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**BECOMING AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST: AN
INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL
ANALYSIS**

JOANNE HELEN STEAD

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Huddersfield
December 2016

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Abstract

This research explores professional identity formation amongst occupational therapy students. Professional identity is examined within an occupational science framework. Much has been written, in recent years, about the professional identity development of occupational therapists during the first stages of their career focusing on preceptorship (Morley, 2006, Tryssenaar, 1999) but the concept of initial professional identity formation remains under examined.

This thesis addresses that gap by following one student's journey of becoming an occupational therapist from enrolment to graduating on an undergraduate occupational therapy course. Five in-depth interviews were carried out over three years. This was situated against a series of focus groups drawn from the same cohort. The Kawa model (Iwama, 2006) was used as a data collection and analytical tool.

Three overarching themes which highlight the processes involved in professional identity formation, were identified

- Establishing occupational coherence; the participants needed to make sense of their occupational history. It was important for participants to explain and present themselves as having developed occupational coherence over time.
- Managing occupational adaptation; the participants dealt with many challenges as they coped with transitions and a changing sense of self. It was important that they developed agency and feelings of competence on their professional journey.
- Developing a new identity; the participants explored how they adapted to new possibilities as they experienced the doing of occupational therapy. Their new occupational identity was congruent their own personal values.

This interpretative phenomenological analysis makes a significant contribution to the small body of knowledge around professional identity formation in occupational therapy. The longitudinal approach created a nuanced narrative which expounds the complex ongoing process. It highlighted the importance of paying attention to the processes of doing, being, belonging and becoming. The fundamental importance of enabling students to develop an occupational perspective to understand their developing professional identity is identified.

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Introduction

As undergraduate occupational therapy students begin their journey to becoming health care professionals, they are faced with a myriad of challenges. These challenges are compounded for school leavers, who may also be dealing with issues of leaving home and asserting their independence. Another layer of complexity in occupational therapy is the changing nature of professional practice and challenges in developing a strong professional identity. As an occupational therapy lecturer, it is a pleasure to contribute to the development and progression of students as they begin their professional journey. Some students seem to manage these transitions with ease, whilst for others it is a difficult, painful process. This research explores that journey using interpretative phenomenological analysis, using data collected over a three-year period. It aims to expose the lived experience of becoming an occupational therapist and provide insight for both educators and future students undertaking similar journeys. The longitudinal approach ensured that the development of the students was captured over time and enabled the researcher to be sensitised to the emotionality of the data (Snelgrave, 2014).

There is a plethora of publications concerning the transition from a new graduate to an occupational therapy practitioner (Morley, 2006; Morley, 2009; Robertson & Griffiths, 2009; Toal-Sullivan, 2006; Tryssenaar & Perkins, 2001). Research highlights that some of the difficulties that occupational therapists experience when entering the workforce include lack of confidence and problems with role clarity (Robertson & Griffiths, 2009), leading to subsequent problems in establishing a strong professional identity (Tryssenaar & Perkins, 2001). However, less attention has been given to the journey that the student occupational therapist undertakes, from enrolment on an undergraduate professional education programme to gaining their first post.

Turner (2011, p.321), argues that occupational therapy graduates need to have a “cast iron professional identity”, in order to shape their own collective professional destiny. However, developing professional identity is increasingly difficult, given the tension in both occupational therapy, and the wider health and social care community. This is especially the case in occupational therapy as it strives to engage with the economically-driven health and social care positivist philosophies, valuing science and quantifiable evidence-based results, whilst remaining true to the profession’s fundamental principles of valuing the individual experience and the essence of being. Consequently, students in particular, may experience difficulty in developing an integrated professional identity. Academics and practice-based educators should pay close attention to how professional

identity formation is developed. The expectations which students have as they enter their chosen professional education courses are constantly changing in response to environmental, economic and technological changes in society. Financial factors, high workloads and lack of support are significant concerns for today's students (Hamshire, Willgoss & Wibberley, 2013). Equally, the skills needed on graduation are constantly changing as professional ways of working are challenged. An occupational therapist is now required to be a "flexible, reflective practitioner, a team worker, and a lifelong learner, market-orientated, managerial and entrepreneurial," (Mackey, 2007 p.95). Alongside this, occupational therapists are required to work in increasingly diverse roles. Indeed, Robertson and Griffiths (2009) argue, it is no longer appropriate to inform curricula, using professional competencies alone, but there is a need to reconstruct knowledge as practice changes.

Knowledge and practice is changing rapidly in occupational therapy as the profession comes of age, gaining confidence and maturity (Turner, 2011). One consequence of this is that occupational therapy is developing and claiming its own epistemology, that of occupational science which is concerned with the "nature and structure of occupation and the relationship between occupation and health" (Molineux, 2014 p.347). It is claimed that it is this occupational perspective which distinguishes occupational therapy from other health and social care professions, contributing to its unique identity (Pierce, 2013; Wilcock, 2001). It is relevant therefore to take a broad view of professional identity, framing this within an occupational science perspective, as this is a central discourse within the profession of occupational therapy.

This research is significant, as it explores the student experience from enrolment through to graduation. It focuses on how students construct their professional identity and subsequent occupational identity, as they progress on their journey to becoming a healthcare professional.

Structure of the Thesis.

The thesis is structured around nine chapters. This first chapter introduces the study, considering its relevance to occupational therapy and health professional education. It contains a number of starting points. The Kawa model which has been used, both as a metaphor in terms of exploring ideas with the participants and as a data collection tool, is outlined. The scene is set by stating the research aims and explaining how I have used reflexivity throughout the work.

Chapter Two sets the work in context by considering briefly a history of occupational therapy and highlighting some of the tensions within the profession. Alongside this, the

conceptual framework of occupational science is presented, along with the construct of occupational identity and its relevance to this thesis.

The conceptual framework is used to consider the literature relating to professional identity and professional identity formation, with particular focus on occupational therapy in Chapter Three. This chapter identifies the work that has been done and highlights some of the gaps in the literature and subsequent understanding of the professional identity formation in occupational therapy.

Chapters Four and Five present my research design considerations. Chapter Four presents the congruence between occupational philosophy, my perspectives and position. These ideas are progressed in Chapter Five as detail on the research method is presented.

Chapters Six and Seven present the research findings, and preliminary analysis. Chapter Six presents the findings from the interviews with Lizzie, whereas Chapter Seven presents the findings from the focus groups. A preliminary analysis is given to capture the unfolding nature of the research and the journey which the participants experience.

The findings from both the individual interviews and focus groups are brought together in Chapter Eight. Combining both data sets to form a coherent whole is congruent with interpretative phenomenological analysis as it seeks to make sense of the whole as well as the parts. This approach adds credence to the individual voice by situating it within the broader focus group experience. Three overarching themes were identified which combine the super-ordinate themes discussed in Chapters Six and Seven. These were: establishing occupational coherence, managing occupational adaptation and claiming a new identity. Finally, the thesis is evaluated in Chapter Nine. This chapter is in three parts; it presents an overall critique of the study and then, using Yardley's four principles of validity (Smith, 2008), it evaluates the methods employed. The thesis concludes by considering the implications for education and practice along with recommendations for further research.

Chapter 1 Starting Points

This opening chapter provides a personal rationale for undertaking the research explaining my interest and positioning myself in the research area. I have given an outline of my use of reflexivity establishing how my position has influenced the co-construction of the research. I have used interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to explore the lived experience of becoming an occupational therapist and a brief introduction to this approach is given. The Kawa model has been used as a data collection tool and this is also introduced in this chapter. The chapter concludes by presenting my research aims.

1.1 Personal Rationale for the research

One of the privileges and rewards of being an academic teaching on a health professional undergraduate course is to witness the students develop and grow into competent professionals. Every year a new adventure and sense of discovery begins with each new cohort of students. I often feel like a gardener carefully nurturing the seedlings, ensuring ideal growing conditions, and observing the seedlings reaching maturity and bearing fruit. Some students seem to blossom and flower with apparent ease and very little intervention, whilst for other students this is an arduous process which requires significant toil and labour from many quarters.

Attrition on this small course means that one withdrawal has an impact upon course statistics, as well as the group dynamics. As course leader and now practice coordinator, I have questioned why some students grasp the core concepts of the profession and seem to think like occupational therapists early on in their journey to becoming an occupational therapist, whilst other students struggle with these concepts and either fall by the wayside, or engage on a problematic journey for three years or longer. This research sought to develop a greater insight into the student experience, by charting the journey from enrolment through to qualification. I wanted to explore what resonates with the students, what it feels like to be an occupational therapy student, how they position themselves amongst their wider peer group, what experiences and activities move them forward on their journey, and what they find difficult. I wanted to understand how their thinking changes and at what point they feel they are an occupational therapist. I wanted to understand how they feel about their chosen profession and how they position themselves within it. These issues have relevance for all those involved in pre-registration occupational therapy programmes, as they seek to facilitate the development of professional identity amongst students. Students may find that the expounded experience resonates with their own and normalises their feelings, easing their progress through difficult transitions.

The research aimed to gain insight into the development of the professional identity of occupational therapy students during their educational programme, prior to graduation. It explored some of the issues students faced along their journey. The tensions within the occupational therapy profession which heighten these problematic issues will be explored in the next chapter.

1.2 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

IPA was used, as this approach resonates with my position of being an occupational therapist. It is suggested that IPA is a useful qualitative methodology for occupational therapy to seek a deeper understanding of the experiences of clients, carers and colleagues, (Clarke, 2009). The focus of any IPA inquiry is how individuals interpret and make sense of major life experiences, (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.1). I was interested in making sense of the participants (students) making sense of their developing professional identity, hence a double hermeneutic process (Smith, Osborn, 2003). The participants were invited to reflect upon their journey of becoming an occupational therapist. They were encouraged to use their emerging knowledge to explore this journey, with particular focus on using the Kawa model (Iwama, 2006). The Kawa model is also congruent with IPA in that it acknowledges the impact that theoretical influences may have when making interpretations (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

The central concern is how the individual experiences the development of their professional identity. Given that my own professional identity, initially as an occupational therapist and more recently as an occupational therapy academic, is closely intertwined with this study, this was a suitable approach to take as I am very close to the subject. Additionally, as highlighted above, I have a close working relationship with the students due to the small numbers and personal nature of the course. Being an insider researcher inevitably means that my interpretations have been influenced by my position. Unlike other fields of phenomenology, IPA embraces the researcher's position, acknowledging that it is not possible to bracket out the researcher's influence and advocates for the use of reflexivity to add understanding and insight to a researcher's influence (James, 2011). IPA will be explored further in Chapters Four and Five.

1.3 Reflexivity

An important aspect of IPA is to highlight the position of the researcher, recognising their influence and role in co-construction the research (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2009). It is recognised that the researcher is a central part of qualitative research, which needs to be exposed and exploited, rather than an influence which needs to be eradicated (Finlay, 2002a). It is argued that "subjectivity" is an opportunity to gain richer, deeper

understanding in the research process (Finlay, 1998). Throughout this thesis, I have highlighted my position and response to the data. I have written much of the work in the first person to ensure my voice as the researcher is heard. It helps to highlight my position as I develop the interpretations. Throughout the research process I have kept a personal reflective journal. Where relevant, this has been drawn upon to highlight my perspectives, position myself within the study and to illustrate how my relationship with the participants has influenced the study. I have done this at relevant points throughout the thesis and interwoven it into the text, in an attempt to integrate my voice into the study as a whole. Where I have drawn directly upon my research journal, this is presented in italics.

Engaging in reflexivity is a complex process, with many traditions and variations. From a Heideggerian perspective, I have inevitably brought my own understanding to the research and my presence has altered the course of the research; therefore, I needed to interrogate my own subjectivity (Finlay, 2002). Much has been written about reflexivity and qualitative research in the social sciences and indeed in occupational therapy many different approaches have been taken, (Finlay & Gough, 2003; Kinsella & Whiteford, 2015; Elliot, 2015). I have drawn largely upon Finlay as her work is situated in both occupational therapy and phenomenology (Finlay 2002; Finlay 2003; Finlay & Gough, 2003) and recommended by Blank (2011). In keeping with phenomenology, I have taken an approach which focuses primarily on Introspection and Intersubjective Reflexivity as recommended by Finlay (2003). This is primarily because it is congruent with IPA, but also because of my position. I am both an occupational therapist and a lecturer, and enjoyed a close working relationship with the participants, and therefore I needed to question my own responses. I have my own experiences of both building professional identity as an occupational therapist and memories of my own undergraduate student journey, which have influenced the research process. Whilst I shared a common understanding of concepts and language, I needed to make sure that I did not make premature assumptions, informed by my own experiences and so I carefully interrogated my own responses (Finlay, 1998; James, 2011). My own experiences as an occupational therapy student were, after all in a very different social, political and economic context, having completed my undergraduate studies some 30 years ago. Because this study also made use of focus groups, there were relationships which needed to be considered between the parties as group dynamics emerged. Again, as explained earlier, the participants knew each other well and therefore I expected the disclosure to be honest, open and direct and perhaps challenging in places as they were used to debating and discussing with each other in both academic and personal settings. As I was their lecturer, another layer was added to this complexity, considering power

issues and how the participants may choose to present themselves to their lecturer and, in some cases, personal tutor. My reflexive approach therefore took account of these things and therefore incorporated Intersubjective Reflexivity as well as Introspective Reflexivity. I was concerned not to engage in self-indulgent introspection, but that my reflexivity situated my position, added depth to this research, enhancing the trustworthiness of the study. Finlay (2003) warns that introspective reflexivity needs to be used judiciously and purposefully, acting as a springboard to open up ideas, rather than becoming self-absorbed and projecting the voice of the researcher at the expense of the participants.

The three other approaches to reflexivity; Mutual Collaboration, Social Critique and Discursive Deconstruction (as identified by Finlay, 2003, p.209) were less relevant to this study and have more social constructionist leanings. Whilst the issue of power was significant in my study, due to my position, attempts were made to minimise the gap by really listening, providing reassurance and using humour. However, it is acknowledged that whatever attempts were made, the gap will still remain to some extent. I did not want the focus of the analysis to detract from the study on to the issues of power. So whilst these were a consideration, it was more relevant to consider these issues in my intersubjective reflections rather than emphasising a social critique framework. The final variant of reflexivity is that of Discursive Deconstruction. The consideration of how language and metaphor were used was important in this study as the Kawa metaphor was used, as a data collection tool. As such, this approach was used primarily in analysis rather than in my own reflexivity. Finlay (2002) warns that this approach, taken too far, can remove the focus from the essence of the phenomenon under study and therefore was not prominent in my reflexivity. I have considered positionality in more detail in Chapter Four, where I have considered how this has affected my methodology.

1.4 Kawa model

A recent emerging model in occupational therapy is the Kawa Model (Iwama, 2006). I have explored this new model with students in class and considered how it might be used in practice. I have also used it as a reflective tool, with students after practice placements. It is a creative and contextually relevant method of data collection which is congruent with the epistemological assumptions of the research. It supported students in developing reflective skills and enhanced their detailed working knowledge of a contemporary model, thereby providing some mutual benefit for being participants in the research process. It also represented an original use of the model, applying it to members of the profession as a reflective tool, rather than a model for practice.

The Kawa Model is an emerging conceptual occupational therapy model, developed in a Japanese context, which is currently used as a method of exploring a person's life circumstances, using graphic and verbal communication and employing the metaphor of a river. The Kawa model aims to be applicable in diverse social contexts and seeks to articulate the culture of occupational therapy. It is a dynamic metaphor of life, which seeks to assess the subjective nature of human experience (Iwama, 2006). The Kawa model was developed in response to the majority of occupational therapy models and concepts, which, being based on western philosophies, emphasise existentialism and individuality. In cultures which value collectivism and interdependence, the majority of occupation therapy conceptual models lack cultural relativity (Christiansen, 2006). The Kawa model encourages the self to be viewed as a number of inseparable elements, including life circumstances, strengths, limitations and life flow (Iwama, 2006), which are expressed in the graphic form of a river to capture the narrative of circumstances and context. Dialogue and probing questions are used to emerge and clarify a person's world view.

The Kawa model is an emerging model which has a limited research base, other than that carried out in its initial development. This was done using grounded theory methodology over a course of two and a half years by 20 practitioners, producing 250 hours of data in Japan under the guidance of Iwama. This culminated in the development of Iwama's doctoral thesis in 2001. Since then Iwama has published a book, numerous articles (Iwama, Thompson, & MacDonald, 2009; Iwama 2007; Iwama 2006; Iwama 2003), developed a website and an international profile. It is increasingly being used across the U.K and internationally in both education and practice settings. Iwama argues that the efficacy of the Kawa model is based upon whether or not people who use the model engage with it.

One credible paper is that by Nelson (2007), who used the Kawa model as a data collection tool to investigate the perspectives of 15 indigenous Australian young people towards health and physical activity. The author recognises that further analysis needs to be developed and presents only preliminary findings. I presented a paper at the University of Huddersfield's research conference in March 2010 and also at the College of Occupational Therapist's annual conference in 2010, considering the credibility of the Kawa model as a research methodology. Conclusions reached and confirmed by the audience were that occupational therapy needs to continue to make methodological advances and develop research methodologies which are congruent with its own epistemological assumptions and that the Kawa model may prove to be a valuable tool to accomplish the same.

The Kawa model was incorporated into this research to help the participants capture their dynamic journey. I felt that the metaphor would help the participants articulate their experiences. I hoped that it would support the participants to consider their professional education as life flow and to focus their attention onto circumstances, events or skills which had supported or hindered this life flow.

1.5 Research Aims

1. To explore the journey that the student occupational therapist undertakes throughout their undergraduate occupational therapy professional education programme.
2. To explore how the student's professional identity develops during their undergraduate education.
3. To contribute to original knowledge by using the Kawa metaphor to support data collection. This thesis will critically evaluate the Kawa model as a data collection tool in educational research.

1.6 Chapter Summary

This introduction has established the personal context for this study. It has introduced the nature of the course under scrutiny as well my position as the researcher. I have presented my rationale and interest in the research area and situated myself within the research. The introduction has explained the reason for using IPA as a research approach and how the Kawa model has been used. My approach to reflexivity has also been examined. These initial thoughts then situate the study, providing a route through the journey taken. Chapter two will provide a wider context to the study, highlighting the importance of the research at this point in time in the history of occupational therapy.

Chapter 2 Context of the Study

This chapter considers the contextual background to professional identity issues in occupational therapy. It also considers the professional and theoretical rationale for the study. It begins by considering the historical and social issues which have impacted upon the occupational therapy profession to date, highlighting how these issues have affected the professional identity of occupational therapists. The educational context is considered, as it situates the study, highlighting professional identity issues. These discussions consider the relevance of the study at this time in occupational therapy's history. The concept of occupational identity is then interrogated providing the conceptual framework for the thesis. This also helps to explain my position and reflexive approach which will conclude the chapter.

2.1 A brief history of occupational therapy and its philosophical roots

Occupational therapy is often a misunderstood profession (Creek, 2003; Turner, 2011). The reasons for this misunderstanding are complex, but perhaps some explanation can be found by reflecting briefly upon its history and development as a profession.

The roots of occupational therapy can be traced back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, (Wilcock, 2001). The actual term occupational therapy was coined by Barton in 1917 in the U.S.A., but it was not until 1936 that the Association for Occupational Therapists was established in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Therefore, it is classed as a young profession; indeed, Turner (2011) suggests it is in it's adolescence. However, the profession's underlying philosophy of the restorative and health promoting nature of occupation was understood by early Roman and Greek civilisations (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015).

Turpin and Iwama (2011) have organised the history of occupational therapy into four periods:

- Pre- formative period, moral treatment paradigm (1800-1899)
- Formative period, occupational paradigm (1900-1929)
- The mechanistic period and paradigm (1930 - 1965)
- Modern period, contemporary paradigm (1960 to present day)

Social reformers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, who advocated the moral treatment movement, such as Pinel and Tuke, were concerned about the treatment of people with mental health problems and the conditions in the asylums. They advocated

the release of shackles and the introduction of strict routines, prescribed occupations and exercise. Whilst these ideas had some influence on the philosophical basis of occupational therapy, at that time, the emphasis was on strict regimes and prescribed work, rather than fully understanding meaningful occupation and the importance of client-centred working.

The idea of restorative activities gained further credence in the First World War with the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers (Wilcock, 2001). At the same time the concept of occupational therapy was developed in the U.S.A by a group of diverse professionals, including a nurse, architect, welfare worker, psychiatrist, a teacher of handicrafts and a vocational secretary. This meeting of different minds highlights the diverse perspectives which had an early influence on occupational therapy and may in part offer some explanation for some of the confused and conflicting identity issues which plague the profession (Duncan, 2011).

In a UK context, Casson, who was originally a housing estate manager for Octavia Hill (social reformer and co-founder of the National Trust), recognised the importance of activities and recreation in promoting the health and well-being of her tenants, (College of Occupational Therapy, 2004). After training as a doctor she opened the first training school for occupational therapists alongside a residential clinic for women with mental health disorders in 1930. The clinic offered a full-time planned day, addressing each patient's individual needs (College of Occupational Therapy, 2004). These founding principles of occupation linked to health, occupation being used as a therapeutic agent, and people being treated as individuals, are the fundamental underlying principles of the occupational therapy profession today (Duncan, 2011).

These concepts proliferated in the Second World War, with rehabilitation clinics being established enabling soldiers to return to employment. The workshops, in which the soldiers worked, were run on scientific principles, analysing the demands of the tasks, with the aim of restoring function or developing compensatory techniques. Turpin and Iwama (2011) identified this era as the paradigm of occupation. These developments lead to an increasing number of occupational therapists being trained, and by 1943 in England the Association of Occupational Therapists was established, followed by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists in 1952, marking increasing professional organisation and recognition.

Moving into the mid to latter half of the twentieth century, the period labelled as the mechanistic paradigm (Turpin & Iwama, 2011), the profession aligned itself closely with the medical model. Patients were referred to occupational therapy by their medical officer, who assumed responsibility for their care and management. The underlying

philosophy was a scientific one valuing the quantitative method (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). Emphasis was on restoring an individual's impairments through activities of daily living, equipment provision and functional exercise programmes. However, despite this focus on the biomedical model, there remained a contrasting concern for people as individuals, recognising people's psychological needs using the humanistic and bio-psychosocial models. These differing conceptual approaches were more prevalent in mental health settings, highlighting the specialisation which was occurring and a loss of a broader holistic perspective of individuals. It is significant that at this time there was much discussion within the profession about its identity, as the profession lost its focus on meaningful occupation.

This lack of professional identity still affects some aspects of the profession today (Turner & Knight, 2015), however, it is argued that occupational therapy has now "come of age" with the development of the occupational science paradigm, (Whiteford, Townsend & Hocking 2000). Occupational science is emerging as a separate academic discipline in its own right. It is a basic science which seeks to further the understanding of humans as occupational beings and the relationship between occupation and health, (Yerxa, et al., 1989; Wilcock, 1993). Occupational science then, involves a broad study of occupational issues including skill development, occupational behaviour, adaptation, and the role of play work and leisure, from an interdisciplinary perspective, (Yerxa, 1993). It aims to develop a unique perspective of the study of human occupations, contributing to the promotion of health and well-being of individuals, groups and populations. It is distinct from the applied science of occupational therapy which is concerned with the therapeutic application of knowledge about occupation and health, (Molineux, 2014). Occupational science holds potential to strengthen occupational therapy's epistemological foundations (Molineux & Whiteford, 2006

Occupational therapy has continued to mature, in part supported by a more robust knowledge base, developed by occupational science as described above. Consequently, occupational therapists are now autonomous practitioners and whilst they may work as a member of an interdisciplinary team, they no longer work under the supervision of their medical colleagues, having their own professional supervision arrangements. In the UK occupational therapists are now required to be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) in order to practise and are the third largest allied health profession after social work and physiotherapy.

Whilst a detailed critical analysis of the current definitions of occupational therapy is beyond the scope of this paper, it is evident that there are many conflicting definitions

(World Federation of Occupational Therapy, 2013). The current definition, from a UK perspective adopted by the College of Occupational Therapy states:

Occupational therapy enables people to achieve health, well-being, and life satisfaction through participation in occupation (WFOT 2013. p.48)

Whilst this definition is relatively straightforward it does not refer to any specific knowledge; its generality results in it being vague and not particularly useful in terms of clarifying understandings of the profession.

