, when the rural context blurs the boundaries between school and community (Eppley, 2015) uncertainty is introduced, most notably when there is doubt about a student's current progress or envisaged suitability. This connects overall positive affect with valued intelligence and meaningful progress, and a proactive placing of self (Markus & Nurius, 1986) within the available rural community.

3.7 Knowing Myself as a Teacher: Transforming the Place of Rurality in Scottish Initial Teacher Education

The analysis revealed, perhaps surprisingly, that the majority of the tensions that we have resolved are not primarily about rurality at all, because we are always rural without actually trying to be or needing to self-identify as such within the liminal timeframe of the programme journey. Rurality only became salient when:

- We explicitly emphasised ourselves as a specific configured local place.
- Individual students joined the programme without an *iterative* or *projective* (Fig. 3.1) driver for their student teacher identity as rural and so only made *practical-evaluative* (Fig. 3.1) use of this year's continuum of rural identities to shape their teacher identity enough to complete the programme.
- The situated and shaping expectations for agentive participation in identity construction introduced negative affect.

In the wider contested landscapes of rural teaching as a potential deficit construct for specialised content or practicum contexts, we concluded that we voice an ecological salience for rurality as a pedagogy for engagement on individual terms, and

that this engagement is with a continuum of lived experiences through an intrinsically motivated attention to place which is meaningful to the possible self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). This is a place-attentive (White & Reid, 2008) construct which is a blend of place-based (Green & Reid, 2014) and place conscious (Gruenwald, 2003) identity work orchestrated by programme affordances. However, crucially, it is led and gradually owned entirely by the student through knotworking (Engestrom, 2008), as an accountable and collaborative programme role. Our conclusion is that the programme does facilitate individual knotworking with a "*runaway" teacher identity* (Engestrom, 2008, p. 227) because we work with rural teaching as a situated, place-attentive (White & Reid, 2008) and self-expressed identity.

We contend that an ITE programme should work with rurality as a practical-evaluative (Fig. 3.1) context, because students do not yet know the projective context where they will be employed as a teacher. Part of the remit in any ITE programme is to build capacity, to establish teacher identity through becoming rather than of being. This needs to be transformative over the agreed programme timeframe, as a liminal period for working on the current self with the projected *self-as-teacher* in mind, but not yet as a placed enactment. Where rurality is a characteristic of that practical-evaluative (Fig. 3.1) context, it must effect the transformation of foundational identity to teacher identity, as in Mannion et al.'s (2013) collaborative "learning to dwell or inhabit places differently" (p. 804). Our programme offers rurality ontologically as a multivocal (Thomson, 2011) embodiment, a continuum of lived experiences, which can shape the consciousness of the emerging teacher self and model fit for purpose as an attribution by those in professional relationships with future teacher in role. The salience for rurality belongs within those interactions. This is offering Knight et al.'s (2018) deep engagement in *being a rural teacher* as an integral part of the present lived reality of being a student teacher, respecting it as a situated identity: expressed by the individual in relation to the other members who matter to them, as they will be the key influences who shape who they need to be and actually can be. This acknowledges the community for and in which the teacher role will be enacted, as integral to the possible teacher self (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Goodnough & Mulcahy, 2011).

Rurality derives its salience from the everyday lives of the inhabitants of any rural place. The meaning for any embodiment of that, including being a teacher, can only be negotiated as a live dynamic of being in role, in situ, and it will be expressed as an informed and achieved animation of the individual (Lumby & English, 2009). As such, we contend that the ethical stance on any mandated use of rurality for ITE, is one which accommodates the full community of voices as intrinsically valid influences (Anderson & Lonsdale, 2014). We resist the meaning for rurality as distance from urban in Scottish policy (Scottish Government, 2017), and challenge policymakers to rethink the measures on which they define rural as disadvantaged (Roberts & Green, 2013). We question any pre-determination or quantifying of rurality as a normative construct to characterise rural teacher or rural school or rural community as a bigger picture to feel positive about (White & Reid, 2008). However, we embrace White and Reid's (2008) conceptualisation of attention to place and the use of "place conscious pedagogies" (p. 2) to develop place conscious teachers. Like Eppley (2015)

we question the value of a short-term ITE placement in a rural school driven by a mandate to prepare for subsequent employment in a different rural school, or de-contextualised engagement in university with rural content and discourses, but we draw a different overall conclusion. We acknowledge that material provision has learning value but contend that to be transformative, it must nurture the possible future teacher self as a projective individual life being lived, as both personal and professional. To do this we advocate that ITE provision should acknowledge rurality as inherently place-attentive, rural teaching as inherently school mediated, and *being a rural teacher* as an individual community shaped embodiment.

We frame this for consideration by others through Engestrom's (2008) "mental landscape" and "material infrastructure" (p. 229) as:

- A commitment to individual student teacher ecological transformation and a respect for any embodiment of teacher as inherently multivocal (a knowing of self as teacher).
- Material provision as practical-evaluative (Fig. 3.1) attention to place which builds the capacity to self-identify as a teacher as an intrinsically motivated enactment within professional community (a supporting infrastructure for rural teacher identity construction).

This is a pedagogy of place-attentiveness (White & Reid, 2008) aimed at nurturing the emergence of a collaborative, agentive teacher self, aspiring to embody their own ideals for being a teacher colleague and a teacher of pupils, and to willingly situate themselves within a school community as a fellow inhabitant of everyday life there. We present this as a critical pedagogy for empowering student teachers to construct themselves first as a teacher (Ajayi, 2013), and then to know their place in school where they become the teacher they have come to know they can, and must, be there.

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