The College of Occupational Therapy has developed a series of more specific definitions which draw upon examples from specific client groups. However, in doing this, an impression is given of occupational therapy which focuses on illness. This is further embedded by the extremely limiting definition offered on the NHS choices website (NHS, no date) which states:

Occupational therapy provides support to people whose health prevents them doing the activities that matter to them.

This definition fails to explore concepts of wellness and health, and focuses on the medical model, suggesting that occupational therapists only work with people with health problems.

It is not surprising, given this wide variety of definitions, and the profession's complex history, along with a lack of a consistent unifying conceptual framework, that practitioners still have difficulties explaining their profession (Pollard & Sakellariou, 2012).

2.2 Tensions within the occupational therapy profession

It seems pertinent at this point, after considering occupational therapy's diverse history, to consider broader professional issues as they impact upon occupational therapy, with the aim of highlighting some of the tensions within the profession.

Occupational therapy, as outlined above, has developed from diverse fields of knowledge, including: anthropology, medicine, nursing, psychology, education, and sociology. It is this wide knowledge base, lacking in definition and clear boundaries, which contributes to a lack of clarity, both inside and outside the profession (Boniface, 2012; Clouston & Whitcombe, 2008; Turner, 2011). Occupational therapy struggles to manage the dichotomy between its medically driven epistemology and its person-centred ontology (Clouston & Whitcombe, 2008). However, this broad eclectic foundation means occupational therapy is relevant to an expansive client base, beyond statutory care

services to vulnerable people, who do not have health problems, but may be encountering issues in their occupational lives.

Whilst occupational therapists strive to demonstrate what is unique and distinct about their profession, they are now finding themselves working in generic roles across professional boundaries. Therapists often have less time for profession-specific duties. There is often significant role overlap and ambiguity, which can lead to conflict and stereotypical attitudes (Atwal & Jones, 2009). Therapists may find that their professional standpoint is significantly compromised if they are part of a team whose philosophy differs from their own, (Boehm, et al., 2015). It may be difficult in these settings to ensure that practice remains occupationally focused (Clarke, Marion, de Visser & Sadlo, 2015; Molineux, 2004). Whilst being part of an integrated team can assist with communication, and aims to provide seamless provision for service users, lone therapists can become isolated and experience difficulty asserting their professional view point. This may be especially apparent if the therapist lacks experience and does not have access to more senior staff to provide supervision and support (Morley, 2009).

However occupational therapists are increasingly broadening their skills to work in non-traditional settings, alongside many different agencies, in areas where previously occupational therapy has not been delivered. This may include third sector settings, or independent practice, indeed in any place where vulnerable people may need support to manage their everyday lives. Students, who access these role-emerging placements, report that these opportunities have a big impact upon their sense of professional identity. They have to work autonomously and use their theory to independently establish relevant services (Clarke, Marion, de Visser & Sadlo, 2014).

Further tensions in the profession have arisen as the profession strives to engage with current economically-driven health and social care positivist philosophies, valuing science and quantifiable evidence-based results, whilst remaining true to the profession's fundamental principles of valuing the individual experience and the essence of being (Blair & Robertson, 2005; Christiansen, 2006). Health care workers are required to embrace new ways of working, as managerialism and the marketisation of services gathers its pace, driven by changing population demographics, chronic underfunding and increasing technological advances. The commercialisation of health and social care is affecting all health care professionals, but it is having a marked effect on occupational therapy as it's outcomes can be difficult to quantify and measure (Mackey, 2014).

The emphasis on evidence-based practice and quantifiable knowledge has resulted in competencies, and practical knowledge being valued, leading to knowledge being treated as a commodity, (Fish & Boniface, 2012, p.11). What is neglected as a consequence of

this approach are the ontological issues; the value base, philosophy and interpersonal skills of the practitioners. Both epistemological and ontological issues are essential for practice (Fish & Boniface, 2012, p.12), especially amongst occupational therapists who need to use themselves as therapeutic agents to facilitate the engagement of their clients.

To survive in this new world, therapists need to reconstruct their professional selves, and challenge traditional power bases (Clouston & Whitcombe, 2008; Mackey, 2011; Mackey 2014). Mackey (2014) explores the tension that occupational therapists experience as they try to re-negotiate their professional lives. She reported that therapists found their client-centred approach was compromised by the business orientation of services; that interventions were time limited, and their continuing professional development was significantly compromised. Despite these changes, many therapists have embraced new ways of working as new opportunities. They do not see themselves as passive agents of the state, but as active, strategic players, who are able to develop reflexive ethical selves, advocating for their clients and remaining true to their professional values (Mackey, 2014).

There are clearly, then, many epistemological and ontological tensions within occupational therapy as a result of both its historical development and the current contextual climate of health care. All these tensions contribute to the problematic professional identity of occupational therapy. As a profession still seeking maturity, it must be difficult for newcomers to make sense of this turbulence and develop their own sense of professional identity within this complexity. Consequently, students in particular, may experience difficulty in developing an integrated professional identity and have difficulty articulating their professional focus to those outside the profession.

These tensions raise multiple problems for the pre-registration curriculum, in particular, which epistemological issues need to be covered and how, along with which professional values and how these might be inculcated. It is relevant at this point, then, to consider the context of occupational therapy education and how this impacts upon professional identity development.

2.3 Context of occupational therapy education.

Historically, occupational therapy education was delivered at diploma level in training schools attached to hospitals, where emphasis was placed upon teaching and the practising of skills. As occupational therapy achieved degree status, entry programmes moved into university settings. Today, there are a variety of entry routes including: the traditional pre-registration three year accredited degree programme, part-time in-service

degree programmes and pre-registration masters level programmes. In the USA, entry to the profession is through an accredited master's degree and there are moves for doctoral level to be the threshold qualification. The professional demands placed upon the autonomous practitioner are ever increasing, and subsequently there are many challenges to delivering appropriate educational programmes for health care students.

In this climate of austerity, all public services, including higher education, are called upon to do more with less. Quality metrics are given increasing emphasis. Student satisfaction and league tables are given high priority, measuring things such as employment rates, and graduate salaries. The National Student Survey collects data from final year undergraduate students and aims to inform prospective students, as well as increasing public accountability; however its effectiveness and credibility has been questioned both by stakeholders, policy makers and the students themselves (Callender, Ramsden & Griggs, 2014). New technology facilitates flexible delivery of courses, including using online delivery; however, Higgs and Edwards (2002) caution that used inappropriately these innovations can lead to student isolation, limit the development of interactional skills and be used as a cost-cutting measure. Occupational therapy courses are busy and demanding, with students being required to engage with inter-professional education, scholarly practice, lifelong learning, entrepreneurial and business development skills alongside the traditional core subjects of occupational therapy (COT, 2014). Students must also complete a minimum of 1000 hours in a variety of practice environments. Delivering quality courses within these constraints demands much from both faculty and the students themselves.

There is tension between ensuring that students are fit for current practice, and that they are also able to challenge existing services developing skills needed for future leadership. Employers and managers want students who are fit for purpose; that is, they have the necessary pre-requisite practical skills, including communication and interpersonal skills along with personal management skills, such as time management and prioritisation (Mulholland & Derdall, 2004; Roberston & Griffiths, 2009). However, Turner (2011) argues that developing a concept-based profession rather than a skill-based one, holds more potential for the future. She argues that graduates need to be able to practise true to their philosophy and critique and transfer knowledge, rather than focusing on a skill-based workforce, which may meet current needs, but may not address the future needs of society or the profession. Similarly, Robertson and Griffiths (2009) identify that occupational therapy graduates could be better supported by learning how to contextualise and re-package their knowledge. The theory practice gap, recognised amongst professions generally, is exacerbated within occupational therapy. Occupational therapists tend to view themselves as pragmatic and practical, rather than

theoretical and therefore may not support their practice with underpinning knowledge as effectively as is necessary (Taylor, 2012). However, is it essential, in the face of budgetary constraints, inter-professional working and managerialism, that graduates are able to articulate and use their profession's underpinning theory to rationalise their role and support their professional identity as autonomous practitioners.

2.4 Occupational science

Occupational science offers the profession this much needed underpinning theory. It advocates a return to the original focus on occupation in everyday life and has emerged in the context of the post-modern paradigm, challenging positivism and universal truths (Whiteford, Townsend & Hocking, 2000). It emphasises the importance of situating an individual's constructions of their occupational stories in both temporal and social contexts (Whiteford, Townsend & Hocking, 2000), and is therefore congruent with a phenomenological approach. Any understanding of the professional identity of occupational therapy must surely engage with its conceptual underpinnings and therefore occupational science is a relevant conceptual framework for this study.

Occupational science conceptualises people as occupational beings who organise their lives by engaging in occupations. It is concerned with understanding the complexity of human engagement and how this is enacted within the environment (Yerxa et al., 1989). Occupation is defined in many different ways, but a recent and accessible definition posited by Christiansen and Townsend (2014, p.366), is any "recognizable everyday life endeavour". This differs from the rather narrowly applied commonly understood reference to paid labour, or work. Whilst the focus of the participant's occupations in this thesis will be their professional undertakings, they will also be engaged in other occupations that make up their everyday lives and have an impact upon their occupational identity, beyond their professional concerns.

Occupational science focuses upon the experience of individuals, their engagement of occupations and their everyday lives. Phenomenological, interpretative and subjective perspectives are therefore crucial to the development of occupational science (Gray, 1997; Reed, Hocking & Smythe, 2011). This thesis takes a phenomenological approach, which is therefore congruent with the field of occupational science within which this work is situated.

2.5 Occupational identity

Occupational science endeavours to develop an understanding of the many inter-related facets of occupation. These concepts are so embedded in everyday lives that until recently, they have been overlooked (Christiansen & Townsend, 2014). One important

concept in occupational science and one which is central to this thesis is occupational identity. This concept was originally suggested by Christiansen (1999) when he posited that identity was closely related to what we did and was important in establishing coherence, meaning, and well-being throughout our lives. This thesis has already considered that the use of the term occupation refers to more than a person's paid work; however work may be a significant influence on a person's occupational identity, as, in some cases, so much time and energy is focused upon it (Unruh, 2004). Occupational identity is so much more than this however, and is also concerned with all the occupations in which people engage, which give meaning, purpose and a sense of who they are and how they wish to be perceived. Occupational identity is seen as an ongoing personal construction which is adapted in response to the environment and accumulated experience of the life trajectory. It is, then, a composite of a person's competence, their interests, roles and relationships, obligations, routines and their interaction with the environment (Kielhofner, 2008 p.120). Kielhofner (2008) argues that, whilst occupational identity is influenced by a person's self-evaluation of past experience it provides a framework for constructing a vision for the future based upon their values and aspirations. Occupational identity, then, as a concept concerned with "becoming who we are through what we do" (Christiansen & Townsend, 2004) is a central concept in my thesis which is concerned with professional identity formation. As the thesis is situated within an occupational science framework, a broad understanding of professional identity, closely aligned to an understanding of occupational identity will be taken. This assumes an integration of a person's values, roles, relationships, competence, self-appraisal and change overtime.

Occupational identity is a composite of other concepts. The three interrelated concepts particular pertinent to this thesis are: occupational competence, occupational coherence and occupational integrity (Christiansen & Townsend, 2014). Occupational competence is concerned with the ability, skill, knowledge and attitude that one has for engaging in occupations (Christiansen & Townsend, 2014, p. 366). Kielhofner (2008, p.120) adds clarity to this definition explaining that occupational competence is concerned with the doing, whilst occupational identity is concerned with the subjective meaning of occupations. An important function of occupational competence, emphasised by Christiansen (1999) is the ability to achieve social validation, gaining the recognition of others as a competent individual. Additionally, a person needs to be able to understand themselves and make sense of their occupational competence, adjusting and organising it as necessary. If a person is not able to present themselves as occupationally competent, then their occupational identity is threatened (Christiansen, 1999). Occupational competence changes over time. These changes may be as a consequence

of changes within the social or physical environment, as well as changes in personal capacity as people develop, mature, age, and encounter illness and disability (Kielhofner, 2008, p. 122). Humans as occupational beings need to make sense of these changes as their occupational identity changes over time. How occupational therapy students develop competence in a professional capacity and make sense of their experiences is a large part of their professional identity formation, and is central to my thesis.

These identity changes are constructed into narratives providing a sense of continuity and flow that is occupational coherence (Christiansen, 1999). This making sense of our occupational lives helps to develop a sense of meaning that unites the past, present and future. Kielhofner's development of these ideas differs from Christiansen's; his focus is, on the "crafting" of narratives and metaphors. The term "crafting" is noteworthy here, as it conveys a sense of individual, artistic endeavour. Both authors, however, emphasise the construction of sense making and evolution. Occupational identity, then, is supported by occupational competence and occupational coherence; the three concepts are interwoven. Our sense of who we are is influenced by what we do, how we do this and how our engagement changes and evolves over time. How students construct their occupational identity is therefore of central concern to this thesis.

One concept, not given as much attention in the occupational science literature, but central this thesis, is that of occupational integrity. Occupational integrity, according to Pentland & McColl (2008), represents the extent to which people live their lives with integrity, guided by their own personal values and strengths. It focuses on how the occupational choices that people make are balanced and provide opportunity for a person to achieve well-being, reflecting values that are important to them. From an occupational therapy perspective, then, it means working with clients to enable them to clarify their personal values and create lives in which their occupations reflect their values and facilitate their wellbeing and integrity (Pentland & McColl, 2008). How occupational therapy students experience occupational integrity is of central concern to this study; how does occupational therapy as a profession support their occupational integrity?

When considering professional identity formation, how the student occupational therapist achieves competence, coherence and integrity within their changing identity from an occupational perspective, needs to be explored. The research relating to professional identity formation of occupational therapy students is considered in the next chapter, but it is worth commenting, that research into professional identity formation which takes an occupational perspective is limited. How occupational therapy students manage their changing occupational identity as they begin their professional journey, develop

competence and social validation as professionals, as well as creating a sense of occupational coherence over time, will therefore be explored. How students develop occupational integrity during their undergraduate professional journey will be an important aspect in the consideration of their professional identity formation. It is important to explore if occupational therapy as a profession lives up to the ideals which the students initially expected and if it contributes to them achieving occupational integrity.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has considered the professional and theoretical frameworks within which this study is situated. I have considered why professional identity is an ongoing contextual debate at this time within the profession of occupational therapy.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

This chapter considers the concept of professional identity, using the occupational science framework of doing, being, becoming and belonging (Wilcock, 1999). The chapter begins by explaining the structure of the review. An explanation of how the literature was retrieved is then given. A construction of professional identity, as relevant to this thesis, will be presented to clarify understanding, before moving into detailed consideration of the formation of professional identity using Wilcock's (2007) framework of doing, being, becoming, and belonging.

3.1 Organisation of the review.

Wilcock's original framework of doing, being, becoming (1999) is widely accepted amongst occupational therapists, occupational scientists, educators and researchers (Ewing & Smith, 2001; Lyons, Orozovic, Davis & Newman, 2002; Rodger & Ziviani, 2006; Watson, 2006), and is congruent with the occupational science understanding of identity as discussed in section 2.5. Wilcock (1999, p.2) postulates that this framework synthesizes the unique understanding of occupation, and clarifies the profession's philosophy, processes and outcomes:

Our profession embraces a unique understanding of occupation that includes all the things that people do, the relationship of what they do with who they are as humans and that through occupation they are in a constant state of becoming different (Wilcock, 1999 p.2).

However, Hammell (2014) suggested that occupation should also be considered in relation to the concept of belonging. Wilcock (2007) subsequently added this dimension into her framework:

"Doing, being, becoming and belonging are essential to survival and health. Or d+b3=sh", Wilcock (2007 p.5.)

This framework has yet to be embraced fully by occupational therapists, (Hammell, 2014 p.41). The majority of the occupational therapy literature often focuses on the initial three concepts of doing, being and becoming. Indeed, in a critical review by Kosma, Bryant and Wilson (2013), considering the key concepts of Wilcock's theories and their influence on occupational therapy research, belonging is not even identified. I have used the latest framework, incorporating all four concepts, as this current, approach provides for a more comprehensive consideration of professional identity development.

Wilcock's ideas were developed to explain the significance of occupation in promoting health. The application of these ideas to professional identity formation, therefore, represents a narrower application of the framework. However as professional identity is

concerned not only with doing a job, but also the integration of values and philosophies into one's sense of being, Wilcock's framework is a useful construct for this thesis.

An explanation of the terms of the framework is offered as follows: Doing is used in this context to refer to active engagement in occupation, (purposeful, meaningful, individualised and contextually relevant activities). It conveys participation and busyness, and is fundamental to human existence (Wilcock, 1999; Yerxa, 1998), whilst being refers to a more ontological construct, the essence of human nature being concerned with expressing or experiencing one's true nature; it is concerned with agency and the uniqueness of the individual. Becoming is concerned with personal development, self-actualisation, and growth. Wilcock, (2007, p.5) considered belonging as the contextual element of the doing and highlights the importance of connected relationships within doing. Clearly, all four themes are fundamental to the practice of occupational therapy, and are equally applicable to understanding professional identity.

In the context of this research related to professional identity, I have interpreted doing to refer to the legitimacy of enacting the professional role, concerned with competence, and professionalism. Being is concerned with concepts of self as a professional, including individual agency, attitudes, beliefs and values. Becoming is concerned with the personal and professional transformation, growth and development, whereas belonging is concerned with the importance to an individual to feel connected and have a role to play within the group or community. Iwama (2003) reminds us that in some cultures the social context takes precedent over individual agency, and that the self is inseparable from the greater whole of the environmental and social milieu. My reading of the professional identity development literature highlighted the issue of collective identity and the importance of connectedness and being accepted within the profession. Lave and Wenger (1991) developed a theoretical concept, Communities of Practice to account for informal learning through participation highlighting the importance of this issue.

These themes represent broad concepts, providing clarity and understanding of the concepts associated with professional identity relevant to this thesis. The themes are congruent with my own professional understandings and, the approach taken in this research focusing on subjective experiences and individual constructions of professional identity.

Clearly, there is overlap and interrelationship between the themes, for example being may be influenced by feelings of competence (doing) and the impact of professional socialisation (belonging).

3.2 Searching the literature

Before moving on to detailed consideration of the literature, an explanation of how the literature was retrieved is offered.

A number of methods were used to search the existing body of literature relating to professional identity formation within occupational therapy. Electronic data bases and hand searches were carried out. The most fruitful search came from examining secondary references. Only published literature was included from peer reviewed journals.

Search terms including "occupational therapy AND undergraduate education/ professional identity/ professional socialisation/ professionalism, AND healthcare professions" were used to search Summon (a single point of entry to a number of electronic data bases including Medline, Cinhal, Psyc. Info).

Initially in order to develop clarity on the concept of professional identity, a broad search was undertaken including health and social care and education. This was to ensure that a broad view of professional identity was gained from various professional standpoints. A significant amount of the literature is situated within the education field, with a smaller amount in the health and social care arena, concerning the professional identity of nurses, physiotherapists and medics.

The parameters for the literature search included published, peer reviewed articles written in English from 2000 onwards. Whilst having concern for currency and relevance, I also felt it necessary to go back further than ten years to consider how the debate about professional identity has changed over time within occupational therapy and how the concept has developed. Discussions became more prolific about professional identity around 2000 due to the momentum created by the development of occupational science (Bjorklund 2000; Christiansen 1999; Fortune, 2000; Wilcock, 2001). Some older works were also included, where it was felt the discussion made a significant contribution to the meaning and understanding of the literature (e.g. Benner 1984; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1980; Lave & Wenger, 1991), or were particularly relevant because of the professional context (e.g. Bossers et al, 1999; Reilly 1962; Tryssenaar, 1999). Articles which didn't focus on issues around professional identity or socialisation in the broadest sense were excluded. For example, articles which focused narrowly on assessment issues, or inter-professional working were excluded. Articles which considered post-graduate or pre-registration Master's issues were also excluded. Additionally, all articles were appraised using CASP guidelines.

Given the exploration of the problematic development of occupational therapy discussed in chapter one, I expected a plethora of articles concerning occupational therapy and professional identity. Whilst there is some occupational therapy literature addressing professional identity, it is not a central theme, suggesting that shifting and negotiating professional identities are not unique to occupational therapy, but are a feature of many of the public service professions, which are becoming increasingly politicised, subject to external controls and constantly changing contexts (Noordegraaf, 2007; Stronach, Corbin, McNamara, Stark & Warne, 2010). My research focusing on occupational therapy professional identity formation then makes a valuable contribution to this small body of literature.

Various aspects of professional identity are explored, with the intention of clarifying the term and identifying areas of particular concern to occupational therapy. The discussion then moves on to considering professional identity formation and development amongst occupational therapy students. Whilst the focus of the discussion is concerned with occupational therapy students, because of the limited amount of current literature available, related health care professions are also considered.

3.3 Professional Identity

This section explores the concept of professional identity, current understandings and their impact on the research agenda of professional identity development, before considering the literature in more detail. Professional identity is firstly situated in the context of identity studies.

The study of identity is a vast, broad subject area which encompasses many disciplines and perspectives. It is increasingly an interdisciplinary field of research which makes it consequently very difficult to situate (Wetherall, 2010). From a psychology perspective it is concerned primarily with identity acquisition and personal maturation. Erikson's (1980) eight stage psycho-social theory of identity development focuses on how individuals resolve psychological tasks at each life stage as they develop their identity. In contrast identity studies in sociology tend to focus on how people construct their identity based upon group membership; that is social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981). This theory is concerned with categorisation, social identification and comparison (Mcleod, 2008). Political studies and anthropology are also concerned with identity studies often focusing on cultural and collective identity whereas biological studies may focus on genealogy. Clearly identity studies include a broad range of theories and identity research addresses a wide variety of issues including gender, ethnicity, difference,

relationships, belonging, media influences, communities, and work-places to name but a few. Professional identity is then a specific aspect of a much broader subject.

Professional Identity is a nebulous term which is difficult to define and seems to refer to a variety of concepts including competent performance, professional socialisation, professional confidence, and professionalism. Whilst professional identity is influenced to some extent by the broader processes of identity formation outlined above, other processes particular to the workplace in terms of knowledge construction, skill development and socialisation come to the forefront when focusing upon professional identity. There is a tension between personal and professional values (Trede, Macklin & Bridges, 2011) and recognition that becoming a professional involves the intertwining of personal and professional identities (Krych & Vande-Voort, 2006). Not only do embryonic professionals have to develop their knowledge and skills but they need to be able to embody these skills and deliver their professional role with integrity and competence. This research focuses on the construction of professional identity from an individual perspective. It therefore considers the processes of doing, being, becoming and belonging in professional identity formation as personal and professional values are integrated (explored further in section 3.4). This research is concerned with how the experience of developing a professional sense of self is constructed.

The term "professional" is widely used in varying contexts, leading to ambiguity, despite the fact that it has been debated extensively (Swisher & Page, 2005). As a noun it is used to classify occupations which demand specific qualifications and knowledge and have expected ways of being, in terms of behaviour and ethical decision-making, usually governed by a code of conduct or similar formal written behavioural expectations, to which a member of the profession must adhere. It is also used to distinguish between someone who is paid to engage in a particular activity or occupation, as opposed to an amateur, for example a professional musician or footballer. The word "professional" can also be used as an adjective to describe someone's approach or behaviour, often implying competence, and efficiency. As can be seen then, it is a term which is used in different contexts, leading to ambiguity of meaning.

Even the narrower term of professional identity lacks definition in the literature (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, p.107; Trede, Macklin & Bridges 2012, p.374), possibly due to its complexity and multi-faceted nature. Trede, Macklin and Bridges (2012) carried out a systematic literature review on professional identity development of 20 higher education related journals. They found that many articles "offer only very loose descriptions of the professional identity development concept" (p.374), and that there was a "remarkably disparate range of theoretical frameworks, indicating an underdeveloped field where there is little agreement amongst scholars" (p.375). Poorly

defined concepts and broad theoretical frameworks make the task of identifying foci for current research difficult.

It is then, not surprising that Cowin et al. (2013, p.608), whilst also noting that professional identity is multi-dimensional, state that researchers concerned with professional identity often focus on what fits their own study, rather than exploring the concept. My research seeks to explore the concept of professional identity by understanding the development of individual construction and personal meanings of professional identity, as related to occupational therapy, so whilst professional identity will be the central concept of the study, the interpretation will be highly contextualised.

Despite lack of clarity around the concept of professional identity, there is some general agreement as to what this may involve. Trede, Macklin and Bridges (2012, p.374) state that nineteen out of the twenty studies reviewed understood professional identity as a way of being.

It seems then, whilst being concerned with roles, knowledge, behaviour and competence, professional identity is also concerned with personal feelings towards one's work, and how these concepts are integrated into one's sense of self, along with outward manifestations of professional behaviour and standards (Cowin, et al., 2013; Flores & Day, 2006, p. 220). There is also wide agreement that it is an on-going dynamic process (Cowin et al. 2013, p.609; Flores & Day, 2006, p. 220; Lamote & Engels, 2010, p.4; Mackey 2007, p. 100;). It is these personal meanings and integration processes, along with formation processes, which are the focus of this thesis.

However, failure to have any robust definition of professional identity makes investigation into professional identity formation difficult, and indeed Trede Macklin and Bridges (2012, p.379) highlight that as a result of a multi-layered concept, there is both a lack of research on professional identity formation and a lack of research informed by "clearly articulated understandings of professional identity."

3.4 Doing, Being, Becoming and Belonging

Having explored some of the understandings of professional identity this chapter uses the latest version of Wilcock's framework (as discussed in section 3.1) to consider the literature related to professional development formation in occupational therapy. This framework is used as it integrates the personal and professional selves as discussed in section 3.3)

3.4.1 Doing

In a UK context in order to practise, or “do” as an occupational therapist and use this protected title, the practitioner must be authorized in law. In a UK context, the practitioner must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and must be able to demonstrate that the HCPC standards for training, professional skills, behaviour and health are met. It is interesting to note that behaviour and professional skills are separated, so there are “standards of conduct, performance and ethics”, which are generic for all of the 16 professions and separate standards of proficiency for each of the professions which HCPC regulates. It seems then, that as far as the regulatory body is concerned at least, there are two aspects to doing a professional job: delivering skilled interventions (proficiency or competence) and conduct or behaviour. So doing is concerned not only with how effective the professional interventions are, but the manner in which these interventions are delivered

Therefore, the concept of doing, as related to professional identity, will be considered under two headings of competence and professionalism. Again, the two notions are not mutually exclusive.

3.4.1.2 Competence

Notions of professional competence are concerned with the ability to “do” one’s job effectively, to be proficient, appropriately qualified with knowledge and skills. However, competency can have different connotations in different circumstances (Valloze, 2009 p.115), for example it may be a descriptive term which is used to describe someone who is deemed safe to carry out their duties, but whose practice does not excel, or it may be used to describe a highly regarded proficient professional. Valloze (2009) developed a concept analysis of competence in nursing. She notes it is concerned with concepts of currency and sound judgment (p.116), but doesn’t develop any detail as to how these concepts are identified, or developed. Valloze goes on to state that competence can lead to job satisfaction and a stronger commitment to the profession. This understanding then, strengthens the assertions made earlier, based upon the papers by Cowin et al. (2013), and Flores and Day (2006), that professional identity is concerned with personal feelings and meanings as well as knowledge (being). It suggests that since competence promotes job satisfaction and subsequent belonging, it is closely linked to professional identity, but Valloze does not make these explicit connections. The relationship between feelings of competence and professional identity is explored in this thesis.

In contrast, Gahnstrom-Strandqvist, Tham, Josephensson and Borell (2000) in their phenomenological study of occupational therapy practice in Scandinavia, explicitly link therapists’ feelings of competence to strong professional identity. They found therapists’ motivation increased following successful therapeutic interventions with their clients.

This increased motivation had a direct impact upon therapists' feelings of competence and subsequent strengthening of their professional identity. They also note that, whilst the study was carried out in a variety of contexts, the paradigms used were derived from clinical practice and, hence, strengthened professional identity across the professionals. What is relevant to this thesis is the impact that external behaviour (doing) and subsequent feedback has on internal feelings (being) and the extent to which the interaction between the two leads to a strengthened professional identity.

There is debate in the literature as to whether competency refers to a defined standard of behavioural skills, or if it refers to broader personal and professional attributes (Duke, 2004; Steward, 2001). Although there are a number of ways of categorising or defining a profession, it is generally accepted that in order to belong to a professional body and work as a member of that profession, a certain standard of competency has to be reached, after a period of education and training. Competency then, is an important part of being a professional, but in occupational therapy there remains much debate as to how this is developed. Perhaps, as suggested by Gahnstrom-Strandqvist, Tham, Josephensson and Borell (2000), competence is subjectively defined by occupational therapists and affected by their subjective feelings and experiences.

One well known model which attempted to demystify the process of developing competence in nurses, was that developed by Benner (1984). She applied the original model proposed by Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1980), of skill acquisition which focused on the development of technical skills for pilots, to the nursing profession. Benner claimed that the differing practices of novice nurses through to experts could be explained, using Dreyfus' five stage process model, progressing from a novice through to advanced beginner, competent, proficient and then expert. Whilst the model usefully accounts for the acquisition of some skills, its application to the clinical environment, with the need for complex reasoning skills, combined with dynamic interpersonal skills, is somewhat problematic, and far beyond the scope of the original model. The emphasis on intuition is challenged (Gobet & Chassay, 2008; Pena 2010), there is significant conflict between the concept of intuition and the emphasis in today's economic context on evidence-based practice. Also, the issue of intuition and the validation of judgements raise issues of power within informal medical hierarchical contexts (Cash, 1995). It is not sufficient for the nurse (or therapist) to say, "I sense that". They need to be able to articulate their epistemology, to assert their opinion over the dominant medical establishment. Indeed, as Cash argues:

Intuition does not give power; it needs it, or confers further power, where power already exists (Cash, 1995, p.533.)

Benner's model is also criticised for lack of definition of the different stages (Pena, 2010) and a failure to acknowledge that progress may not be linear, especially given that health care professionals increasingly might change the context of their employment (Hargreaves & Lane, 2001). The issue of context is particularly relevant to this study because, although Benner identifies the novice stage as being typified by understanding of rules which are context free, my experience as both an occupational therapist practice educator and academic is that students learn from concrete to abstract, and that their initial understanding of rules is very context bound. How this model then applies to the development of professional identity needs to be explored further. Although the model is not without criticism, it offers a starting point for providing some understanding into how competence may develop. Benner's model has had an impact on pedagogy in occupational therapy education, in terms of the teaching of skill acquisition. It is a model which is frequently drawn upon when preparing occupational therapists to become practice educators for students within the practice setting, and therefore may have affected the experiences of the participants in this study. It is certainly a model I use to support students as they begin to realise what they do not know and lose their confidence, and it will therefore impact upon my interpretation of the findings of this research. One of the most useful aspects of the model, from a health professional education perspective, is the recognition of the importance of informal learning from experience and the significance of tacit knowledge (Eraut, 2008. p.4). Boud and Middleton (2003), and Velde, Wittman and Mott (2007) advocate for the value of situational learning, and this highlights the significance of placement learning within the occupational therapy curriculum.

The concept of tacit knowledge was first identified by Polanyi (1958) and refers to knowledge which is difficult to transfer or communicate to others; the knowing how, rather than knowing that which can be taught. Riding a bike is a typical example; the learner needs to practise the skill, no amount of verbal instruction will completely teach the skill; the learner also needs extensive situational learning. Tacit knowledge involves both implicit acquisition of knowledge, as well as implicit processing of knowledge. Tacit knowledge is generally gleaned from social contexts and actions, and is influenced by what the learner remembers or notes as significant. Tacit knowledge is, then, highly individualised, whilst at the same time affected by work-place culture and professional socialisation (Eraut, 2000, p.113). As Benner has identified, this tacit knowledge is difficult to make explicit, which goes some way to explaining why the concept of competence is difficult to define and also to assess. Equally, the link between competence, tacit knowledge and professional identity is elusive in the literature. My

research encourages the participants to locate their tacit knowledge and explore how this impacts upon their feelings of competence and professional identity.

The significance of practice learning has already been highlighted. Practice Educators are experienced occupational therapists, who have undertaken additional education in health-professional education in order to manage student learning in the work place. Practice educators are the gate keepers of the profession, in terms of determining whether a student is deemed competent and fit for practice and, as such, have to make robust defensible judgements. However, it is widely recognised that this is a problematic issue in the health care professions generally (Cowan, Norman, & Coopamah, 2005; Duke, 2004; Morrells, Robinson, & Griffiths, 2009). Assessment of student performance and development is a complex issue, when trying to make objective judgements on ill-defined concepts.

Duke (2004, p.202) suggests that observable behaviours, clinical reasoning, continuing development, professional and personal attributes including self-awareness are among the areas which educators consider when assessing students. Whilst these attributes are not clearly defined, the notion that competence is more than simply a set of reproducible behaviours and skills, and includes personal attributes linked to professional identity, is highlighted. Duke (2004) is quite rightly cautious of making any claims that her research has identified the essence of competence. She notes that her findings regarding the components of competence, and the impact that these components have on assessment of competence are not generalisable due to the small local nature of the study; a specific area of OT practice, focusing on five practice educators working in neurological rehabilitation. However, the research highlights the complexity of assessment of student practice, acknowledging that both tacit knowledge, and personal skills, are contributing factors in the decision making process.

As practice educators are the gatekeepers of the profession, it seems that the relationship between the student and practice educator is very significant. Practice educators have the power to make judgements about the competence of the student. Students are tasked with meeting their educator's expectations, as well as developing their own skills.

3.4.1.3 Professionalism

The second aspect of doing is that of conduct, or professionalism; the outward manifestation of professional behaviour.

Whilst competence is typically used to refer to how effectively a person carries out their job, professionalism has a broader application and referring to more general attitudes

and interactions. In the context of occupational therapy, the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (COT, 2015) identifies that competence alone is not sufficient for a safe practitioner and that skills and knowledge need to be accompanied with appropriate professional behaviour and attitude.

Some authors indicate that professionalism is profession specific (Bryden et al., 2010; McNair 2005); others suggest that professionalism is more generic, referring to “widely held expectations” (Wood, 2004, p.245). Robinson, Tanchuk and Sullivan, (2012) suggest that professionalism is a combination of context specific and some more general aspects of behaviour. The profession specific occupational therapy Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (COT, 2015) provides a set of comprehensive guidelines divided into five sections, addressing: service delivery, service user autonomy, professional competence, continuing professional development and the development of the profession. Robinson, Tanchuk & Sullivan, (2012 p.277) comment that this document fails to provide a conceptualization of professionalism, despite referring to professional behaviour and professional manner several times. There has been effort to understand the concept of professionalism within occupational therapy, in more detail, from an international perspective. Attempting to inform curriculum development and teaching, Bossers et al. (1999) met with 155 occupational therapists, including students, clinicians and academics, to understand the essential behaviours of professionalism and clarify terms. Bossers et al. (1999) determined that professionalism in occupational therapy could be considered under the headings professional parameters, professional behaviours and professional responsibilities. However, Bossers et al. (1999) do not distinguish professionalism from professional identity, this is despite the fact they note it is “difficult to address how to be a professional person” (p.117). It seems then, that they are using professionalism in a broad sense here, as they are also considering personal factors such as integrity and the professional self. Bossers et al. have conceptualised professionalism as a subset of professional identity. Bossers et al. note that further research is needed, especially to contribute to the understanding of how professionalism is developed amongst students. As my research explores how professional identity develops, it therefore contributes to filling this gap of understanding of how professionalism (as conceptualised by Bossers et al.) is developed.

A more recent study carried out by Aguilar, Stupans, Scutter and King, (2013) in Australia, contributed to the understanding of professionalism by identifying professional values and behaviours, which were considered essential for occupational therapy practice. Seven behaviours and sixty-one professional values were identified, using the Delphi technique. The behaviours include non-profession specific behaviours, such as upholding client confidentiality, and withholding judgement, but also include profession -

specific behaviour, relevant to occupational therapy, “integrates client’s priorities, occupations and goals in therapy”, (p.214). The authors note that these behaviours are already identified in the “Australian Minimum Competency Standards for New Occupational Therapists”, (Occupational Therapy Australia, 2010, p.214), so whilst highlighting the relevance of the behaviours to the profession, their research adds little further knowledge in terms of understanding expected behaviours. Amongst the 61 professional values identified, were many core beliefs and concepts of occupational therapy, including “meaningful occupation”, ‘using occupation as a primary therapeutic medium’ and ‘enabling client’s participation in occupations’, as well as professional initiatives, such as evidence-based practice and clinical reasoning. It seems that a lack of clarity over terms has had an impact on the findings. The authors do note that, whilst the findings are fundamental towards understanding professionalism, this is only an initial step and the findings are culturally and contextually specific. The study is carried out with experienced therapists, all of whom have been qualified at least five years, and does not consider how these views may develop or change with experience. My research explores how values change throughout the undergraduate journey to becoming an occupational therapist.

What is clear from the literature is that professionalism (doing) and values (being) are closely intertwined and that the external manifestations of professionalism, that is professional behaviour and skills, need to be driven by an internal value base as well as knowledge and understanding.

Although it has been shown that professionalism needs to be informed by values, the relationship between professionalism and professional identity is not clarified in the literature. Bossers et al. (1999, p.117) aligns professional identity with professionalism when citing Debeers’ content analysis, claiming that professionalism is the second most commonly occurring theme of the Eleanor Slagle lectures between 1955 and 1984 but doesn’t distinguish between the two concepts. The Eleanor Clarke Slagle lectures series at the Annual American occupational therapy conference, honour members of an American Occupational Therapy Association who have contributed to the development of the body of knowledge of the profession, through research, education, and/or clinical practice. Similarly, Wood (2004) argues that in order for occupational therapists to maintain commitment to their ideals and the profession, they need to practice with their heart, mind and soul. She refers to this as enacting professionalism of an intensely personal nature; honouring compassion, valuing knowledge and continuing professional development, whilst also engaging in critical debate with colleagues, to maintain a balance between heart and mind. However, Woods does not mention professional identity. In keeping with Wood’s metaphor, it would seem that the “soul” is the linking

between the values (heart, being) and knowledge (mind, doing) and this is where professional identity may be found. It would seem then, that professionalism in occupational therapy, a debated concept in itself, refers to the expected behaviour of a professional, which is underpinned by individual and shared philosophical values.

The concept of professionalism then is a vital part of professional identity. It contributes to the professional's sense of self and influences, not only the behaviour and values of members of the professional community, but society's expectations of professionals. This intertwining relationship between the individual as a professional, the professional community and the social contract between professionals and society (Holden, et al., 2012, p.246; Mackey, 2011, p.134) has far reaching consequences in the tacit and explicit expectations of students undertaking courses, leading to professional accreditation, both of themselves and from others. How these notions are enacted and developed within students' experience, is the subject of this thesis.

3.4.2 Being

Moving on to consider the second theme in Wilcock's framework, being is concerned with concepts of self as a professional, including agency, attitudes, beliefs and values, including integrity.

Wood's (2004) metaphor of practicing with the heart and soul as well as the mind clearly introduces the concept of professional selfhood, and the importance that personal values, motives and meanings have in informing professional identity. This research seeks to make sense of Lizzie's (the participant) dynamic feelings, emotions, and meaning-making throughout her journey of becoming a professional. Indeed, as Denshire (2002), reminds us, a fundamental concept in occupational therapy is the concern with what people do every day, so it is therefore understandable that the personal informs how we practice and vice versa, the two therefore become difficult to separate. Similarly, Hooper (2008, p.239), identifies how the biographical experience of occupational therapy lecturers informs the implicit curriculum, seeing "teaching and the curriculum as extensions of the deeply personal".

Under the theme of being the issues of the integrity, professional confidence and agency will be considered.

3.4.2.1 Integrity

The above literature has illustrated the difficulty of separating the self from the professional (Hooper, 2008; Wood, 2004). How a therapist uses their inter-personal skills, that is, the therapeutic use of self is seen as a significant and important skill in

occupational therapy. Therapeutic use of self is understood to include amongst other things; empathy, connecting at an emotional level, and appropriate self-disclosure. Therapists are expected to develop heightened self-awareness to manage their therapeutic communication and are encouraged to use their own personal experience to understand their client predicaments and inform their collaborative decision making (Taylor & Melton, 2009, p.125). It can therefore be difficult to distinguish the personal from the professional; the professional and personal can often flow into the same life spaces, resulting not in a dichotomy of professional and personal, but rather in a "multiplicity of the self" (Denshire, 2002, p.213). This research will attempt to tease out how Lizzie's interpersonal skills influence her developing professional identity.

Personal feelings about oneself then, may be a contributing factor in professional identity, indeed Clandinin and Connelly (1987) saw novices' views of themselves in the learning environment as very significant, while they make sense of their learning by putting it into a personal context.

The ability to maintain one's integrity is an important aspect of professional identity and also an area which can cause dissonance and stress, undermining professional confidence and self-belief. Internal conflict may arise when the reality of practice does not meet the imagined ideal or match a person's values. A small scale study by Pearcey and Draper (2008) found that conflict between what first year student nurses thought nursing was about, and the reality of practice, can lead to early disillusionment, emphasising the importance of maintaining compassion and communication. Pearcey and Draper (2008) provided a stark reminder of the need to listen to the student voice. In the wake of the Francis Report (2013), the student voice has been identified as a significant factor in the measurement of quality, as students observe situations with fresh perspectives and have not become institutionalised or imbued with bad practice. The Care Quality Commission (2013) is also placing increasing emphasis on student feedback and evaluations, which highlights the need to listen to the student voice and also demonstrates the relevance of this research in understanding the student experience and its significance to curricula and pedagogical development.

3.4.2.2 Professional confidence

How confident professionals feel in their professional capacity in terms of their skills and abilities can have an impact on professional identity. Holland, Middleton and Uys (2013, p.105) identified that professional confidence is a personal belief which changes over time. Through research in a South African context with newly qualified occupational therapists, Holland et al. (2013) identified that professionally confident therapists have to integrate "knowing, believing and being" thoughts and behaviours. There are some

clear links here to Wilcock's framework of doing, being and becoming. The fact that Holland et al. (2013) link the changing personal belief of professional confidence to both fitness for practice and professional identity highlights the circular and interdependent nature of confidence, competence and professional identity.

That this complex process of integration of thoughts and behaviours can lead to crisis of confidence, is well documented internationally across the professions (Kasar & Muscari, 2000; Robertson & Griffiths, 2009; Morley, 2006), particularly as graduates make the transition to practitioners. If particular triggers, times, or events can be linked to crises of confidence, additional student support or scaffolding could be made available to pre-empt this. This may also have implications for curricular design.

3.4.2.3 Personal agency

Professional confidence impacts upon feelings of empowerment. It affects how professional power is experienced and exercised. Clarke (2010), argues that professional power must be underpinned by a professional confidence and ethical decision making. Interestingly, Grant (2013) identified that occupational therapists who feel they have power and autonomy to exercise their own discretion, report a stronger sense of professional identity. How student occupational therapists experience and exercise discretion and autonomy will be explored in this research.

There is some pertinent research relating to this issue of autonomy and personal agency; Clouder (2003), using a three-year longitudinal analysis, explored the professional socialisation of twelve undergraduate occupational therapy students over their course. Clouder suggests that there is a subtle difference between "conforming and compliance" which is both "constraining and enabling" (p.216) and that students learn to develop a sense of individual agency within the structure. She found that students reported a need to learn to play the game and meet educators' expectations. However, Clouder's study focuses on a narrow aspect of professional socialisation, whereas my study provides a detailed in-depth analysis of one person's journey of becoming an occupational therapist, using an occupational perspective. Given ongoing curricular developments and the changing context of health care professional education, it was interesting to analyse Lizzie's experience as a school leaver ten years later in the light of Clouder's findings.

To summarise being is concerned with the essence of a person, their values and attitudes, sense of self and confidence and sense of personal efficacy or agency. It is a facet of professional identity and how these intangible concepts contribute to professional identity, needs to be considered.

3.4.3. Belonging

It is noted that it is important for students to feel that they belong to their profession, that they fit in and are respected by their peers (Levett-Jones & Lathlean, 2008). It is also identified that belonging to the wider professional community and participating within this promotes professional identity (Thrysoe, Hounsgaard, Dohn & Wagner, 2010). The section considers two aspects: professional socialisation and collective identity.

3.4.3.1 Professional socialisation

Whilst the term professional socialisation is often used interchangeably with other terms, especially with that of professional identity, and is not clearly defined, there is a general broad agreement about the concept. It is certainly agreed that, like professional identity, it is a complex, on-going process, which continues throughout one's working life (Dinmohammadi, Peyrovi & Mehrdad, 2013; Linqvist et. al., 2006; Price, 2008). It is a dynamic process leading to changes in attitudes, values and beliefs, skills and knowledge (Brown, Stevens & Kermode 2013; McKenna, Scholtes, Fleming, & Gilbert, 2001).

As a result of the complex and dynamic nature of professional socialisation, there are difficulties in understanding how this develops and there is agreement that this needs further investigation, especially from an educational perspective (Clouder, 2003; Dinmohammadi, Peyrovi, Mehrdad, 2013; Krusen, 2011; Mackintosh, 2006; Turpin, Rodger & Hall, 2012; Richardson Lindquist, Engardt & Aitman, 2002). This research will explore how professional socialisation develops over time adding to this gap in the literature.

Early professional socialisation is not well understood, but it is known that students may self-select, according to their values and beliefs (McKenna, Scholtes, Fleming & Gilbert, 2001; Price, 2008; Richardson et al. 2002). The influence of parents, social contacts, life experiences, and teachers on career choice is noted in the literature (Richardson et al. 2002). Hosburgh, Perkins, Coyle and Degeling (2006, p.429) propose that professional socialisation begins before training commences. They suggest medical students, nursing and pharmacy students have significantly different attitudes and values from each other, even before they begin their professional education. They argue that pre-conceived ideas, along with the implicit curriculum which they are exposed to through professional socialisation with role models, can make attitudinal shifts difficult. This thesis explores the participants' understanding of occupational therapy, prior to beginning the course.

Turpin, Rodger and Hall (2012) identified that occupational therapy students, upon entering the profession, have a narrow understanding, focused around a bio-medical model, reflecting the general public view. This concurs with Price's (2008) findings,

which revealed that nurses entered the profession with traditional images of nursing, and subsequently experienced reality shock when their ideals did not match up to their practice experience. Turpin, Rodger and Hall (2012) highlight the importance of educators understanding the starting points of occupational therapy students, so that their perception of their chosen profession can be transformed. Professional socialisation is also subject to change in different contexts, both situationally and culturally (Krusen, 2011; Mackintosh 2006; Turpin, Rodger & Hall, 2012), resulting in a lack of contemporary research on the issue (Clouder, 2003). Professional socialisation is concerned with understanding the implicit, as well as explicit, rules of "being" in a professional context, which can prove problematic for students who have a limited time to make sense and integrate themselves into the practice area (Krusen, 2011; Richardson, Lindquist, Engardt & Aitman, 2002). This understanding of the implicit, "unspoken rules" links with previous discussions around tacit knowledge.

Whilst some professional socialisation may happen before students commence their professional education, a significant element of this will take place throughout their actual student journey. The academic setting may be the backdrop for some of the first formal socialisation processes, as students are exposed to philosophies, professional expectations and role models, but the majority of professional socialisation happens in the work place. Lave and Wenger (1991) developed a theory to contribute towards the understanding of processes of work based learning. They identified "communities of practice, informal groups, sharing an interest, bringing together a variety of experiences to learn from and share with each other. The novice participates in the group, gradually getting more involved and through learning and adopting the practice of the group, moves from the periphery becoming a full member. Lave and Wenger (1991) refer to this as situated learning, and it is a part of the learning of becoming a health-care practitioner. Graded exposure to practice based experience is seen throughout health care professional programmes, as a part of the socialisation process (Webb, Fawns & Harre, 2009, p.54). Wenger (2002) subsequently focused more on social participation and the construction of identity. A community of practice is now seen as a group which, through sharing a domain of knowledge, develops a community with supportive relationships, which reconstruct a shared identity as their practice develops. This theory contributes to how novice professionals become acculturated into the custom and practice of the group and reflect the values and behaviour expected. Often cultural practices within groups are taken for granted, implicit or difficult to articulate (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). It does, however, highlight the importance of the social aspect of learning; how learning is broader than the formal curriculum or even practice based learning and is embedded in our everyday activities and lives (Wenger, 1998, p.6).

Despite this, Orr (2013) notes that learning involves cognitive processes as well as social processes, highlighting the relationship between doing, being and belonging.

Equally, what is of relevance here, is how novices, are able to utilise individual agency and are able to develop a professional self within the community of practice, linking to the earlier discussions about being and feelings of personal efficacy and agency. The desire to conform, in order to position oneself in the social group, gaining approval and acceptance from experts is widely acknowledged (Clouder, 2003; Mackintosh, 2006. p. 954). Hence professional socialisation, as understood by Wenger (1998), could be construed as oppressive and controlling. However, Clouder (2003, p.222) suggests that professional socialisation is a "complex process" which involves differing amounts of individual agency. This is echoed by Krusen (2011) who argues that professional socialisation is very complex, and that the impact of the environment and culture of the organisation on newcomers, whether that is student, novice practitioners or new member of experienced staff, needs exploring further. She goes on to state that understanding professional acculturation in unique settings should be part of the entry level competencies, and will become even more important as occupational therapy focuses more on working at organisational, community, and population level, rather than on an individual basis.

3.4.3.2 Collective identity

Professional socialisation is also concerned with how the individual positions oneself, or identifies with the collective identity of a profession. Collective identity is a process wherein the group defines itself, shares philosophical assumptions and develops common aims and interests (Mackey, 2011 p.134), focusing on collective rather than individual values. Through collective identities, strong professional associations are formed, achieving public recognition and status, having powers to regulate their own activities and standards. Collective identity then, refers to something bigger and more formalised than a community of practice. The task of novice practitioners is to position themselves within this collective identity, whilst at the same time developing their own unique professional identity maintaining their individual agency. It is argued that, although occupational therapists throughout the world may share fundamental philosophical and professional foundations, they cannot espouse one single grand narrative; otherwise occupational therapy will become meaningless to different cultures and contexts (Iwama, 2006). Ikiugu and Rosso (2003), Mackey (2007), Mackey, (2011) and Watson (2006) also argue that occupational therapists' loss of identity may be attributed to the departure from a philosophy based upon the association of occupation and health, to the medical model. There is certainly a need within the profession to identify ways of

reconciling the tensions between pragmatism and structuralism, not only to accommodate the current political context of health and social care delivery, in terms of broadening services and developing entrepreneurial approaches, but also to drive practice rather than just responding to demands, (Greber, 2011; Hooper 2006; Mackey, 2011; Whitcombe, 2013). Therefore, Mackey (2011) argues that the challenge for occupational therapists is to use reflexive practice to develop authentic ways of working, creating freedom and space for individual agency within the professional discourse. The collective identity of occupational therapy and its communities of practice are dynamic and constantly evolving, subject to contextual, historical and philosophical influences, leading to a plurality of ways of being. Within these discourses, practitioners negotiate dynamic personal professional identities, whilst still belonging to a coherent framework. This complex ongoing process is demanding for experts (Mackey, 2011) so novice therapists will require significant support and scaffolding to create a sense of self, belonging and acceptance. How this is done and how students negotiate their journey through these complex issues is the focus of this thesis.

Belonging is concerned with the process of professional socialisation. It is concerned with how the initial ideas around their profession are developed and how these alter over time. It is concerned with how novices make sense of the unspoken, implicit culture of the workplace. Belonging is also concerned with how student or novice professionals develop allegiance to professional groups, to what extent they conform and to what extent they establish their own agency.

3.4.4 Becoming

Becoming is concerned with development, growth and potential. The process of change is important to occupational therapy; it is concerned with how people develop their potential, or adapt to change through the process of doing. As Wilcock (1999 p.6) argues becoming through doing and being is part of daily life for all people. Becoming, as a central tenant to occupational therapy, needs to be applied to both individual practitioners, in terms of their professional identity formation and continuous professional development, and also to the collective identity of occupational therapy, as it develops changes and matures as a profession (Mackey, 2007).

Becoming is closely related and inseparable from the other three dimensions of doing, being and belonging. This section reviews the occupational therapy literature concerned with becoming an occupational therapist and touches upon related literature, identifying issues which need to be explored further in this research.

3.4.4.1 Professional identity formation

Attempts have been made to investigate the processes involved in professional identity formation, however, given the lack of definitions and broad range of understandings, this body of research lacks cohesion. There is a focus on the challenges of novice practitioners adjusting into the work role, following graduation and the early years of practice, especially in the occupational therapy, nursing and teaching literature (Tryssenaar, 1999; McKenna & Green, 2004; Schepens, Aelterman & Vlerick, 2009). Recognition that this transitional period is problematic, has led to a particular focus in the research, in order to understand how both graduates and employers can be supported (Morley, 2006; Robertson & Griffiths, 2009), but that research does not address the question as to how professional identity is formed during the undergraduate learning trajectory- the focus of this enquiry.

Given that professional identity is difficult to conceptualise, attempts to measure it and how it changes are even more problematic. Numerous quantitative scales have been developed to measure professional identity, but the validity of many of these measurements are questioned (Cowin, Johnson, Wilson & Borgese, 2013). The difficulty of trying to measure professional identity over time, in different contexts, is problematic. Wenger's (1998) notion of communities of practice, with its emphasis on the social theories of learning, is a relevant framework to help understand the various aspects of professional identity formation. Its recognition that learning is partly social in nature, individually negotiated, transformative and takes place through experience and participation is reflected in much of the literature on professional identity (Bagatell, Lawrence, Schwartz & Vuernick, 2013; Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010; Wenger, 1998 p.27).

Some interesting longitudinal research around professional identity formation has been conducted, again, mainly focusing on the public sector, including teachers, and health professions. Although a wide range of approaches are used, the majority of them are qualitative in nature, as would be expected, given that they explore the subjective experience of becoming a professional. However, Lamote and Engles (2010), using a quantitative approach, focus on student teachers' identity construction. They found that exposure to practice and different contexts, undermined professional identity construction, and challenged the student's initial ideas. They suggest that there is not a direct linear progression of professional identity in students, but that they are continuously engaged in short term shifts and reconstructions, particularly after the first six months and after placement experiences, which undermine their initial ideas and professional identity construction. Similarly, Coster et al. (2008), focusing on inter-professional education, found that professional identity declined over time, especially between baseline and the beginning of year 2, despite being high on admission to the health professional course. They suggest that this is due to the impact of clinical

placement and the reality shock of the dissonance between expectations of their chosen career and the reality of practice. Another quantitative study carried out by McKenna, Scholtes, Fleming and Gilbert (2001) involved a survey of 84 first and fourth year OT students; they explored how student's attitudes to disability, career plan and understanding of what make a good OT changes over the course of the education. Whilst this study, like much of the literature, does not focus directly upon professional identity, it is concerned with attitudes which are an implicit part of the professional sense of self. My research highlights the significant impact that clinical placements and the clinicians themselves have upon the changing of attitudes and the importance of role models. All these quantitative pieces of research, fail to explore any affective aspects of professional development formation, indeed Coster et al (2008) recommend that further qualitative research is carried out to explore motivation supporting professional development formation.

Reid, Dahlgren, Petocz and Dahlgren (2008), carried out an important international qualitative study, in Europe and Australia adding to the understanding of professional identity formation. The journeyman project, in a European context, explored students' preparation for working life by their academic studies across a variety of disciplines. In contrast, the professional entity project in Australia involved a series of inductive studies in different subject areas using the information gained to inform further studies exploring how students understand the nature of professional work. Both projects interviewed over 500 students. The Journeymen project found that some courses focused on rational concepts, that is, those aspects of the curriculum which had obvious linkage with their future professional work, such as problem solving on engineering courses, whilst others had a larger component of opaque subjects, which may lack apparent relevance to their future needs, for example, high emphasis on academic maths in early parts of engineering courses (Reid, Dahlgren, Petocz & Dahlgren, 2008 p.735). The professional entity project findings suggested that professional identity could be conceptualised in a hierarchical model on three levels, the narrowest being at the "extrinsic, technical level," (Reid, Dahlgren, Petocz & Dahlgren, 2008 p.735), comprising of technical skills to be used in the work situation; the next level described as the "extrinsic meaning level" (ibid), where students seek to develop their understanding of the discipline by making sense of the meaning of discipline subjects; and the broadest level, described as the "intrinsic meaning level," which refers to instances when students take a personal approach to learning and integrate this into other areas of their life, (ibid). Using the data from these two projects Reid, Dahlgren, Petocz and Dahlgren (2008) develop more abstract meta-categories contributing to the understanding of professional identity formation. They compare how professional identity develops in clear, as opposed to

diffuse, fields. Clear fields, more relevant to this study, are those which have a professional end focus e.g. psychology students feel that their learning also involves learning about themselves, and they identify clinical placements as a major contributor to their learning; whereas diffuse fields are focused on the subject discipline, such as political science. In the diffuse fields students report academics as being significant role models; their learning is focused on curriculum based tasks only. Reid, Dahlgren, Petocz and Dahlgren (2008) conclude that developing a sense of identity within a profession can take a number of forms: applying knowledge in real life situations; finding relevance and reflecting the communities of practice notions. Finally, they consider that professional identity formation can be supported by providing exposure to different professional contexts, role models and an involvement of practicing professionals in the curriculum. The relevance of these findings will be considered in relation to the current study.

3.4.4.2 Professional identity formation in health care professionals

There is a body of health care literature focusing upon the socialisation of nurses (Price, 2008). Some of the initial concepts, with which student nurses enter the profession, are challenged and the importance of role models is emphasised. Mackintosh (2006) found that students lose their caring focus in exchange for a coping focus. Since 2000 several longitudinal studies in occupational therapy have been carried out, looking at this issue, demonstrating that it is an area of consternation for the profession, (Bjorklund, 1999, 2000, 2006; Clouder, 2003). As discussed previously under Being and Belonging, Clouder (2003) studied the professional socialisation of twelve full time students, however despite the fact that Clouder claims to use a longitudinal approach, her analysis failed to capture changes over time as students' progress along their journey. Another study, relevant to my study, is a longitudinal one carried out over six years in Sweden. Bjorklund (1999, 2000, 2006) explored the developing understanding of student occupational therapists from initial enrolment through to three years post qualifying, in relation to paradigm shifts. Using content analysis of essays written at three different points, she found that initially the students held a "public view", that is knowledge about occupational therapy which is broadly understood by general society (Bjorklund & Svennson, 2006). The important and difficult role of helping students develop a strong professional identity, despite a vague professional profile, is highlighted (Bjorklund, 1999, p.19). The nearly-qualified students developed a theoretical view, influenced by the occupational therapy curriculum, they described themselves as "acting as" rather than "being" occupational therapists (Bjorklund, 2000, p.106). However, whilst these studies present a useful way of conceptualising students' progressive understanding of occupational therapy, they do not address occupational identity issues, which have already been highlighted as gaps in the recent literature. Another shorter longitudinal

study, which is worthy of mention here, is a phenomenological study carried out by Tyssenaar (1999) exploring the lived experience of becoming an occupational therapist. This paper is focused on a graduate's experience in the first four months of practice in an American context, but is relevant to this study because of the phenomenological approach taken. Given that the focus is on a graduate, it highlights the need for this issue to be explored further at pre-registration level. The study identified the impact of "reality shock", as discussed earlier, as the new graduate comes to terms with the reality of working life and practice. Other pertinent issues were the impact of clients as teachers, inter-disciplinary relationships, and role models (or lack of them) (Tyssenaar, 1999, p.111).

Finally, a shorter study by Davies (2008), exploring metaphors used by students, sought to understand the attitudes and belief which inform the professional identity of 124 newly enrolled and Level II fieldwork occupational therapy students.

This research is useful to my study because of its interest in metaphor. Davies (2008, p.242) refers to the "ambiguous gap filler professional identity", and seeks to steer students away from this image. This research is discussed more in the methodology chapter, due to the use of metaphor. Davies found that student occupational therapists have a stronger sense of power and control during their course than upon graduation. She suggests that over time students realise that autonomy and empowerment needs to be promoted in the client and, as therapists, they need to be more of a facilitator and guide. She states that this changing attitude is promoted whilst on practice placements and can contribute to the reality shock discussed earlier. Davies suggests that students can learn a great deal from unmotivated and challenging clients. By listening to their clients' stories, students can be better prepared for client autonomy.

Reviewing the literature then, in terms of operationalising the construct of professional identity, and analysing the literature on professional identity formation, a number of themes have been identified. These include: the impact of inter-professional education working, practice placements, learning from clients, and the importance of role models.

3.4.4.3 Inter-professional working.

Increasingly, inter-disciplinary working is featured in all walks of professional life. This is especially so in health and social care, where services are working towards integration, inter-agency and cross- boundary working. Consequently, inter-professional education (IPE), a common feature of most health and social care professional education programmes, is receiving a large amount of attention, in terms of effective ways of facilitating IPE, the barriers and inhibitors of inter-professional education, and the impact

it has on students (Finch, 2001; Norman, 2005). Some of this literature makes links with professional identity formation, although often the central focus is not professional identity, but IPE and how this affects other aspects of professional life (Davies et al., 2011; King & Ross, 2003).

In a qualitative study exploring occupational therapy students' experience of IPE, Howell (2009) found that OT students sometimes struggle to articulate the focus of their own profession and to differentiate it from other health care professions. She found that this was a particular feature of students who were newly enrolled on the programme and was partly attributable to the fact that, generally, OT as a profession is poorly understood in health care. She suggested that this impacts upon a student's confidence and sense of professional identity and that this should be considered when designing IPE curricula, ensuring that students are firstly equipped with the skills of team working, conflict resolution, and an understanding of professional roles. The participants identified that it was essential to learn to work in inter-professional teams in university as a preparation for the work environment. My study will be sensitive to the impact of IPE on professional identity.

Another study in a British context, looking at final-year physiotherapy students' perceptions and experiences of inter-professional learning in the university and placement setting, found that increased personal and professional confidence improved their developing professional identity (Davies, et al., 2011). However, in contrast, 21% of the student responses indicated that inter-professional learning on clinical placements was unimportant (p.143). The authors note that in order to engage with team working on placements, students must have a strong sense of professional identity, based upon an ability to think flexibly in response to changing situation demands and that students will develop this at different rates. The students also reported that other professionals valuing their role, contributed to their self-esteem. It highlighted that exploring the relationship between this sense of growing self-esteem and identity was beyond the scope of their study. The changing nature of these ideas and the impact of inter-professional learning is important here.

3.4.4.4 Practice education.

The importance of opportunities afforded, whilst on practice placement, for developing professional identities has already been touched on. In most professional education programmes, a significant period of "on the job" training, under guided supervision and assessment, is needed to develop professional competence in the workplace. In occupational therapy, students must complete 1000 hours of supervised practice to be able to apply for a licence to practise (World Federation of Occupational Therapy, 2004).

Practice education is a significant part of the curriculum, providing opportunities for students to integrate theory and practice, and develop the skills needed for professional practice. Practice placements are undertaken by students to promote integration of theory and practice and to ensure that, upon graduation, students are fit and safe to practise, as well as being educationally informed (Lawrie & Polglase, 2012). Placements are all supervised in some shape or form by experienced occupational therapists (practice educators), who have undertaken additional training in health professional education, and adult learning.

Some of the longitudinal research reviewed above, highlighted some of the difficult issues which can arise when a student enters the work force, including feeling disillusioned and struggling to cope with the reality of practice (Coster et al., 2008; Lamote & Engles, 2010), resulting in them needing to make adjustments to their original ideas about their chosen profession and motivations (Mackintosh, 2006; McKenna, Scholtes, et al., 2001). However, despite this practice, placement is an essential part of professional education, crucial for their professional socialisation and acculturation (Krusen, 2011), resulting in a developing sense of professional self. During practice placements students come to understand the unspoken rules (Krusen, 2011), and either make sense of these and accommodate them into their own practice, or use less effective strategies by simply trying to fit in and learning to “play the game” (Clouder, 2003, p.217). The impact of practice placements has a significant effect on students developing professional identity and is discussed in detail in this thesis.

3.4.4.5 Role models

Learning from role models is a widely understood aspect of social learning theory, and practice placement provides novices with direct access to role models. Role models may be their practice educator, other occupational therapists, or indeed other health care professionals. Not surprisingly, the relationship between practice educators and students is pivotal (Field, 2004). Mackenzie (2002) notes that students express concern about not getting on with their educator, dealing with criticism and not meeting their educators’ expectations. These concerns also link into the issues discussed under professional socialisation about not fitting in and learning to play the game (Clouder, 2003). The nature of this relationship, how this relationship changes over time, as students gain more autonomy, and its impact upon the students developing professional identity, has been explored within this study.

3.4.4.6 Service users as teachers

Related to this issue of learning through people in practice, the role of service users in contributing to health professional education programmes has been on the agenda for many years. However, this is now gathering momentum and strength made explicit in the HCPC standards of training (HCPC, 2014). Student healthcare professionals have direct access to service users on their practice placements, and it is during these times that they get the opportunity to put theory into practice. As they interact with service users and others in the workplace, they begin to develop their own therapeutic persona, as discussed in the “being” section. In the literature, both students and educators, recognise the role of service users as teachers. In Tryssenaar’s study of the lived experience of becoming an occupational therapist, focusing on a newly graduated occupational therapist Maggie, her participant, highlights the importance of clients in promoting job satisfaction and how “challenging clients” (Tryssenaar, 1999, p.110) provide rich learning experiences. Similarly, in terms of Davies’ study using metaphor to understand professional identity development, the role of service users as teachers helping students deconstruct and re-establish their understanding of their own professional identity, in terms of power and authority is highlighted. It was interesting to learn how the service users that the participants engage with contribute to professional identity development.

“Becoming” then, can be seen as the over-arching context for the three themes of doing, being and belonging. Becoming is also concerned with the changes that the student experiences overtime. This review has explored some longitudinal research into becoming a student occupational therapist; some of this is dated now, whilst some of it primarily focuses on one specific issue i.e. inter-professional working or the impact of practice placements. There is a lack of a cohesive narrative that focuses on the various trials, tribulations and moments of joy in the journey to becoming an occupational therapist, over the three-year undergraduate journey, hence this is what this research explores.

3.5 Summary

In summary, then, this review has highlighted a number of issues considering the professional identity formation of occupational therapists. It also has identified some gaps in this body of knowledge.

The review has been organised under the four themes of doing, being, becoming and belonging in congruence with the occupational science philosophy. There is significant overlap and inter-relationships between these themes, often with similar issues arising in each theme. For example, the impact of the practice educator was considered under doing in terms of their role in assessing students competence, under being in terms of

meeting expectations and conforming or complying, under belonging more implicitly in terms of identifying with a community of practice and finally, under becoming when considering how practice placements and educators contribute to the longitudinal formation of professional identity.

A number of salient points have arisen which are explored further. Context and how this impacts upon students' competence was a clear issue in doing, but again cannot be separated from the other themes. Alongside this was the impact that external regulation and expectations has on professionalism. The understanding of tacit knowledge, or unspoken rules was considered under both doing and belonging. How students come to understand the unspoken rules and knowledge of practice needs exploring.

Under being, the importance of congruence with personal and professional values was considered and how reality shock can be experienced when these values are challenged. A significant consideration under this theme was the developing sense of agency and how this is influenced or threatened.

In terms of belonging, attitudes of the students towards occupational therapy on commencement of their course, and how this changes over time, was identified. How students struggle to articulate the concepts of occupational therapy is seen as having an influence on their developing professional identity. The review also considered the usefulness and limitation of the communities of practice theory in terms of this research. Although there is some literature concerning professional socialisation, its influence on professional identity in terms of occupational therapy needs developing further.

Finally, in terms of becoming, the dynamic nature of professional identity formation was again considered. Practice placements, the impact of practice educators and service users as teachers, and inter-professional working were all considered. The need for further longitudinal research, focusing on professional identity formation is identified, especially from an occupational perspective.

The review also identified gaps within the knowledge base. It was noted that there is a need to explore how motivation and effective issues of the individual affect professional development formation. There is a lack of focus on the relationships of practice educators as gatekeeper of the profession.

Chapter 4 Methodology

This chapter considers the philosophical roots of occupational therapy, my epistemological and ontological assumptions and positionality, demonstrating that a qualitative paradigm was relevant to study the professional identity formation in occupational therapy students. The chapter will then move on to consider the alignment more specifically, of hermeneutic phenomenology, lifeworld approaches and IPA as a suitable research methodology, considering congruence with the aforementioned and the occupational science conceptual framework. The chapter will conclude considering the synergy between longitudinal designs and IPA.

4.1 Philosophical roots of occupational therapy

A brief history of occupational therapy has already been given in Chapter Two to set the work in context. It is pertinent at this point, however, to focus on the philosophical underpinning of occupational therapy to demonstrate congruence with the methodological approach of this study. Occupational therapy as a profession derived its original philosophical underpinnings from a pragmatic perspective in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when it was concerned with Moral treatment and the Arts and Craft movement, as purported by the social philanthropist and Quaker Tuke (1732-1822) and French psychiatrist Pinel (1745-1826), (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). Its focus was on the restoration of health through participation in daily activities. This movement encouraged people with a mental illness to be treated humanely, encouraging quality relationships and social interaction. This was in direct response to the earlier models of workhouses and asylums where people had been subject to physical punishment and restraint.

However, the biomedical model of health gradually became dominant in the western world as medicine asserted its influence (Turpin & Iwama, 2011), and consequently occupational therapy was influenced at that time by reductionist, mechanist ideas. Occupational therapy aligned itself with a positivist, scientific paradigm as it sought to gain greater professional recognition (Wilcock, 2001). The focus of occupational therapy treatment was on prescribed activities which were carefully selected to exercise specific muscle groups or exercise a particular area of the body. The concept of meaningful occupation was not prevalent and "remediation of impairment rather than the development of self-health" (Turner & Iwama 2011, p. 318) was the intervention strategy.

In the latter half of the twentieth century the biomedical model came under considerable criticism (Turpin & Iwama, 2011) and a broader model, the bio-psychosocial model,

became main-stream. This model takes a more holistic view of health, and the person is seen within the context of their social environment, as well as their internal biomedical and psychological systems (ibid). This model is one which reflects more accurately the original philosophies of occupational therapy acknowledging the differing social realities for individuals.

As we progress into the twenty- first century, a socio-ecological model of health is increasingly asserting its influence on western health care (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). This model conceptualises health as determined by a wide range of factors, including: environmental, economic, genetic and individual, as well as the previously considered biological, psychological and social issues. This is encouraging occupational therapy to take a broader public health and population approach in its delivery of interventions.

Additionally, there is greater realisation that health and social care workers need to be culturally competent (Awaad, 2003), as the individuals, groups and populations with who they are working are becoming increasingly diverse. Alternative philosophies to the dominant western concepts of health and occupation, (for example the Kawa Model), are now beginning to challenge some of the fundamental constructs of western occupational therapy (Watson, 2006), highlighting that there is no universal model of health, and that a culturally relevant perspective may be more effective in guiding health care delivery.

This brief overview of the philosophical changes in occupational therapy has shown how the profession has been influenced by dominant paradigm shifts, resulting in practitioners espousing a wide variety of philosophical assumptions with little internal coherence.

Adding to these shifting paradigms, there is now a significant tension in the profession as it strives to engage with current economically-driven health and social care positivist philosophies valuing science and quantifiable evidence-based results, where randomised controlled trials are often considered the gold standard, whilst focusing on the profession's fundamental principles of valuing the individual experience and the essence of being (Christiansen, 2006; Blair & Robertson, 2005).

Indeed, the art and science of occupational therapy is perhaps why the profession is sometimes misunderstood. Occupational therapy needs to combine epistemological viewpoints, drawing upon scientific medical knowledge, as well as reflexive, personal, contextual and situational reasoning. Turpin and Iwama (2011, p. 36) suggest it is this "dual attention" which leads to the "complexity of reasoning" as being required from occupational therapists. The profession has been described as being situated on a

“medical/ social fault line” which requires it to be “theoretically eclectic and epistemologically pluralistic” (Blair & Robertson, 2005, p.275). The positivist medical knowledge is often the most valued by society, but the strength of occupational therapy, as has been shown in chapter two, is its unique emphasis on the essence of occupation. Ignoring the softer, ontological position of occupational science will be to the profession’s peril, creating even more dissonance in its professional identity (Blair & Robertson, 2005; Greber, 2011).

4.2 My perspectives: ontological and epistemological considerations

It is out of these tensions that the research design considerations influencing this study have been born. Having been educated as an occupational therapist in the early eighties, the dominant paradigm at that time was a reductionist, medical model. As this did not resonate with my understanding of my professional role at that point in my professional development, I quickly specialised in working with people with learning disabilities. Here I felt I could develop a more holistic person-centred way of working with my clients and be more autonomous in my practice, since I was largely removed from delivering the prescriptive exercises and medical interventions under the watchful eyes of consultant physicians. Despite working in a less medically dominated environment, the dominant positivist philosophy which founded the backdrop to both my education and early years of practice has continued to have an influence on my thinking, albeit subconsciously. If questioned, I would have claimed, at that time that I was of a relativist persuasion, accepting each person’s own world view as truth for that person at that moment in time, and recognising that all social phenomena are interpreted differently by individuals (Robson & McCartan, 2016). As a person-centred occupational therapist working with people with learning disabilities with extreme challenging behaviour, I have shunned many of the behavioural approaches. Instead I have used an occupational framework focusing on occupation to establish rapport, promote self-esteem and understand and work with people (Goodman, Hurst, & Locke, 2009). As such then, my professional interventions have tended to take an individual approach, finding out what works for each person, rather than focusing on quantitative evidence. I have tended to understand reality as individually constructed and interpreted in social action (Robson & McCartan 2016). However, it is only recently as I have begun to explore the notions of phenomenology within my doctoral studies, that I have become aware of the pervasive influence of the positivist paradigm on my professional thinking. Even though I felt that, as an experienced therapist and lecturer, my focus was on the individual experience, I have come to recognise that I frequently use language and ideas influenced by a positivist philosophy. For example, initially in developing my research proposal, I

considered issues such as bias subjectivity and objectivity, rather than engaging with ideas such as positionality and co-construction.

Considering my ontological assumptions, that is the nature of reality (Creswell, 2007) I state my ontological perspectives as:

- Reality is not created by scientific law or nature but by people's interpretation and perception which is powerfully influenced by others.
- This understanding is an internal often unconscious attitude, which cannot be accurately represented outside of each person's mind.
- Experience changes our understanding of reality.
- Appearance and reality are two different things; there are often hidden contradictions and tensions.

Moving on from these ontological assumptions to consider my epistemological position, I would explain my understanding as:

- We cannot fully understand other people's experiences and interpretations; we can hope to increase our understanding, but any such exposition remains partial.
- People are creative and responsive and whilst they may be influenced by the social world, they are also capable of change and action.
- The aim of social research is to explore the hidden and uncover the depth, to challenge perceived social reality and promote empowerment.
- As an insider researcher, I am as much a part of the research as the participants and will therefore influence this, given my relationships and my own experiences and interpretations.
- There is no absolute truth out there, any context and situation determines our understanding, which is subject to change.
- I am interested in the "how's" and "what's" rather than the "whys", recognising that there are not necessarily simple cause and effect relationships when working with people.

Given these assumptions, and considering how my scientific professional education has influenced my thinking as described above, I would place myself on the critical realist continuum. I acknowledge that there is no absolute truth and have always been focused on how individuals respond differently to illness, disability and occupational deprivation

and how the same intervention is not always appropriate for someone else in similar circumstances. I work passionately with the occupational therapy students to help them appreciate that they cannot assume a “recipe” approach to working with people and need to develop heightened professional reasoning, personal awareness and flexibility, to facilitate optimal therapeutic outcomes.

4.3. My positionality

I have considered how I have managed my positionality from a reflexive perspective in chapter one. However, my position as an insider-researcher, as alluded to above, has also had a significant influence on the choice of research design. Interpretative phenomenological analysis values subjectivity and I have used this insider perspective as an opportunity to add to the richness and understanding of the study (Costley, Elliott & Gibbs, 2010).

I am a senior lecturer, teaching on the participant’s course and also personal tutor to some of them. I know all the participants, having lectured to them both formally in lectures and workshops, and informally in seminars and tutorials throughout their course. Some of the respondents were also my personal tutees, with whom I developed a deeper working relationship over the three years, acting as a guidance tutor, and meeting with them at least twice a year, providing pastoral support and guidance in their academic and professional development. I am also practice placement co-ordinator, responsible for the organisation, and management of the practice experience, a significant part of the occupational therapy course. I liaise with practitioners and practice educators ensuring adequate quality placements are available; manage the allocation system; monitor the student assessments; visit students whilst on placement and monitor the student feedback on their placement experience. All these duties mean that I get to know the students very well over the three years in a variety of contexts.

Initially, I naively thought that I would be able to take an objective stance in my research, bracketing my assumptions, and making “objective” interpretations, as I am required to make professional judgments as part of my professional duties on a frequent basis. However, I now recognise that all inquiry, knowledge and judgements are contextualised and co-constructed. My ontological and epistemological understandings, my experience and interpretations will all significantly direct and affect the research process.

When reflecting upon the issues of positionality within my research, it seems that there are three issues to consider: situatedness, relationship with the respondents, and power.

The fact that I am studying the development of occupational therapy students, as an occupational therapist, having gone through similar processes, (albeit over 25 years ago) inevitably means that I have memories and expectations of what I may hear. It could be argued that it is impossible to make any accurate representation, being too close to the subject (James, 2011). However equally I argue, that as an insider, I am able to understand and access meanings that outsiders would miss (Finlay, 2003). This dual position then, can offer an extremely powerful opportunity; rather than seeing subjectivity as a weakness, it can enhance opportunities for understanding (James, 2011). Just as a practitioner maximises the therapeutic use of self within a therapist client relationship, greater depth and richness can be achieved in the research process by reflexively using one's own situation.

As an insider researcher, and having a relationship with the participants as described above, I need to be aware of the relationships and interactions, recognising that these are constantly shifting, both from the respondent's perspective and my own. At times, the respondents may feel emboldened to speak directly about an issue on which they have strong opinions, whilst at other times they may acquiesce and say what they think their tutor wants them to hear. There is therefore, a constant relational, interactional and shifting re-negotiation of positions. Similarly, at times, I may respond as a therapist, whilst at other times, a researcher and at others as a tutor. The issues of responding as a researcher rather than a therapist or personal tutor were paramount in my mind, influencing my ability to respond and formulate the sequential questions throughout the interview. In a longitudinal study such as this, there is also a temporal issue to consider, as the research relationship deepens and changes over time.

As I am an occupational therapy lecturer working closely with all the participants, it would be impossible to bracket off any assumptions. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009), however, advocate for close engagement with participants, rather than a bracketing off, as a means to attempt to access the participants' experience. However, the researcher also needs to stand back from this first-hand perspective and question what is being offered from a different viewpoint. The researcher needs to be able to take both an empathic and questioning role, as they attempt to understand what it is like and also make sense of this (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009, p.36). This is a suitable approach to take, considering my relationship with the participants. It is important that I develop a close understanding of the participants' experience, which will be supported by the fact that I have detailed knowledge of requirements of the curriculum, the educational processes employed and some of the group dynamics within the course. However, there is naturally some distance as a result of different roles, which will facilitate moving between the etic and emic stand points. My epistemological and ontological assumptions

acknowledge that research is co-constructed, and works towards joint meanings produced within a social context (Finlay, 2003). The interactive and ongoing nature of the interviews enabled understandings and interpretations to be clarified.

At this point it is important to acknowledge issues due to power relationships. It may have been that the participants coloured their responses in their eagerness to please (Goodson & Sikes, 2001) and I needed to reassure the participants and I tried to guard against this by being reflexive and monitoring my own responses. It would be naïve to assume that I was able to represent the student voice without contamination from my own cultural lens as a senior lecturer. I also needed to be aware that, as a lecturer, I perhaps wanted the students to “perform” and say the right things which reflecting my effectiveness as a lecturer.

My approach to reflexivity has already been outlined in chapter one. My reflexive diary informed the research process, however, reflexivity in itself is not a panacea for enhancing weak research, and care needed to be taken to ensure that the simple act of engaging in reflexivity is not used as an excuse to claim more authority.

4.4 Methodological considerations.

Given that the focus of this research is on student experience, it makes sense to use a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is concerned with inductive, exploratory questions, aiming to understand the social world. It aims to shed light on the messy intricacies of the social world (Finlay, 2011). It does not seek to answer closed questions or establish the reasons why things are so. Instead, it is concerned with how things are experienced, and the meanings that people bring to these experiences (Finlay, 2006). Because it is concerned with feelings and things which can't be quantified, it often appeals to therapists (Finlay 2011; Nayar & Stanley, 2015). My research seeks to explore how students experience being an occupational therapy student in their particular situation. It seeks to understand how they make sense of the tensions within the occupational therapy profession, and how they manage the various challenges they encounter on the course. It seeks to understand how they experience the doing, being, becoming and belonging of occupational therapy and how they establish a coherent occupational identity which supports their integrity.

My positionality statement above has highlighted the multifaceted relationships that I have with the participants and therefore these need considering within the research. Qualitative research recognises the significance of the researcher's relationships (Finlay, 2006). Additionally, qualitative research can better accommodate my position as an insider researcher by making use of reflexivity.

The literature review in Chapter Three highlighted a lack of cogent inquiry into professional identity as a broad concept. Whilst there are some longitudinal studies, there are only a few studies which capture the lived experience and there are none which do this from an undergraduate and occupational perspective. Given the research focus, my epistemological persuasion and positionality and the findings of the literature review, it seems that it is appropriate to use a longitudinal qualitative approach. Furthermore, Nayar & Stanley (2015 p.9) stress the alignment between qualitative methodologies, occupational science and occupational therapy in understanding the place of occupation in people's lives.

4.5 Phenomenology

Whilst there are many qualitative methodological approaches, given that I wanted to study the experience of being an occupational therapy student and their professional identity formation, and also given the methodological considerations outlined above, phenomenology was an appropriate starting point. In essence, phenomenology is concerned with studying the lived experience or life-world (Laverty, 2003). It aims to uncover the, often taken for granted, hidden phenomena. It seeks to get as close as possible to the experience by moving beyond, or putting aside what is already understood and instead focuses on how that experience is felt, conveyed and communicated by a person who has undergone the experience (Nayar & Stanley, 2015). Before committing to phenomenology I also considered using grounded theory and narrative research.

Given that as outlined in my literature review there is a paucity of research on professional identity formation especially in occupational therapy, a grounded theory approach may also have been useful. This approach seeks to move beyond description to generate a theory based upon the experiences of participants in the study (Creswell, 2007). By engaging in an iterative process of data collection and analysis until the data saturation is reached a theory is gradually developed based upon a constant comparison of codes and categories generated from the participant's responses. The researcher is aiming to develop a general explanation shaped by a large number of participant responses. Its epistemological underpinnings are positivist but it has increasingly been used within a constructivist paradigm recognising the impact of the researcher's view, hierarchies of power, relationships and social situations (Creswell, 2007). However, grounded theory was not used in this study due to a lack of congruence with its epistemological underpinning and the nature of the study and also I felt that systematic inductive approach would be difficult to achieve due to my positionality.

I was also attracted to a narrative approach in that I wanted to capture the participant's stories. However, as a stand-alone approach there were a number of inherent difficulties. I was not sure how rich and detailed the stories would be. There are also issues of who owns the story, whose version gets authenticity and how conflicting stories are managed (Creswell, 2007). I wanted to progress the research further than just retelling the experiences. I was therefore looking for something between a grounded theory approach with its positivist leanings and a narrative approach which was more descriptive.

Phenomenology, with its purpose to reduce individual experiences of the phenomenon under consideration and to then achieve a "description of the universal essence" (Creswell, 2007, p.58) addressed these concerns. I needed an approach that would enable me to focus on the lived experience of the participants, seeking to understand their world, within a social construction whilst, acknowledging my insider researcher position. Phenomenology seeks to understand phenomena which are tacitly known but not necessarily researched in-depth, the experience may be situated in the context of an ongoing narrative, and is often unnoticed, taken for granted or unquestioned (Finlay, 2011). Phenomenology is a dynamic, evolving way of thinking about and exploring the social world (Laverty, 2003). There are different variants of phenomenology but may be broadly separated into two approaches, descriptive and hermeneutic (Creswell, 2007; Finlay, 2011). Descriptive phenomenology, based upon Husserl's concepts of reducing phenomena to the essence of experience, requires researchers to bracket their own suppositions and avoid bringing external theory to the analysis (Finlay, 2011). I felt therefore, that this approach would not be suitable for my study given my positionality and the fact that I wanted to use an occupational perspective. Hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with understanding the lived experience through attention to language or text, following the tradition of Heidegger. Heidegger emphasised the human condition of "being", and that people could only be understood in the context of their cultural, historic and social contexts. This aligns itself with one of occupational science's central concerns, that of being. Heidegger suggested that the world and the individual constitute each other; that is, as people seek meaning from their interactions in the world, so their background and experiences affect how the world is construed. Heidegger developed the notion of the hermeneutic circle in an attempt to make deeper and fuller interpretations, moving back and forth between the parts and the whole of the text or experience. The lived experience is understood using themes and interpreted using theoretical, historical, cultural or philosophical perspectives (Finlay, 2011). The importance of the researcher's perspectives in co-constructing the account is important, using their own experience and empathetic understandings. Given that hermeneutic

phenomenology has a “commitment beyond science towards the humanities” (Finlay, 2011, p. 111) it seems congruent with occupational therapy. Heidegger’s premise is consistent with occupational therapy philosophy, being concerned with the everyday and the experience of doing, which leads to an understanding of being. It is an ideal approach, congruent with occupational science, and especially considering the occupational identity focus of this research.

Lifeworld approaches may be considered as a separate branch of phenomenology although equally it can be argued that all phenomenology is concerned with lifeworld (Finlay, 2011). Lifeworld refers to the natural pre-reflective taken for granted world involving the lived experience in time, and space. It is concerned with both internal subjectivity and the external context which adds meaning. The participants in my study were immersed in their journey of becoming occupational therapists and therefore their lifeworld, of doing, being, becoming and belonging was a central consideration. Finlay, (2011, p. 127) argues that reflective lifeworld research as it theorises between relationships and the world offers a hermeneutic interpretation and is congruent with a “caring science” approach. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach incorporating a lifeworld perspective then is entirely congruent with nature of this study.

4.6 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

The study uses an IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis) framework. Interpretative phenomenological analysis has developed from hermeneutic phenomenology. It distinguishes itself from other hermeneutic approaches in that it focuses upon the individual and their sense- making (Finlay, 2011). This then makes it an ideal methodological approach, as I follow the professional identity formation student and how Lizzie internalises these changes to form a new coherent occupational identity.

It is interesting to note that a significant amount of IPA studies are often concerned, albeit not intentionally, with identity and life transition (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.163). This can be explained to some extent by considering that the focus of IPA studies are often around substantive life issues and it is therefore likely that participants make links to their sense of self (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.163). For example, some studies show how the impact of a long term condition affects people’s sense of identity, as they seek to understand their loss of previous roles and come to terms with a new sense of self, reconstructing their identity (Dickson, Knussen & Flowers, 2008; Preston, Marshall & Bucks, 2007). Others focus upon the impact of major life events or transitions on a person’s sense of identity, such as retirement (Roncaglia, 2006) and motherhood (Smith, 1999). Of particular interest to occupational therapists, and indeed to this study, using an occupational framework, is the impact of activities on a person’s

response to their situation and ultimately sense of self (Reynolds, 2003; Reynolds & Prior 2006). Clearly, whilst all these studies do not make identity the central focus, participants make important links to identity, development or reconstruction as they make sense of their experiences. It therefore seemed congruent to use IPA for this study, focusing on professional identity formation.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis has developed over the last 10 years, emerging from the health psychology field. It is, however, being increasingly used outside health psychology in health related areas, being primarily concerned with people and predicaments (Smith, 2004), and is now advocated in occupational therapy, (Finlay, 2010). IPA is congruent with occupational therapy philosophy (Clarke, 2009; Cronin-Davis, Butler & Mayers, 2009). It is suggested that IPA is a useful methodology for occupational therapy to seek a deeper understanding of the experiences of clients, carers and colleagues (Clarke, 2009). As has already been discussed, occupational therapy focuses on the individual experience; working in a client-centred way and does not have a “one size fits all” approach. The therapist facilitates the client to tell their own story and identify their goals and focus for intervention. The therapist listens to the client’s story and uses their professional knowledge, skills and judgement to develop interventions, interpreting the subjective experience of the client. Therefore, Cronin-Davies, Butler and Mayers, (2009) argue that using a higher order interpretation process is a compatible methodology for occupational therapists, as it allows the participant’s voice to be heard, as well as facilitating the researcher to draw upon theory, understanding and expertise, to interpret the experience.

At the centre of IPA research are two philosophical premises, that of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). The focus of any IPA inquiry is how individuals interpret and understand a particular experience by formulating a biographical story. Its focus is on the subtleties of participants’ described experiences and facilitating the participants’ telling of their own story in their own words (Reynolds, 2003). The researcher is interested in making sense of the participant making sense; hence a double hermeneutic process (Smith & Osborn, 2003), resulting in joint product created by both the participant and the researcher (Smith, et al., 1997). The ongoing longitudinal nature of the research allowed me to share my preliminary interpretations and reflections at the beginning of each interview, and the interactive nature of the interviews facilitated ongoing reflection as the interview progressed. The caveat of course is to ensure that the interpretations remain grounded within the interview text (Finlay, 2011). This then guides the process that this research will take. Using both individual interviews and focus groups, the participants (students) are invited to reflect upon their experience of becoming occupational therapists, (the use of a single case

study approach and focus groups is discussed in section 5.3 and 5.8). As they do so, they will be encouraged to use their emerging knowledge to make sense of this journey, using the Kawa metaphor to guide this reflection. The researcher will then interpret these reflections. The central concern is how the individual experiences the development of their professional identity, and their personal account of the experience (Clarke 2009). The aim is to explore, describe, interpret and situate the ways in which the participants make sense (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006) of their changing identity as they become occupational therapists.

The nature of this particular research demands that participants are able to tell their story, IPA seeks to “explore, understand and communicate the viewpoints of the participants”, (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006, p.103), and therefore will support the research aims. It goes a stage further than developing descriptive representation of an experience, as it explores how the phenomena has been understood by a particular person in a particular context and then attempts to make sense of what that means for that person (ibid.). It aims to highlight “how” and “so what” but not the “why”. Hence this study seeks to understand the journey of becoming an occupational therapist. It explores an experiential perspective, which is not often heard in qualitative terms, but is increasingly focused on terms of quantitative opinion (i.e. the national student survey). To fully utilise the potential of IPA, an interpretive account will be developed.

Smith (2004) suggests that there are three essential features of an IPA study. Firstly, that it is idiographic; that is, the focus is on the individual and seeks to fully understand each person’s unique situation. He advocates that each case is closely interrogated and themes identified, before moving onto the next case. Smith (2004) suggests that only when each case has been closely analysed, should attempts be made to compare on a case by case basis, to develop more general or deeper inferences. This approach then, calls for small sample sizes, and indeed Smith (2004), challenges researchers to develop more single case methodologies.

Secondly, an IPA study is inductive. It does not aim to impose any particular theory or structure on the data, but ensures that the data emerges from the text and remains closely aligned to the same. The participants have been encouraged to use the Kawa model, but the semi -structured interviews have not been constructed exclusively around the model and participants were encouraged to explore any pertinent issues (see Appendix 1). The Kawa model was used in the second level of analysis, that is, after the idiographic analysis had been completed. The researcher remained open to other issues and themes emerging from the data.

Thirdly, the researcher must use the data to interrogate what is already known. Smith (2004) uses the example to illustrate his point by referring to his own research, investigating the practice of unprotected sexual intercourse amongst gay men. He uses his data to question previously made assumptions that gay men engage in unprotected sexual intercourse to enhance pleasure, but Smith suggests that his data shows that decision making in this area is linked to expression of commitment and love. The literature review has already shown that professional identity formation is influenced by the experience of doing on placement and this effects being in terms of how a student experiences their competence, confidence and autonomy. However, the data may not substantiate this. Again in congruence with the Kawa model, it is acknowledged that knowledge is never absolute and must remain in context. Any inferences which can be made must recognise that what is found is true for that person, at that moment in time, in that specific position. In seeking to gain a deeper understanding of individual experiences, meanings and commonalities are sought in the hermeneutic phenomenology tradition (Larkin et al, 2006). However, it is not possible to make any real inferences from using IPA methodology; the focus is exposing one particular understanding.

The issue of being an insider researcher and the impact of this on this research study has been considered earlier. IPA is then, a useful approach to take when the researcher is particularly close to the subject area, as the process of bracketing, as recommended by Husserl (cited in Finlay, 2011), (where researchers set aside their own experience in an attempt to see the phenomenon with fresh eyes) is difficult to achieve. In keeping with Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology the researcher's own interpretation is important, as attempts are made to make sense of the participant's voice, whilst remaining focused on the interview data (Finlay, 2011, p.141). What is significant is how the researcher's previous experience, knowledge and assumptions influence the research, and therefore the need for reflexivity (Finlay, 2009). Indeed, it is argued, that IPA has a clear focus of generating an insider perspective, however avoiding using narrow pre-prescribed assumptions (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006, p.114). IPA, then, fundamentally highlights the researcher's interpretation (Dean, Smith & Payne, 2006, p.140).

The use of a conceptual framework (in this case occupational science) is also congruent within IPA in that it acknowledges the impact that theoretical influences may have when making interpretations (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Occupational science concerned with its notions of doing, being, becoming, belonging and occupational identity is congruent with a Heideggerian phenomenology. Additionally, the use of the Kawa model as a data collection tool fits in well with the interpretive premise of hermeneutic phenomenology

and its call to use creative approaches to access the aesthetic, and imagined nature of the experience (Finlay, 2011). It is particularly useful in that it is sufficiently flexible to allow a variety of theoretical assumptions to be used, whilst providing some structure to the analysis. However, the analysis focuses on the participants' accounts and is not driven by theoretically derived categories (Eatough & Smith, 2006). An epistemological openness is a particular unique strength of IPA (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

Within this approach there is significant flexibility to allow creativity and applicability (Larkin, Watts, Clifton, 2006) which is also a significant consideration in my practice as an occupational therapist. Finally, IPA offers clear step by step guidelines, ideally suited to novice researchers (Dean, Smith & Payne, 2006; Gee, 2011; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). These guidelines appealed to my pragmatic nature as an occupational therapist. An IPA methodology has been chosen over a grounded theory approach because, even though little is known about the current development of professional identity from an occupational science perspective, I particularly wanted to understand the student experience, on this particular course, at this particular university. I want to focus on the individual experience and develop rich textual data, based upon individual stories, rather than looking at a more contextual explanatory approach, using larger samples sizes, which grounded theory tends to purport (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). It was felt that a phenomenological approach would be most suited to do this. An IPA approach was used, rather than a descriptive or hermeneutic phenomenological approach, because I am an insider researcher and therefore my analysis is going to be idiographic and interpretive in nature (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Also I am particularly interested in how the Kawa model could be used as a research tool and felt that using a pre-determined framework is more congruent with an IPA approach than other methods of phenomenology. Brocki and Wearden (2006) advocate an IPA approach for use with novel areas of research, due to its flexibility. As the Kawa model is an emerging model and may generate pictorial as well as textual data, IPA seemed a sensible choice.

IPA is not without its criticisms, indeed Giorgi (2011) criticises it harshly for not taking an appropriate scientific approach and for not meeting phenomenological criteria. However, phenomenology is a dynamic philosophy which continues to develop and Giorgi seems reluctant to acknowledge this. Giorgi applies stringent descriptive phenomenological criteria to evaluate the methodology of IPA, even though it is of interpretative persuasion (Blank, 2011). IPA is criticised for not detailing how phenomenological reduction is achieved, however as a novice user, I have found the guidelines that have been produced by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) to be extremely helpful in making a complicated research approach accessible. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) stress that the guidelines provided are flexible and the constraints

should come from a phenomenological understanding, not a methodology. Finlay (2011,) warns against using the guidelines as a mechanical approach, but nevertheless celebrates IPA for providing structure and support to novice researchers.

4.7 Longitudinal designs

Longitudinal research designs can take a broad range of approaches, but generally involve repeated measures over an extended period of time to demonstrate change (Robson & McCartan, 2016). The National Child Development Study (NCDS) is a well-known, on-going study, following over 17,000 people born in a single week in 1958. Its findings have contributed to understanding social change in Britain and have been used to inform policy making in health, education, housing and employment (Elliott & Vaitilingam, 2008). Of these 17,000 individuals, only 12,000 are still in touch with the NCDS team, which does highlight one of the major issues of longitudinal design, in terms of sample attrition.

Longitudinal cross section designs, for example the General Lifestyle Survey, ask the same questions over an extended period of time, but will use a different sample set each time and therefore whilst these studies are able to demonstrate trends and changes at a population level, they are not able to show change on an individual basis. Change at the micro or individual level may be better investigated using qualitative approaches, for example, life history approaches. These approaches will follow people over time and explore how a person's life trajectory has been affected by the complex interaction of life events and transitions. Inevitably this will involve using, in part, a retrospective approach as a person recalls their past life, which can be problematic, relying on recall and memory. When using life history approaches, the researcher needs to give careful consideration to the "partial, selected commentary on lived experience", recognising that the stories are already removed from life experiences and any representation is a partial starting point (Goodson & Sikes, 2008, p.16).

In this study, a prospective longitudinal approach has been taken, in an attempt to track becoming an occupational therapist in real time, rather than taking a retrospective stance, which may result in memory distortions and nostalgic recollections. This is in an attempt to minimise recall bias which may occur, especially when considering attitudinal and emotive issues (Ruspini, 2002). The central participant was interviewed in depth five times at key points over the three years of the course, in an attempt to recount her journey concurrently. The other participants were interviewed at the end of each year, and their journeys were used to situate the central focus. This data is complex as it assumes a two dimensional quality. As well as dealing with cross sectional data from different participants, there is the temporal data with each participant, and unfolding in

each relationship. It was necessary to do this in order to capture individual change and create an individual trajectory, whilst the cross sectional data is useful for establishing patterns and trends (Ruspini, 2000).

As has already been highlighted one of the significant challenges in a qualitative approach is that of on-going input from the participants over the lifecycle of the research. As this was a limited three-year study, this was less problematic than in longer studies for example, the NCDS considered earlier but nevertheless drop outs were likely to occur. In this study, although originally two people volunteered to be interviewed over the three years, one of these left the course very shortly afterwards, resulting in only one participant being followed over the three years. Additionally, the focus groups in this study were constituted from volunteers at the end of each academic year, rather than relying on the same people, each year. Whilst having the same participants in all the focus groups would have mirrored the approach taken in the individual case study and enhanced the longitudinal aspect of the study, the pragmatics of keeping all the participants, managing both withdrawals from the course and the study, along with ensuring participant availability due to complex timetabling issues, demanded that a pragmatic approach was taken, whereby volunteers were sought in a timely manner before each focus group for a pre-arranged time and date.

4.8 Longitudinal designs and IPA.

There is an increasing body of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of using IPA in longitudinal studies (Lowe & Molassiotis, 2011; Snelgrove, Edwards & Liossi 2011; Smith, 1999). Some of the issues associated with longitudinal research have already been considered, including loss of participants over time, (for example in Lowe and Molassiotis' study looking at patient distress in lung cancer participants dropped from sixteen to four over a twelve month period, with understandable ill health being reported for the dropout). The issues of relying on recall and subsequent distortions in stories not using longitudinal methods is an important consideration (Snelgrove, Edwards & Liossi, 2011). However, a particular strength of using a longitudinal approach alongside an IPA approach, adds a third dimension to the analysis, looking not only within cases, and across cases, but also to look at change over time. This approach highlights the importance of being in time from a Heideggerian perspective, focusing on what "is at a particular time for a person" (Snelgrove, Edwards & Liossi, 2011, p3; Smith, Flower & Larkin, 2009).

4.9 Summary

This chapter has introduced and discussed the qualitative research paradigm. I have provided a rationale for the methodology by highlighting the congruence between the research focus, occupational science, and hermeneutic phenomenology, incorporating a lifeworld approach. It has considered the utility of an IPA approach in guiding the data analysis. The chapter concludes by considering the congruence of a longitudinal and lifeworld approach within an IPA framework. The next chapter will describe the processes involved in carrying out the IPA study.

Chapter 5 Method

This chapter will explain how I carried out the study exploring the professional identity formation in undergraduate occupational therapy students. It considers the Kawa model's relevance to this study and how it has been applied. It also highlights the approach to data gathering, explaining the case study perspective, the use of focus groups and how these were congruent with the Kawa model, and IPA. It introduces the participants in the study. The chapter concludes considering issues of rigour and ethical principles.

5.1 Kawa model

An introduction to the Kawa model was given in section 1.6. The Kawa model was used in this thesis as a data collection tool to help structure the participants' narratives on becoming an occupational therapist. Before moving on to consider the detail of the method used in the research, it is appropriate to consider this in more detail, as it is used in both the individual interviews and the focus groups.

The Kawa model challenges the grand narrative of the western language associated with disability and illness. It is an alternative model, based upon constructivist assumptions that all knowledge is culturally framed, (Iwama, 2003). The Kawa model seeks to be an accessible model which redresses the power of the professional and the client by opening up the client's worldview, using metaphor rather than relying on western imbued medical and professional terminology (Iwama, 2006).

It was used as a framework to guide the data collection. One of the research aims was to critically evaluate the Kawa model as a data collection tool in education research. The participants therefore were encouraged to use the model to describe their experience and to reflect upon its usefulness. I chose to use the Kawa model as its constructivist framework resonates with my own constructivist-interpretivist position and is consistent with the symbolic interactionism upon which interpretative phenomenological analysis is based. It is a creative, flexible framework, which moves away from the more jargonistic or medical models which are in current practice in occupational therapy. I have found, in my teaching to date, that this is a model which those students who feel restricted by the current post-positivist position of occupational therapy are able to engage with. The Kawa metaphor views the individual as embedded within their social context, and not as a separate entity from the environment (Iwama, 2006), a view which is reflected in the phenomenological position of Heidegger, who was concerned with ontology, that is "Being and Time". Heidegger's exposition of "Being and Time" is concerned with the nature of existence itself, being in the world, and one's practical engagement with it

(Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). The Kawa model then is congruent with the philosophical assumptions of the thesis.

The Kawa (Japanese for river) model is based upon a metaphor: that of a river flowing from source to mouth. Life is viewed as a complex journey, which can be represented by a river, which flows through space and time, and the cross section it makes as part of the environment is a symbolic representation of life (Iwama, 2006).

It focuses on the complex inter-relationships of all elements within the river and the harmony of nature. The flow of the river symbolises the life force or flow which can be affected by fundamental structures within the river, including the river walls and bed (environment), driftwood (assets and liabilities) and rocks (life circumstances), and their position to each other. All are inseparable parts which can affect the boundaries, shape and flow of the river (life course and direction, quality of life) (ibid).

In occupational therapy practice, the aim is to maximise a person's life flow. This involves reducing or moving elements which impede their river (or life flow) and open up or maximise the spaces (Iwama, 2010, p. 200). The spaces represent the focus for occupational therapy. They are the potential channels for the life flow and demonstrate how each element is inter-connected within the broader context.

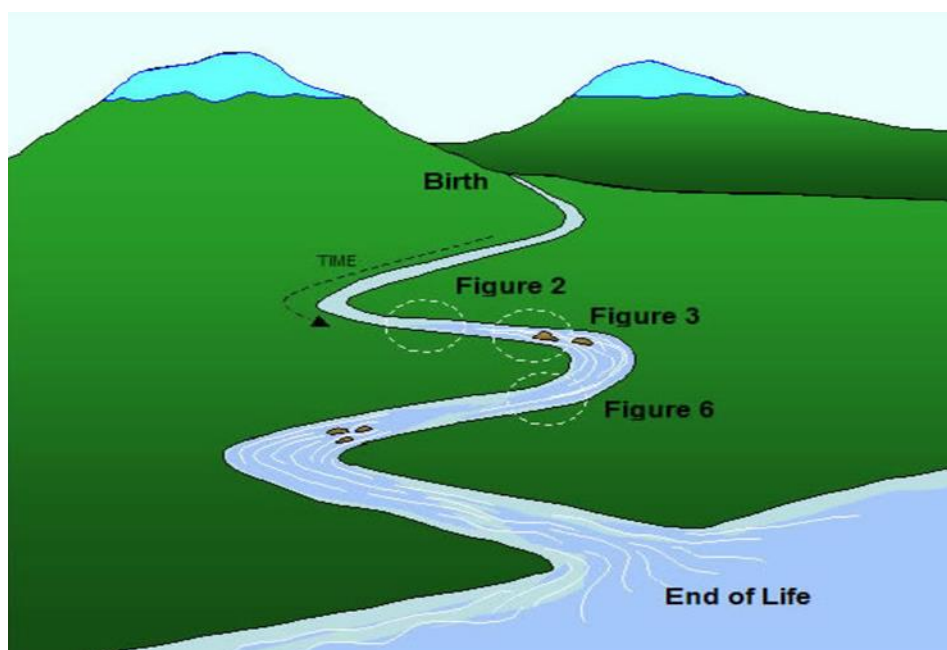


Figure 1 Life is like a river, flowing from birth to end of life

(<http://kawamodel.com/concept-and-structure>. Iwama 2010) By kind permission of Michael Iwama

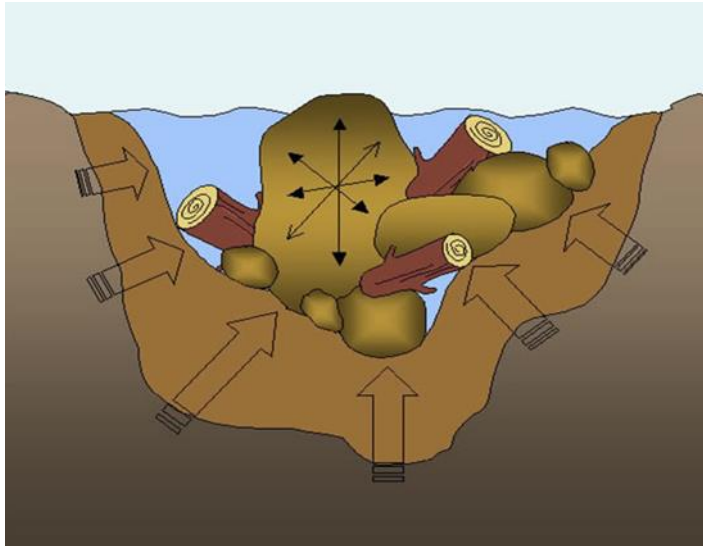


Figure 2 Shows a cross section of the Kawa model showing the effect of the river components on flow

(<http://kawamodel.com/concept-and-structure>. Iwama, 2010). By kind permission of Michael Iwama.

Clients are encouraged to explore what their rocks (life circumstances, the problematic issues which are difficult to remove) are, and how these can be manipulated or removed to open up the space. These may be transient or long term. The clients are asked to consider the size and location of their rocks and how they impact upon the life flow and within the environment. They are then asked to identify what driftwood is present in their current circumstances, i.e. (character, attributes, and materials) which can help or hinder their occupational well-being. Driftwood tends to be more transient in nature; it may be inconsequential or due to their position assume a greater significance. Again, together the therapist and client will plan how the driftwood can be used to their maximum benefit. The spaces or channels which promote their inner strength are identified and maximised. All this is considered in the context of the river bed and sides. The therapist and client work together to identify how the river bed and sides (social and physical environment) can be widened and deepened, in other words, which aspects of the social and physical environment can be utilised to enhance their occupational well-being. This may include family members, and social relationships. The concepts are all interpreted in relation to the whole and how they impact upon each other. In essence, it is the client's choice which category an issue is placed in; what is more important is its relation to the other elements within the system. The aim of the Kawa model is to develop a mutual understanding of a person's circumstances in relation to their occupational well-being and how these issues are situated and impact upon a client's life world in the broadest sense.

The participants were encouraged to reflect upon their journey using the concepts of the Kawa model. They were encouraged to describe their journey using the concepts and, together with the researcher, a common understanding of the issues was developed, using reflecting back and clarification. Materials were made available for them to graphically represent their ideas if they so wished. Lizzie (the main participant) only chose to produce a graphical representation during her first and last interview. In her first interview she chose to produce a cross section (see fig 3. p 94), whereas in her final interview, she produced both a cross section and a longitudinal diagram (see fig 4 & 5, p.131, 132).

5.2 Single case study research

The use of case study research is an established research methodology in many fields especially in the social sciences (Salminen, Harra & Lautamo, 2006). This is distinct from the use of case study examples, which are often used in medicine and health related areas as teaching aids or to document approaches, but not linked to academic research. Despite the fact that this is an established research approach, it seems an underdeveloped area in occupational therapy. Given that it focuses on individual experiences in situ and seeks to develop deep understandings of complex situations, makes it highly congruent with occupational therapy principles and philosophy. There are calls for this approach to be utilised more frequently in occupational therapy (Salminen, Harra & Lautamo, 2006, p.3).

Case study research involves the systematic, rigorous exploration of a particular case to derive understanding and meaning, rather than developing a descriptive account. The use of case study research seeks to demonstrate existence, not incidence (Yin, 2014). Case study research can be defined in a variety of ways and incorporated into various methodological approaches. Creswell (2007) suggests that, whilst it can be seen as a research methodology in its own right, it can also be viewed as a type of study designer object of study, as well as an end product. Case study research refers to the in-depth study of a single case (a bounded system, for example an individual or a particular location, or institution) or a series of "cases" over a period of time. All approaches are aimed at developing in-depth, rich, detailed description of complex situations. Case study research is carried out in situ and is concerned with the context as well as the focus of concern, (Salminen, Harra & Lautamo, 2006). Yin (2014) views case studies as a strategy which can incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data collections. Yin also suggests that, as an approach, it can make use of theory to drive the data collection, allowing the results to point towards more general patterns. In contrast to Yin's more realist, post positivist persuasion Abma and Stake (2014), suggest that the

use of naturalistic case studies lead to a “rich portrayal of insights and understandings interpreted in the particular context”, (p.1157). They suggest that sound methodology in naturalistic case studies should address the five issues of emic issues: considering the influence of context; meaning and interpretation; holistic understanding and learning from the case.

My study makes use of the single case study approach embedded within a longitudinal IPA study. The study will focus on one student’s experience over the three-year undergraduate course. The research explores the complex processes involved in the development of professional identity. It seeks to understand the experience of being a student occupational therapist, and becoming an occupational therapist, within the framework of occupational science. It addresses Abma and Stake’s (2014) sound methodological principles in the following ways:

- **Emic issues:** Whilst I am incorporating a conceptual framework from occupational science, this is sufficiently flexible to ensure that beyond the initial orientation questions, the participant will be able to explore issues relevant to her and her lived experience. The framework is mainly drawn upon in the discussion rather than in the initial interpretations and analysis. The focus of the interviews was to find and discover the issues of concern of the participant.
- **Influence of context:** The influence of context is particularly relevant to this research due to my insider researcher position and the situatedness of the ongoing longitudinal data collection. As an insider researcher I have a good understanding of the contextual influences on occupational therapy education and can therefore be cognisant of these. Additionally, the use of the focus groups (see section 5.9) will assist with the consideration of contextual influences by positioning the participant in the wider context of the course.
- **Meaning and interpretation:** As this study is using an IPA approach, the interactively constructed meanings are will be given consideration in the analysis, following IPA guidelines. Abma and Stake, (2014), suggest that close engagement with the participant to construct a shared understanding is important, but at the same time, some distance needs to be established to be able to take a wider view point, to contextualise the case study. The use of reflexivity as described in section 1.6 will, then, ensures that this principle is upheld.
- **Learning from the case:** Abma and Stake, (2014), highlight that a rich, purposeful case needs to be identified and a detailed story developed from which “the humanity of the case can become clearer.... because stories acknowledge ambiguity”, (p.1152). Again

the longitudinal nature of the research assists in the development of a narrative and the IPA approach developed detailed interpretive data.

- **Holistic Understanding:** Whilst it is impossible to gather an entire version of the truth, indeed following on from the discussion in chapter four, in the interpretive tradition there is no objective truth out there, an attempt to get a broad and full understanding is seen as a laudable principle. This has been achieved in this case by considering the sequence and time bound issues, along with information from the focus groups, the interviews, drawings and interpretations.

These principles are congruent with the principles of IPA as outlined in the last chapter and have been embedded into the case study in this theme as outlined above.

IPA is idiographic, and, therefore whilst typically it may focus on small numbers of participants, it lends itself to the use of single case studies. Focusing on a particular experience, in a particular context, and the detailed examination of claims, is the core of both IPA and case studies. Whilst there are guidelines to support the carrying out of IPA studies, these are not prescriptive and indeed it is identified that the use of single case studies within IPA is an area which needs to be developed (Smith, 2004, Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). They (ibid) suggest that single case studies can provide the opportunity to delve deeper into the particular, and that this can actually take us closer to the universal. Similarly, the focus on identity as a subject matter is an intensely personal issue and, as such, tends to be treated with individual focus (Smith, 2004).

The use of single case studies has been criticised in the literature, mainly by quantitative researchers (Polit & Beck 2012, Salminen, Harra & Lautamo, 2006). This criticism is mainly around issues of subjectivity and generalisation. Similarly, this approach conflicts with the evidence based positivist paradigm discussed in chapter 2, in that case studies are not rated highly in the hierarchy of evidence (Taylor, 2007). However, the approach is rigorously defended and utilised by many, especially in education and health related fields (Abma & Stake, 2014; Glazzard, 2014; Salminen, Harra, Lautamo, 2006; Smith, Flowers, & Larking, 2009; Silverman, 2010; Thomas, 2016; Tryssenaar, 1999). Thomas (2016) argues that there is a real need in educational research for the descriptive and interpretative study of pedagogic events, and that there are very few generalisations which can be substantiated in the classroom environment. From an occupational therapy perspective, Salminen, Harra, and Lautamo (2006) argue that case study research focuses on complex systems in real life situations, along with assisting with relating therapy to practice. In case study research, the depth of one is celebrated. It is argued that, in the study of one, the issue of generalisability is repositioned to possibilities (Silverman, 2010, p.211) so that a case study approach leads to the premise, it can or

may exist, rather than it does exist. Typical cases can help to suggest the possibility of occurrences in other settings, whereas deviant cases are used as a comparison or to highlight differences. The findings may be compared with the literature to ground any theoretical suggestions or equally to question what is already known (Creswell, 2007). Thomas (2016) argues that precise forms of generalisation are impossible, but to interpret a situation within its context is legitimate, as it opens up understanding. To return to the issue of the personal as well as making links with the general, Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, p. 38) identify that, at a deep level, there is something of us all in each of us, "the specifics are unique but they are hung on what is shared and communal". Indeed, they highlight that this concept in turn takes us back to the original insight of the phenomenologist Schleiermacher "that everyone carries a minimum of everyone else within themselves."

5.3 Data gathering: Semi structured interviews

Most qualitative studies rely on interviews as a main data collection method (Silverman, 2010), and indeed IPA is no exception. Interviews are essentially a type of conversation and most people have some experience of them in one way or another (Robson & McCartan 2016). Interviews are flexible ways of gathering data and in phenomenological research these are usually carried out face to face, but alternative methods may be used, including telephone interviews. Despite their popularity, interviews in research studies need to be used judiciously and need careful planning and consideration, and they are not without their difficulties. Interviews can be time-consuming. They require careful planning in terms of the structure, time availability for all parties, method of recording the interview, and a suitable venue which is private and free from distraction (Robson & McCartan 2016). Additionally, the researcher needs to be skilled in carrying out research interviews: to be able to establish a relationship with the participant; ask appropriate questions; respond appropriately and be flexible, whilst able to control and manage the process and structure of the interview itself, (ibid). It is important to consider the relationship between the researcher and participants in detail. Creswell (2007) notes that there is usually a power relationship between the two parties which is hierarchical in nature. He sees the interviewer as holding significant power in terms of controlling the interview itself, as well as how the interpretation is framed. He also questions if the participant is able to present themselves honestly. They may choose to selectively share some information, whilst withholding other important aspects, as well as acquiescing with the interviewer.

There are different approaches to interviewing, ranging from fully structured interviews to semi-structured and unstructured ones. The main way of gathering data in IPA studies

is through the use of semi-structured interviews, (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The interviews are not tightly controlled, but have a loose flexible structure, which facilitates the participants to open up and explore their ideas, (ibid). The participants are invited to give detailed first-hand accounts of their experiences, thoughts, and responses to the phenomena under study. This is usually facilitated by one-to-one interviews, which also allows for the development of a relationship between the interviewer and participants, which is relevant to the life world of the participant. This relationship, as discussed above, is particularly important in IPA interviewing, as often very personal intimate experiences and details of one's life are shared. Given the longitudinal nature of the research and the fact that there was only one main participant, this issue of the relationship was one which needed careful management and I felt a huge responsibility to the participant to try to understand and present her life world accurately, honestly and respectfully. The researcher also needs to keep the participants "safe" during the data gathering process, in terms of exploring issues to the depth with which participants feel comfortable whilst avoiding any distress (Finlay, 2011). These issues will be explored more under ethical considerations, in section 5.12.

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) provide helpful detailed guidance in terms of developing interview schedules within an IPA framework. These need to be prepared in advance, and consideration needs to be given to the overall format of the interview, in terms of a warm up to encourage the participants to talk, the main questions and a closure/summary. It can be useful to have semi-structured approach to guide the interview. This may help the interview to proceed and may help in encouraging less-responsive participants and help to give the interview some focus. It can also act as a useful prompt for the researcher to ensure that the interview keeps its focus. The schedule is not prescriptive however, and the interviewer needs to be responsive to the participants' concerns. The aim is to get the participants to explore the phenomena under consideration from their experience. The questions need to be carefully positioned and begin with more general issues, then lead onto more probing, intimate questioning. The questions need to be open question to encourage dialogue from the participants. As IPA researchers want to enter into the participants' life world, space needs to be given to encourage the participants to do most of the talking, whilst the researcher listens and responds. The questions need to approach the phenomena from a tangent. Research questions are often very abstract and to ask the question directly may not lead to full exploration, whereas more detailed questioning around the issue may open up a wide discourse (Robson & McCartan 2016). I developed the interview schedule considering the points above.

5.4 Planning the interview: The pilot interview

The interview schedule can be found in Appendix One. I developed some points to welcome and remind the participant about the purpose of the interview, and her right as a participant. Whilst I did not read these out verbatim and paraphrased them, as I wanted the interview to be as informal, and personable as possible, I had them detailed on the sheet in front of me to act as reminders.

The interview schedule, especially the first one, was used almost entirely as planned. As discussed above, it was a flexible schedule to act primarily as a checklist to make sure that I covered pertinent issues, whilst also encouraging the participant to explore areas of concern to her.

The first nine questions were more factual, concerned with scene setting, to put the participant at her ease. The questions were concerned primarily with historical facts and things which had lead up to the participant applying for the course. These were less challenging questions, designed to help the participant enter into the interview process. The subsequent points were structured around the Kawa metaphor, and these were used to explore the participant's lived experience. Open questions and follow-ups were made based upon the participant's responses.

The interview schedules for the other four interviews were even less structured. They all began with a summary of the previous interviews. Opportunity was created to encourage the participant to reflect upon her ongoing experiences, using the Kawa model and also using some of the occupational science concepts, in terms of doing, being, becoming and belonging. Reflection and probes were used to encourage the participant to explore any issues which they considered relevant.

A pilot interview was carried out informally with an occupational therapy practitioner. I didn't pilot this with students as I didn't want to preclude them from subsequently being a participant and didn't want to use a fellow academic to ensure that it was free from any academic suppositions. I felt, however, it was important that I got feedback from an occupational therapist, to ensure that the language I used was clear, and that the questions were open, but relevant to the subject and phenomena. The pilot interview just raised grammatical corrections and points for clarity.

5.5 Introducing Lizzie

The study was situated within a UK university which offers a variety of health and social care professional education courses including: occupational therapy, nursing,

physiotherapy and podiatry. The occupational therapy course has a small intake of twenty pre-registration undergraduate students yearly. Generally, the student demographics tend to comprise of approximately a third of the cohort who are school/college leavers around the age of eighteen or nineteen years old, a third of the cohort who are aged between twenty-one and thirty, and a third who tend to be more mature students. The twenty-one to thirty year olds typically have experience in the care sector and have gained Access qualifications. Some students in this bracket already have a degree and have had a previous career but are now seeking more personal and professional fulfilment. The final third of more mature students may have had previous careers, but the majority are returning to education after having a family. The course struggles to recruit a diverse student cohort; generally there are only one or two male students and three or four people from diverse ethnic backgrounds in each cohort.

I initially intended to follow a sample of five “typical” (i.e. under 20 years of age when enrolling) students through their course by carrying out a series of narrative interviews at key points in their education. Non-traditional students were excluded from the one-to-one interviews as it was thought that too many other variables may be brought to bear on their experience, including significant previous work and life experience.

5.5.1. Recruitment strategy.

A purposeful sampling strategy was used where all eligible participants (n=8) were contacted via e-mail and given an information sheet (See Appendix Two) and asked to consider volunteering to take part in the research. The initial approaches were made by e-mail to prevent students feeling coerced to participate, due to the imbalance of power within the relationship. An “opt in” rather than an “opt out” strategy was used. I received two positive responses, but this finally ended up in there being only one participant, due to the other participant dropping out.

As an insider researcher I did not want to coerce the students to participate and was keenly aware of the power issues and carrying out research on my own students so I accepted that as a result of the recruitment strategy there was only one participant. This altered the focus of the study to that of a single case study as discussed in 5.2. Although this was not the original intention of the study, IPA is sufficiently flexible to accommodate this and indeed, as a result, the thesis evolved into an innovative study, using a single case study combined with three focus groups. A single case study approach is a risky research strategy in terms of sustainability should the single participant choose to disengage with the research process. Risks could include:

withdrawal from the course due to academic or personal reasons, suspension, long term sickness or withdrawal from the research process. Discontinuation would have affected the longitudinal nature of the research as well as sufficiency of data. Had this occurred, a broader recruitment process would have been employed to recruit other members of the cohort- perhaps those over twenty- one and making more use of the focus groups. Participants could have been recruited from years two and three of the existing cohorts to support the longitudinal aspect of the study (see Risk Assessment Appendix Twenty). To conclude the formal recruitment process, the consent forms were signed and arrangements were made to meet at a mutually agreed time.

Lizzie (assumed pseudonym), is the main participant in this thesis. All names of people and places have been altered and given pseudonyms to protect their identity. Lizzie was a “typical” occupational therapy student, having entered the course directly from leaving school, after completing her A levels; she was eighteen. She had limited work experience at school and a part time job. Additionally she had completed some work-shadowing of occupational therapists as part of her career planning. Lizzie chose to live in a student residence, even though her parents lived locally. In her first interview, she describes the decision leading up to her applying for the course.

5.6 The Interviews – Procedure

As outlined in section 4.7 it was necessary to take a longitudinal approach to capture Lizzie’s trajectory throughout the years of undergraduate education. In order to do this Lizzie was interviewed five times as outlined in table 1.

The in-depth, extended interviews were spread throughout the three years. Ideally, the first interview would have taken place earlier, but pragmatics of the research process, including waiting for ethical approval and recruitment, delayed the first interview. However, this took place after two separate placements of five days each had been completed, which facilitated more informed discussion, as Lizzie had experienced the doing of occupational therapy in practice. The other four interviews took place at regular intervals, either before or after placements, and at the end of each year.

1st Interview	Year one	March (mid-year 1)
2nd Interview	Year two	December (End of term 4)
3rd interview	Year two	June (end of year 2)
4th Interview	Year three	Dec (end of term 7)
5th Interview	Year three	June (end of course)

Table 1: showing the interview schedule over the three-year period.

I arranged to meet Lizzie in the occupational therapy base room, which also had a cosy corner where we could be relaxed, informal and enjoy refreshments. This was also a familiar environment for Lizzie, being an area where most of her lectures and seminars had taken place, and reinforcing her occupational therapy student role. The area was quiet, private and free from interruptions. On the initial interview, I recapped the purpose of the research, the time commitment and longitudinal nature of the study. I had copies of the consent sheet and invitation (see Appendix Two and Three) available, along with details of how to access counselling should there be any issues which were difficult for Lizzie and required follow up. Each subsequent interview began with an opening conversation, to check on the well-being of Lizzie and on her current plans for the day and then lead onto a summary/recap of the previous interview. Each interview ended with an unrecorded normalising conversation, where Lizzie was thanked and had opportunity to say anything else outside of the research process. This was generally about ongoing plans. Each extended interview lasted at least an hour and was digitally recorded. Felts tips and paper were available on the desk at each interview for Lizzie to draw her Kawa model if she so wished.

5.7 IPA and Focus Groups

The individual interviews were also supplemented by a series of focus groups in order to provide more context and comparison for the individual interviews.

IPA was originally developed as an intensely idiographic phenomenological approach and therefore the majority of studies using IPA are based upon small numbers of participants, usually gathering data using one to one interviews. However, other methods of data collection have been employed, including postal questionnaires and electronic email dialogue (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005).

Focus groups are becoming an increasingly popular method of data collection, especially in health settings, gathering information relating to attitudes and experiences relating to health care issues (Hollis, Openshaw & Goble, 2002). Focus groups are usually associated within the qualitative paradigms, but often fail to use robust methodological approaches. Earle, et al. (2005) report a study exploring the issues of childhood cancer survival using focus groups. They claim that IPA is used as a method of analysis, however this paper at best, illustrates a phenomenological inspired approach, as it doesn't fully make use of the researcher's perspective, indeed, it identifies having research bias as a limitation which suggests not fully embracing IPA principles. Focus groups are less obviously associated with IPA analysis, as they move away from the

idiographic and contain more complex interactional environments (Palmer et al, 2010). However, Smith (2004) suggests that, whilst caution must be employed, it is an approach which is worth exploring further, and indeed Palmer et al (2010) provide a framework for applying IPA in focus groups, which is drawn upon in this study. Some studies use a hybrid approach combining interview and focus groups, but Brocki and Wearden (2007) suggest this can be problematic, despite studies claiming that a combined approach leads to a greater synergy (Brocki & Wearden, 2007; Flowers et al., 2001). It is clear that a group may be less suitable for exploration for particularly sensitive issues, such as sexuality, whereas groups may be more appropriate for more general exploration of the experience of a particular health care issue or service. However, Palmer et al. (2010) show effectively how a focus group approach may produce different, but nevertheless powerful and significant data, considering significant issues from an IPA perspective. This may include contextual data concerning the social context leading to shared meaning- making and experiential detail. This detail can be collaboratively developed by discussion within the group. They suggest that the focusing on relationships and the positionality of both the researcher and the participants can be important contextually, leading to co-constructed accounts which would not have emerged from single interviews.

This study then, incorporates focus groups into the data collection, to enrich the narrative given by Lizzie. The focus groups act both as background to contextualise her experiences in broader course experiences, as well as aiming to foreground themes and experiences which may warrant further exploration in the individual interviews, looking for both divergence and convergence across cases as recommended by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Therefore, the focus groups incorporated non-traditional mature students, as well as traditional students, to broaden the context. The intensively idiopathic detail is developed from the individual interviews; the focus groups however are analysed separately and used as a back-drop to contextualise what is happening in terms of the broader context, focusing on collective meanings and relationships.

There is some discrepancy within the literature as to whether it is more useful to develop focus groups with people who do not know each other, or with people who have close previous relationships. Leask et al. (2001) suggest that constructed groups with the primary purpose of collecting data lead to animated discussions and more divergent opinions being expressed, whereas Palmer et al. (2010) found that self-selection among people whose primary purpose was the topic under discussion, lead to more positive engagement. However, it is agreed that homogeneity is important in both cases.

In this study, the focus group participants already know each other well, as they are drawn from the same year group, which is a small cohort of twenty students. The researcher was already aware of many of the group dynamics, as a course leader, module tutor and personal tutor. The participants were invited to volunteer for each focus group as they came along, without expectation that they would commit to all three focus groups. This was aimed to encourage attendance and enhance the number of participants. It was expected that the complex relationships would indeed encourage animated discussion and positive engagement (Leask et al., 2001; Palmer, et al., 2010).

The tension here, when using IPA, is to ensure that a balance is maintained in the analysis between the experiences shared by the individuals, and the group process, which can also be a rich source of data, but may modify how the individuals present their stories. Smith (2004) advises two levels of analysis are carried out, one which focuses on group dynamics and the second exploring individual stories. IPA's roots in hermeneutic phenomenology leads itself to being concerned with being in the world and relatedness, and therefore the use of focus groups analysed in this two-fold way is congruent with its epistemological underpinnings.

5.8. The Focus groups: Planning, Participants and Procedure

Running concurrently with the interviews with Lizzie, three focus groups were held. As when planning the individual interviews, a flexible schedule was drawn up (see Appendix Four). This schedule was discussed with the same occupational therapist that assisted with the pilot interview, checking for clarity of the questions and a logical structure. In order to address the ethical issues around conducting focus groups (see section 5.11), ground rules were also drawn up (See Appendix Four).

The question schedules for the focus groups had already been developed in principle, prior to data collection, as approval was needed by the ethics committee before the research commenced. The schedules were informed by the Kawa model, to encourage people to explore their experiences of being on the occupational therapy course to date. The flexible schedules allowed me to explore issues as they occurred, thereby following up on issues of central concern to the participants, rather than imposing my ideas and concerns onto the data collection. When there was a particular area which needed more exploration, the schedule was sufficiently flexible to allow this. I encouraged the participants to share their experiences, reminding them that I wanted to hear their voice, that this was not an evaluative focus group feeding into university systems. The Kawa model, with which all the participants were familiar with, provided a framework to guide the discussions, whilst avoiding leading questioning. For example, I asked very open questions such as "how is your river flowing?" and "what is your river bed like?".

This enabled all participants to speak the same language, due to their understanding of the metaphor, and allowed me to explore concepts in a very non-specific way, which helped the discussion stay focused on the participants' experiences.

5.8.1 Recruitment

An invitation was emailed out to the entire cohort, inviting them to the focus group. I had planned that if I had a response of more than six volunteers (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007, recommend 6-12 people in a focus group) I would use random selection to reduce the numbers, however, this was not needed. I was hoping that a range of students in terms of age and experiences would volunteer, as I wanted the group to be a contrast to Lizzie as a traditional school leaver. I was also hoping that I would be able to get both genders represented. However, given issues of power, I needed to ensure that I avoided coercion and therefore was unable to target any particular students. I was entirely reliant on self-selection, recognising that if students volunteered they may in fact see this as an area of personal interest and have much to say. Indeed, all the students were eligible for participation by virtue of their experience of being on the course. Additionally, whilst I would have preferred that the students committed to all three focus groups over the three years, I was concerned that this would compromise the number of participants I got and I therefore recruited on a group by group basis. This convenience and pragmatic recruitment process ensured that the focus group participants were fully engaged, and as already discussed, was in keeping with a phenomenological approach which is concerned with developing a deep rich understanding of possibilities, rather than developing a list of generalisations.

Following a response from the volunteers, date, time, ground rules, question schedule and consent sheets were sent out confirming the arrangements. As with the individual interviews, they were held in the occupational therapy base room and were digitally audio recorded. The group was reminded about the ground rules and all the documentation was completed and gathered in. I had paper and pens available, but only the final focus group chose to draw the Kawa model, the other two groups preferring to discuss. Due to pragmatic issues, including participant availability and timetabling, the focus groups took place as detailed in table 2.

Year	Time of data collection	Participants (Pseudonyms)
Year one	Oct year 2	3 participants, non-traditional, Zuni, Ellie in their mid-twenties, Betsy in early forties.
Year two	Oct year 3	2 participants.

		Betsy early forties (attended previous Focus group), Millie traditional 20 yr old
Year three	June year (end of the course)	5 participants. Mark traditional 21 yr old Eva traditional 21 yr old. Elaine, Ellie, Kath ,all mid-twenties (one had attended year one focus group)

Table 2: Giving details of focus group timing and participants

5.9 Data Analysis

I approached the data analysis with some trepidation, wondering where to start and how to make sense of the mountain of data. However, following a combination of the very clear practical guidelines from Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) and Gee (2011), I found this part of the research the most engaging and rewarding. The authors emphasise that these guidelines are not prescriptive and I therefore combined both sets to develop a method of working which suited both the individual case study and the focus groups.

As soon as possible after each interview, the recordings were transcribed. I then read the transcripts several times whilst listening to them at the same time. This helped me to pick up the nuances in their voices, pauses and other non-verbal communication, leading to a better understanding of their meaning than just reading the written word. I noted my first impressions and at the same time ensured that all names had been altered or removed to preserve anonymity.

I then organised the transcript into a template, cleaning up the data by removing all conversation fillers for example "yes" and "ah ah", which interrupted the narrative. The text was also chunked into topic area (see Appendix Fifteen). I was, however, cautious not to dismiss too much at this stage and indeed found most of the text relevant. It all felt rather overwhelming as I wondered how I was possibly going to reduce down over 55 000 words into any type of manageable form. This part of the data processing was painstakingly slow, but it did help me to become more familiar with the text and pick up the idiosyncrasies of Lizzie's language.

I then set about making sense of the data using Gee's (2011) clearly explained guidelines. I recorded my initial impressions and structure of the interview in a notebook, which helped me understand the context and tone of the interview.

The next step involved making a detailed set of notes and descriptive comments, trying to get as close as possible to Lizzie's meaning, for example focusing on her experiences of relationships, events and places and detailing how and why these things were important to Lizzie (see Appendix Fifteen , these were typed in blue). For example, Lizzie describes how she initially enrolled upon the course. There is some hesitation in her language; "it's really, it's weird" (see also linguistic comments below), but the whole sentence suggests Lizzie is feeling confused and out of control, that choosing to study OT was not an active decision on her part:

It's really, it's a bit weird actually 'cos I don't know whether you know but I didn't originally choose to do occupational therapy I wanted to do teaching (lines 54-55)

I followed this by reading the transcript again, and this time noting any linguistic comments; how Lizzie uses language, and how this may give deeper insight into her world, for example, the metaphors that she used, hesitations, and repetitions (these were typed in red in Appendix Fifteen).

I noted that, as Lizzie recounted her decision not to pursue a teaching career, she describes her thought processes as "we", suggesting a high degree of influence, dependability and lack of separation from her mother at this point:

We sort of thought well it's a bit too late for this year we'll probably do some work experience and then apply again next year (lines 102-103).

The next reading focused on me making more interpretive comments, drawing upon my own experience and knowledge and reflection (marked black in Appendix Fifteen). For example, as Lizzie described her work-shadowing experience, she was not able to fully describe what she saw, showing her lack of understanding of concepts at this stage of her education:

I spent a morning in rheumatology but it was just like outpatients coming in and having like a chat and then the afternoon I was with like some day-patients who just came in and like elderly patients who just came in and did exercises on like mes, playing with locks and playing with that, you know that theraputty that you roll around in your hands (lines 179-184).

The next reading at this stage involved identifying any conceptual comments and linking them to theory, (marked green in Appendix Fifteen): Again for example:

I liked how, the fact that I've, on my first like test I got a really good mark so that gave me some more confidence (lines 650-651)

I linked this to Lizzie's reliance on external validation.

Obviously there was some overlap between the different interpretations, but this process helped me to become very familiar with the text and deepen my interpretation with each

step. I used the techniques of deconstruction, free association and underlining and highlighting the importance of the text as recommended by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009, p. 91).

As I approached stage three, I started to feel lost in the data and, after supervision, realised that I had almost jumped a stage, trying to see the conceptual and psychological interpretation before slowing down enough to ground myself in what Lizzie had said, and I felt.

The process was revised eventually, producing the example provided in Appendix Fifteen.

I then moved on to developing emergent themes, a combination of psychological essence, grounded from participant's experience, but abstract enough to show the conceptual synergy between the ideas. These are shown in Appendix Fifteen as they emerged from the data, and I have then extracted them to develop super-ordinate themes and sub-themes in Appendix Five. The super-ordinate themes attempted to capture the essence of the meaning of the sub-themes, and were developed after numerous possibilities were explored using post-it notes to rearrange different combinations until such a time as a comprehensive pattern emerged, capturing similar ideas. However, these themes needed to remain grounded in the text and therefore the left hand column of Appendix Fifteen demonstrates how they arose. In subsequent interviews, it was difficult on occasions to ensure that consistency was achieved and similar ideas were grouped in similar ways. In these circumstances, I went back to the text, to ensure that the themes were allocated according to the context of the text, for example, in interview 2:1, the super-ordinate theme "I feel like I think more like an OT now", considers Lizzie's developing concepts of being an OT, whereas in interview 3:2 the theme "Thinking and feeling like an OT" is concerned with autonomous working. At this point, as recommended in the guidelines (Gee, 2011; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2007), I progressed immediately to drafting the first write up whilst I was immersed in the analysis. I developed a preliminary discussion to inform the next interviews and to keep both the longitudinal and idiographic aspects at the forefront of my thinking.

These steps were repeated for all the interviews. A master table was devised (Appendix Thirteen) showing all the super-ordinate and sub-themes for the interviews. This captured both the idiographic nature of each interview, along with the longitudinal nature of the study, showing Lizzie's progression and professional identity development.

5.9.1. Data Analysis –Focus groups

The focus groups were analysed using the same processes, as described above. The transcripts were read multiple times and each time different aspects were noted using the following the colour code:

- Blue: participants' view
- Red: linguistic comments
- Black: my interpretation
- Green: conceptual comments

Additionally, group dynamics were also a consideration in the focus groups and these comments were made in orange (see Appendix Sixteen). As well as capturing the participants' views I wanted to explore how they positioned themselves within the group. I was interested in how the group developed meaning from their collective experiences as well as their own individual experiences, how they established consensus and validated each other's experience, including how they managed contradicting and conflicting experiences and meanings

As in the individual interviews, emergent themes were then identified (See Appendices Ten, Eleven, and Twelve). As before, multiple clustering of the emergent themes was carried out until myself and my supervisors felt that the essence of the meaning had been captured by the naming and arrangement of the super-ordinate themes (see Appendix Fourteen).

Finally, the super-ordinate themes from both the interviews and focus group were combined in Appendix Fourteen.

5.10 Trustworthiness

All research needs to demonstrate its commitment to robustness in terms of validity and quality; qualitative research is no exception. Indeed, as it continues to take its place as an equal alongside quantitative research, and in order to rebuff criticisms from those of a positivist persuasion, it needs to ensure that these issues are addressed in a detailed rigorous manner (Ballinger, 2006). IPA as a more recent contributor to the qualitative field needs to focus on quality issues as it moves from producing studies which are "good enough" to studies which make an outstanding contribution to the field (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 185).

As has already been discussed IPA is not concerned with issues such as repeatability and generalisations but focuses on possibilities, and interpretations. It is important therefore that the framework chosen for evaluation is congruent with the research methodology's

epistemological assumptions. A variety of frameworks have been developed for use in evaluation of qualitative work. Perhaps one of the more widely known ones is Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for trustworthiness. Whilst this is a useful framework I have chosen to use Yardley's (2000) four principles of validity: sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance as these emphasise the issues which were pertinent in this research given I was an insider researcher. Yardley's principles are also recommended by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) for use with IPA studies. This critique is presented in Chapter Eight. Many of the quality issues have already been addressed in this chapter and are summarised here:

- Embedding reflexivity throughout (Finlay & Gough, 2003) as discussed in Chapter One (see section 1.5).
- The longitudinal nature of the study which allowed the narrative to take shape over time as Lizzie found her voice and also provided opportunity to follow up on any issues which needed clarity.
- A flexible interview schedule which was piloted with an occupational therapy colleague for understandability and relevance, but which was responsive to the participant's concerns and allowed issues to be explored in depth.
- Detailed data analysis which is plausible, and supported with evidence (Smith, 2008).
- Ensuring I accessed regular supervision, attending particularly to ethical issues, data analysis and interpretations, and writing up issues.
- The use of both the single case study and focus groups triangulated the data along with supervision as described above.

It is also recommended that an audit trail is used to demonstrate quality (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Full accounts of all the process which I engaged with are presented in this thesis to enable the reader to undertake their own independent audit trail. Ethical considerations are outlined below and permissions available in appendices 3, 18 and 19. Recruitment processes and details of the interview and focus group schedules are presented in sections 5.6, 5.7 and 5.9. Examples of both interview and focus group transcriptions, including my initial notes are presented in the appendices. Detailed explanations of how the themes were developed along with examples are also presented in appendices 15, & 16. Reflexive comments are embedded throughout the thesis. Even though this detailed account has been provided this is not an attempt at demonstrating inter-rater reliability, or repeatability (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Indeed, it is recognised that another researcher would produce a different

account of the possibilities even when working with the same interview transcripts. The information presented here is to assist with quality appraisal, not an invitation for repeated independent data analysis. This would firstly be unethical given the co-relationship within which the data is offered, and secondly would not be possible given the researcher perspective which is an integral part of IPA work.

5.11 Ethical Considerations.

In all research it is important that ethical issues are addressed. This is especially so in qualitative research as it inevitably involves research with people in their everyday lives (Silverman, 2010), and even more so in phenomenological research as personal and sensitive issues are explored (Finlay, 2011, p.217). Ethical guidelines are numerous and there is no single unifying framework within the UK. However, those relevant to this thesis include the British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics (2014) and the British Educational Research Association's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2011). Essentially these are concerned with gaining access and permissions, informed voluntary consent, minimising distress to participants and ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. Whilst these guidelines contributed to my ethical decision making the issues encountered in this research were so much more than adherence to protocols. Alongside my engagement with the necessary processes, obtaining permissions and consent (see Appendices 16, 17, & 18) I was concerned with my duty of care to the participants, ensuring anonymity, and managing the power dynamics throughout the research study.

Working as an insider researcher, with my own students, issues of power needed to be carefully addressed. As an occupational therapist, I engage with my students from a position of mutual respect, and within the limits of the educational establishment I try to work as collaboratively as possible. I needed to ensure that the participants were able to speak freely and not simply say what they thought I wanted to hear. I encouraged an informal atmosphere and was mindful throughout of my verbal and non-verbal communication, trying to ensure that I responded authentically. I was also aware that I needed to maintain a safe environment for all concerned. Whilst I relinquished power, encouraging the participants to control the discussions, I was mindful of my duties of care. I was aware of the possibility of emotionally intense or difficult disclosures arising. I did find myself, on occasions, needing to be reflexive over conflicts between my role as a lecturer, personal tutor, therapist and researcher. These emotionally intense disclosures invoked my therapist response, especially as Lizzie grappled with her own anxiousness and self-doubt. I noted in the focus groups how mutually supportive they were of each other, validating each other's concerns, whilst respecting each other's

boundaries. They discussed issues at a level they were comfortable with, and were, on occasions prepared to challenge consensus views. For example, in focus group one, Ellie expresses disappointment at what she sees on placement (Focus grp 1. lines 1180-1184). She challenges the previously expressed view of the group in terms of how motivating practice is and also expresses something which potentially I may have found controversial as an educator. Finlay (2011) notes how participants may hold power during the research encounter by taking care to present themselves in a socially acceptable way and protecting each other from distress. Equally as the researcher I had a duty of care to the participants not to be intrusive and to over step the boundary from researcher into personal tutor or therapist. The ongoing reciprocal relationships were supported by judicious awareness of trust, openness, power and responsibility.

Whilst participants hold power in terms of what they disclose, how this is then interpreted relocates the power with the researcher, as attempts are made to understand the participants' sense making and expose issues which the participants themselves may not be aware of (Smith, 2008, p.54). There is debate in the literature as to the merits of participant validation, however, Finlay (2011, p. 223) argues powerfully that what may have been reality for the participants at the time of the interviews may be refuted later. For these reasons and along with the issue of maintaining ongoing engagement with the participants in a longitudinal study I decided against using participant validation. However, when I came to write up the analysis I felt uneasy about making interpretations without the involvement of the participants. I was reassured, when reminded that the researcher's interpretation is an essential element of IPA. Whilst the interpretation phrase did focus my attention away from the participants onto myself, I was an essential part of co-constructing the lived experiences (Gee, 2011, p.19; Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p.92).

I was also concerned about the exploitative nature of the research. I am hugely indebted to the participants for sharing their experiences and time, and was concerned that I was the one who was benefiting from this. Upon reflection however, these concerns were resolved, as I reflected upon the ethical principles of beneficence (Beauchamp & Childress, 2001) and utilitarianism, (Häyry, 2014). I noted the energy and enthusiasm which the participants brought to the focus groups. They had opportunity to make sense of their own experiences and join with others in both validating and celebrating their success. Lizzie reported afterwards (personal e-mail communication Nov. 16) that she had enjoyed taking part in the study as it created the opportunity for her to reflect on the whole of her journey. The participants in the final focus group noted that they gained reassurance from sharing their experiences. The intention of this research was to provide insight for both occupational therapy educators and students around possible

challenges which may face pre-registration students. Whilst the focus is on occupational therapy this research may also have resonance for other professional degree programmes. The mutual collaboration, openness and directness of the participants and their willingness to share experiences was a testament to their professionalism and commitment to occupational therapy.

5.12 Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined and justified the methods I used in order to gather and analyse the data. The extensive use of appendices has provided the evidence to support my decision and enhance transparency.

The next two chapters will present the findings from the interview and focus groups.

Chapter Six: Findings from the Individual Interviews

6.1. Introduction

The research focus was to explore lived experiences on an undergraduate occupational therapy course from enrolment to graduation. Five in-depth interviews were carried out; one in year one, two in year two and two in year three. Using an interpretive phenomenological analysis method, emergent themes were identified for each interview, which were then grouped together into super-ordinate themes. These themes make sense of the narratives, highlighting significant aspects of the participant's journey in becoming an occupational therapist. The themes are presented in chronological order as they appeared in the interviews highlighting the longitudinal approach.

Where appropriate, I have made reference to my reflexive diary to give an account of my positionality. This is an important consideration due to my close working relationship with the participant, considering issues such as power and acquiescence. It is also important to recognise my influence on the interpretative nature of the analysis and subsequent co-constructed account.

A synopsis of each interview is presented, including an overview of the general feeling and mood of the interview. A detailed idiographic analysis, considering the super-ordinate themes and sub-themes is presented, along with reflexive responses. Where appropriate a preliminary discussion is offered at the end of each year, to develop the longitudinal perspective and to situate the findings in the wider literature.

In the first part of the analysis of each year, the focus will be on presenting the findings from Lizzie's perspective – taking an insider approach which is consistent with phenomenological methodology. In this first order analysis, I am trying to summarise Lizzie's concerns, and understand what the journey is like for Lizzie with some limited interpretation from me, in keeping with interpretative phenomenological methods of "giving voice" (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

The second order analysis "making sense" (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006), which develops a more interpretive stance, will be further developed in the final discussion presented in chapter eight, considering the overall findings from both the individual interviews and the focus groups.

Table 3, overleaf, shows the super-ordinate and sub-themes which arose in each of the interviews. This table has been included at both the beginning and end of the chapter for clarity.

First interview	Second interview	Third interview	Fourth interview	Fifth interview
Making Sense Making sense of how she came to be here Making sense of what matters. Making sense of her feelings	Moving on	Anxiously motivated	The big abyss	The big abyss
Transitions The big step: Feeling squeezed Emerging new identity	Second doubt Impact of the anxiety Anxiously motivated Anxious relationships	I enjoy going on placement	Dip in the journey	Thinking and feeling like an OT
	Beginning to think like an OT Every things sort of coming together OT student identity	Into the big wide world	Being a student/ Becoming an OT	Taking stock of the journey
		I feel like I think more like an OT now		

Table 3 showing super-ordinate and sub-themes emerging from the interviews

6.2. Year One – Interview One

The first interview was carried out in the second semester of the first year. It was carried out at that point to allow Lizzie time to adjust to the major life transition which she had undertaken.

Lizzie explains how she made the decision to study occupational therapy. She talks about the process of leaving home and settling in at university, making new friends and developing independence from her family. She describes the challenges she faces as she engages in degree level professional education and makes sense of her chosen profession. She supported the interview by drawing her version of the Kawa model.

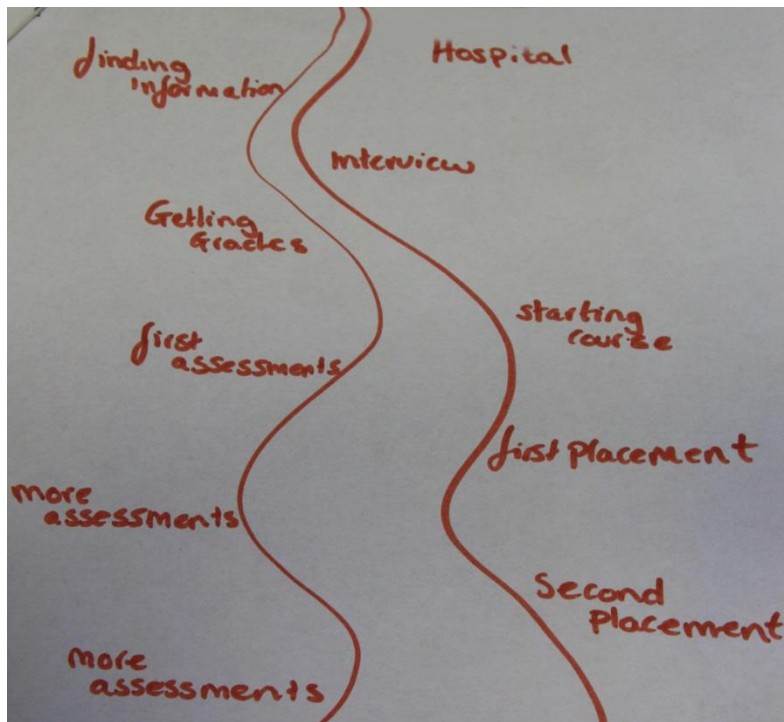


Figure 3: Lizzie's Kawa river model

Lizzie also drew a cross section to highlight her challenges and supports

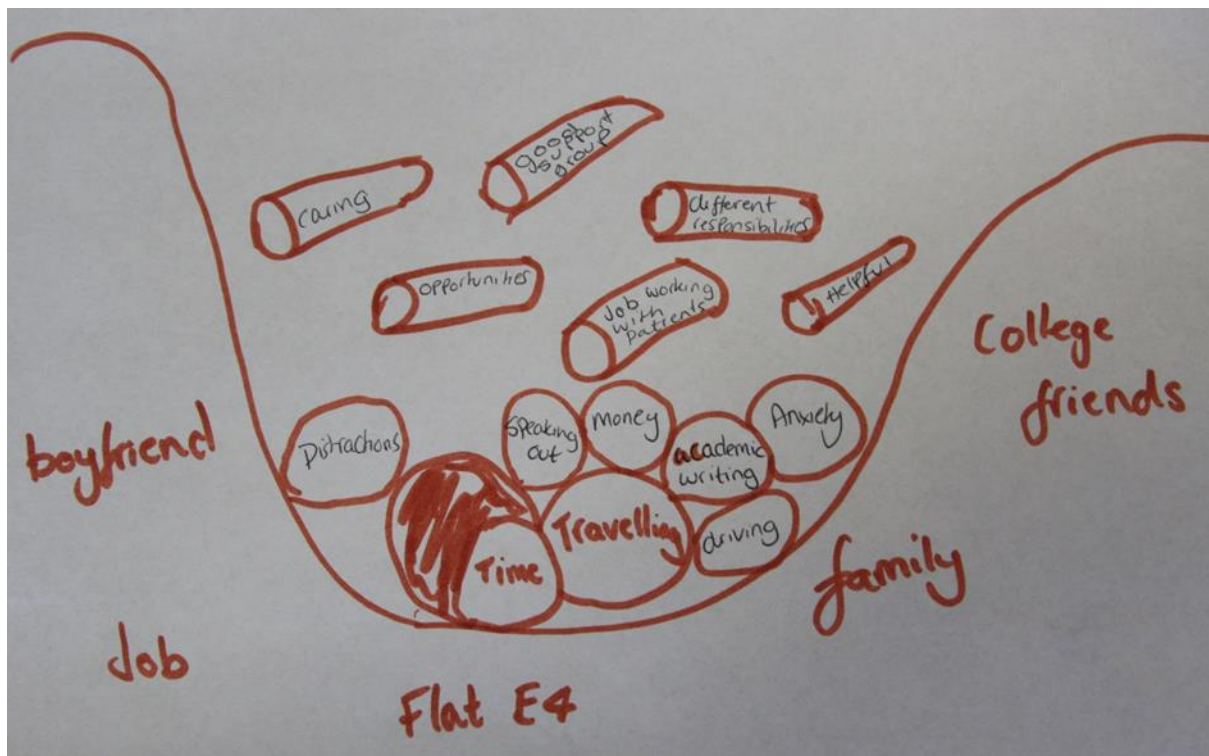


Figure 4 Interview 1 cross section of Lizzie's Kawa River Model

Forty-one emergent themes (see appendix 5) were identified which were grouped together to develop two super-ordinate themes with sub-themes to make sense of the interview as a coherent whole.

- Making sense
- Transitions

Lizzie's story unfolds with her trying to understand her journey to date; how and why she developed an interest in pursuing occupational therapy as a career. This "Making Sense" is the largest super-ordinate theme in Interview One and illustrates how Lizzie's energy is focused on trying to rationalise the overwhelming things which happened to her.

The other super-ordinate theme, "Transitions," highlights Lizzie's focus at this stage of her journey as she deals with the process of maturation, leaving home, establishing a more independent self. Throughout the interview, Lizzie seems to be completely overwhelmed. Whilst reflecting upon the interview, reading the transcript whilst listening again to the recording, I noted in my journal:

Listening to her, I got a clear image of a small boat being tossed about on a choppy sea, without a clear steerage and course, just managing to miss one group of rocks before being carried forwards onto the next; not having enough power to maintain a clear straight course. There is a sense of a lack of agency and mastery over her own destiny. The anxiety, self-doubt and lack of agency all combine to produce a confusing sea full of hidden obstacles one after the other, of overwhelming proportions, with no safe anchorage in sight.

In Lizzie's account, her use of the passive voice suggests a lack of control or direction. She talks about what she needs to know, including phrases like "I think you need lots of practice" (line 360) and "it can gain more experience for you" (line 365). Her use of the passive voice implicitly suggests that Lizzie sees herself as an empty receptacle which needs filling up, but she doesn't know where to begin; she doesn't have to do the filling up, rather other people will do this for her. Later on in the interview, Lizzie again uses this passive voice when considering how important it is to have underpinning knowledge:

Well it makes you look more professional if you know, if they say oh we've got this and then you're sat there thinking, I don't really know what that is (Lizzie, 1, lines 371-372).

Lizzie is concerned more with how she looks than how she feels. It suggests that there is an underlying sentiment of a concern about getting found out, leading Lizzie to

question how she would maintain a professional image in such a situation. The super-ordinate and subsequent sub-themes will now be explored in detail.

6.2.1 Making Sense

Making sense of her new circumstances and recent life events is the main focus of Lizzie's attention in the first interview. As Lizzie talks, she makes sense of her circumstances and why she applied for occupational therapy. She evaluates her own values and beliefs and how these support her decisions and her subsequent feelings, as she embarks upon this new episode in her life.

Three sub-themes emerge:

- Making sense of how she came to be here
- Making sense of what matters.
- Making sense of her feelings

Making sense of how she came to be here: "It's really confusing..... it was quite a shock"

There is almost an other-worldliness about her description of how she came to pursue occupational therapy, a sense of events being outside of her control, tinged with a sense of disbelief, "It's a bit weird actually"(line 54)... "I don't really know how I got an interview" (line 98). Later on she refers to her account as a "story", reflecting this feeling of it being unreal and happening to her rather than under her active control.

As Lizzie reviews her decision to study OT, she recounts what the options are and what attracts her, including why she discounted teaching. She gives an account of her decisions, sounding emphatic and satisfied with the final result:

If I decide I want to change and go somewhere else there's so many different places I could go and work and so many different people I can go and work with, and I can also still go with like, work with children if I want (Lizzie,1, lines 210-212).

There is a sense here of Lizzie being pleased with the outcome of her deliberations.

Making sense of what matters. "It's just...mind boggling"

A large part of Lizzie's concerns at this stage of her professional journey is making sense of what is important to her. She articulates the reasons that she selected Occupational Therapy as a career for herself and this is concurrent with her values. Lizzie values working with other people. She seems to feel a great deal of responsibility for other people, wanting to make it ok for everyone, making sure that all her friends are happy.

So it's like, I've got to fit, see my boyfriend in, the flat, everybody at the flat, I've gotta see them and also erm, there's a girl, who I live with, it's four boys and one girl.....and she's from Essex so it's not easy for her to go home... ..so sometimes I feel bad leaving her because ... she's on her own sort of thing so there's that, then there's my college friends who I've got to see (Lizzie, 1, Lines 772-780).

Lizzie finds it difficult to prioritise; she has many divided loyalties between her friends at home, her new friends at university, as well as fitting in her part-time job and driving lessons. At this point her academic studies appear to be fairly low on her list of priorities, which causes Lizzie considerable anxiety, as she procrastinates more. She seems to give the most important aspect of her current circumstances, that of her studies, the least focus, and I speculated whether this is tied up in her lack of self-belief and self-value. Perhaps it is easier to focus on other people's needs rather than her own.

I was struck by Lizzie's preoccupation of making sure everyone else is okay and interpreted this as Lizzie trying to improve her own self-worth, by feeling that she was valued and needed by others, rather than meeting her own needs first. Perhaps this is a way of Lizzie fulfilling her belonging needs, knowing that she is needed by others, or it may be a means by which she can receive external validation. Both these possible interpretations are given credence by a later comment when Lizzie describes the reassurance, and solidarity she gets from having a peer on the course who seems to exhibit similar characteristics to herself:

I mean some people get us mixed up and it's quite funny really but she's got quite the same personality as me...and I find that she seems to be ... like unconfident about the same sorta things and she doesn't like speaking out in front of the class so it's like good to have like another person there and like not think that I'm the only, like person like that (Lizzie, 1, lines 974-986).

The feeling of not being in this alone is important here to Lizzie, it gives her some reassurance that she is not the only person feeling this, recognising that she is not different, it normalises her feelings. This could be interpreted as Lizzie getting reassurance from the fact that her circumstances are externally validated by someone else in the same circumstances.

Making sense of her feelings: "I was excited about coming but it was ...always gonna be the, oh I've got to go to Uni and it's took me away from college"

The aforementioned sub-theme of "making sense of what matters" overlaps with this sub-theme, "making sense of her feelings", as Lizzie makes sense of the emotional turmoil which she experiences as a result of the transition to university." Throughout the interview, Lizzie fluctuates between expressing self-doubt and a sense of self-belief and determination:

I don't know whether everybody does, but you... you always think oh what if you get a difficult patient, you get a patient that does this or a patient that does that and it's always like the things that you don't really want to happen (Lizzie, 1, 1049-52).

Concern about working with "difficult" or challenging clients is recognised in the literature (Tryssenaar, 1999) and indeed it is noted that challenging clients can often be therapists' best teachers. Despite this, the internal dialogue of self-doubt and self-belief which Lizzie describes, highlights the tension and I would expect Lizzie to feel very tired and worn down by it.

In summary, then this super-ordinate theme has focused on Lizzie's feelings about her change of circumstances, trying to get at the essence of what it is like to be Lizzie, as she deals with this major change in life circumstances and tries to integrate her initial ideas about occupational therapy to the reality of being a student.

There is a sense of the whole process being unreal and things happening to Lizzie, rather than her having any influence over the process, a sense of watching a film and being dis-associated from the action rather than directing the film, indeed at one point, Lizzie refers to her narrative as an "interesting story" (line 160). The prevailing mood is one of confusion and anxiety. This is not surprising, given that the transition to university is recognised as a "highly stressful transition for emerging adults" (Mackinnon, Sherry, Pratt et al. 2014). I made this entry in my reflexive journal after listening to the recording of this first interview:

I got a strong sense of constant moving backwards and forwards, not only physically in terms of places, from University to home and back again, but also in terms of her developing her new life separate from her previous life with family and friends. This movement is compounded with an emotional tension within Lizzie, constant fluctuations between self-doubt and self-belief. It made me want to hold out a hand and pull her out of the choppy sea onto dry land. There were dry land and firm foundations in there somewhere, but it was constantly getting washed over by the waves. I was struck by how utterly exhausting this must be.

I wanted to be the emotional rescuer that Lizzie is trying to be for others, to hold her hand and tell her everything was going to be alright. I was aware of the huge privilege of being able to share this honest first-hand experience and was again challenged as to how, as a lecturer, I could make this journey easier, which was part of my rationale for undertaking this study initially.

6.2.2 Transitions, Coping with Change: "I get worried about everything that's new."

Transitions and how Lizzie manages and makes sense of these transitions, and copes with the major life change is another super-ordinate theme of the first interview. Anticipatory anxiety is a feature which pervades the themes throughout all the interviews. Lizzie describes how she finds new situations stressful, how she got really worried before her first tests and assignments. She goes on to describe how anxious she got before her first placement "Just, I get worried about everything that's new" (Lizzie, 1, line 656). It seems she feels an anticipatory anxiety which is almost paralysing at times:

I spent lots o' time looking at my computer saying I know what I want to say but I can't say it because I need a reference for it (Lizzie, 1, line 680).

It was during one of these discussions that I experienced a dilemma between myself as researcher and myself as a therapist. I wanted to respond as a therapist, but knew that was inappropriate and so made inane unhelpful comments, "oh bless", myself feeling paralysed by anxiety in that moment and not knowing the most useful way of responding, perhaps some transference was taking place here as well.

Within this super-ordinate theme, three sub-themes emerge:

- The big step: "It was a big change... coming to Uni was a big step"
- Feeling squeezed: "It's the whole juggling everything, that's most difficult"
- Emerging new identity "There's so many different places I could go and work"

The big step

This sub-theme focuses on Lizzie leaving home. The big step captures something of the challenge Lizzie faces as she is separating from her parental home and college friend:

It was a big change ...I really enjoyed college. Rr, a lot... and I didn't want to leave college so coming to Uni was a big step and it was always going to be the thought of, I was excited about coming but it was ...always gonna be the oh I've got to go to Uni and it's took me away from college sort of thing... (Lizzie, 1, Lines 598-603).

Whilst Lizzie anticipates starting a new life at University, this is tinged with sadness and nostalgia as the chapter of her college life closes. There is an ambivalence here of wanting to move forward, but also wanting to cling onto the well-loved and familiar. At this stage the influence of Lizzie's mother over her career decisions is very evident:

My mum was like the one that was telling me about it, (Lizzie, 1, line 68).

It's really confusing because my mum just rung, rung up, when I said I don't wanna do teaching anymore, we sort of thought well it's a bit too late for this year we'll probably do some work experience (Lizzie, lines 102-104).

The use of the pronoun "we" suggests a mutual collaboration or a lack of separateness between mother and daughter.

The separation from home and her old lifestyle are ongoing issues for Lizzie throughout the first year. However, despite the stress, strangeness and separation issues, Lizzie rises to the challenge and embraces the new opportunities and developing independence:

I like it at, here. It's, I've go, I have my own space so I can go and sit in it and be quiet. Whereas at home there's me and my mum and my sister and, as you can imagine, three girls argue quite a bit so we, I liked, like coming and having my own space and yeah it was good (lines 633-638).

Despite the ongoing process of separation over the first year, there is a hint here that, now in April (two terms into the first year,) this separation process has been completed. The emphatic "I like it here, I have my own space" highlights a successful resolution of this dilemma and also the need for physical separation, represented by a separate environment which is entirely Lizzie's. The repetition of "my own space" emphasises its importance and represents an emerging identity separate from her previous life and family.

Feeling squeezed: it's the whole juggling everything, getting ... everything done and things... like that that's most difficult.

Lizzie recounts a feeling of being overwhelmed, as in the other themes, there is a sense here of things being out of control. Her phrase "it's mind boggling" conveys an exponential vicious circle of procrastination, loss of time, anxiety, and more procrastination:

Everything's demanding on your time And then when you don't do it, and do your work, you get anxious, well I get anxious about it and think oh, and then that just works, gets me worked up and then I end up not doing it again and then, yeah, it's just...mind boggling (Lizzie, 1, lines 800-804).

Compounded with this spiralling anxiety about managing her academic work, Lizzie describes other demands on her time, in respect to her feelings of responsibility to her friends. The conflicting life world between her friends from home and the new demands upon her time are significant:

I think she's sorta got used to the fact now that I've got lotsa work to do and I can't be, I'm not neglecting 'em and I'm not just ...ignoring 'em but I think at like first, they used to think oh Lizzies not, Lizzie's like not really talking to us anymore sort of.....thing, even though it's just 'cos I like, didn't spend all my time on the computer sorta thing... (Lizzie, 1, lines 997-1004).

I was struck by her loyalty and concern for her friends. Lizzie sees herself as an emotional rescuer. I contemplated whether this was reflective about how she would like to be rescued, as she feels without any anchor points at this turbulent time in her life. Whilst there are clearly conflicting priorities and time pressures here for Lizzie, there is a pervading sense of generalised anxiety. She has already alluded to this overwhelming feeling of commitment, of keeping everyone happy, as well as fitting in her academic work, as paralysing, leading to further problems managing her time. Lizzie does not explain the underlying source of this anxiety; there are hints elsewhere, that it is perhaps to do with her self-esteem, in that she takes solace from the fact there is someone else on the course who is "under confident about the same things", as well as acknowledging the need to increase her own confidence. This limited self-esteem and confidence seems to have an impact on all aspects of her life.

Emerging new identity: "There's so many different places I could go and work"

There is some indication that not all the transition is chaotic; there are signs of Lizzie beginning to think about all things occupational. Lizzie considers her emerging new identity as an occupational therapy student. She reflects upon the opportunities that she sees before her and this sense of excitement and positivity is in contrast to the previous discussion which focused on the overwhelming nature of it all:

I've got like lots of opportunities cos like I'm still young and like...I've got 'cos I've not got different ties so I could qualify and go wherever I wanted to go and do whatever I wanted (Lizzie,1, line 933).

Lizzie finds it difficult to articulate the concepts of occupational therapy. She describes her initial experience of observing occupational therapy and is not able to frame what she sees in appropriate professional concepts:

I spent a morning in rheumatology but it was just like outpatients coming in and having like a chat and then the afternoon I was with like some day-patients who just came in and like elderly patients who just came in and did exercises on like mes, playing with locks and playing with that, you know that theraputty (Lizzie,1, lines 175-190).

There is a lack of understanding and professional language, as she describes what she observed; chatting, exercises and playing. These words show misunderstandings of occupational therapy and are often used in stereotypical assumptions by people who do not understand the profession's fundamental philosophies. Lizzie's lack of understanding

is highlighted further when she acknowledges that she finds it difficult to explain what occupational therapy is to other people:

I don't know, it, I think it's almost, really a hard one to sometimes I just say to my friends it's like physio but not (Lizzie, 1, line 331).

Lizzie does not see herself as part of the profession referring to "those OTs" (line 171) suggesting she is not part of them, they are separate from her. She does seem not have any sense of belonging or identity with occupational therapists currently.

Lizzie gains a great deal from her practice-based learning and values the experiences as significant parts of her development. Lizzie reflects upon the importance of being exposed to lots of different opportunities, but doesn't seem to directly own the explanation, referring to "you" rather than "I":

you need pra, lots of practise, like working with different people and different areas just so you can, 'cos it's alright you can learn it on paper but it's always gonna be different when you go out into the real world and try and sort, try and deal with things like that, so I think the, more experience you have of it the better... it can also gain more confidence for you (Lizzie, 1, lines 355- 359).

Lizzie views her academic learning as very separate from her practice education; the practical application is different. It is noteworthy that Lizzie uses a modal verb to suggest possibility rather than actual fact "it can also gain...." I wonder if this is again reflective of the powerlessness that she feels at this stage of her education, as well as the lack of agency and responsibility discussed earlier, almost as though she has no role to play in managing her own learning.

This theme of the emerging new identity shows the vulnerability of Lizzie at this stage. External support mechanisms are very important in terms of social support and Lizzie shows a strong reliance on external validation, and this supports her new fragile identity in much the same way a child seeks its parents' approval.

The impact of professional socialisation is highlighted as Lizzie seeks to make sense of occupational therapy but has only limited understanding of professional constructs at this time. Relationships with practice educators may be pivotal. Indeed, Lizzie refers to one of her practice educators as "giving her hope":

She says I know like how you are,... , like quiet and erm, she says I used to be, really quiet, I used to be quieter than you, I wouldn't like do anything...and speak to anyone sort of thing and like thinking about it, she was so loud and just when she ...went onto the ward and she was just talking to everybody and...making jokes and things like that, she was just like well a really loud person and to think that she's gone from that, that like gives me like hope that that one day I'm gonna be like able to... (Lizzie, 1, lines, 900-911).

These encouraging sensitive comments from her educator act as a motivator to Lizzie as she struggles to develop her professional self. They highlight the impact of professional socialisation and the powerful role modelling processes which exist within practice education.

This super-ordinate theme then, highlights how the general pervasive nature of the transition affects all parts of her life, including living situations, social situations and lifestyle matters. In Lizzie's case, the process of leaving home and establishing oneself is not one single act but is on-going over a period of time. This process of upheaval caused me to recall and reflect upon my own experience of leaving home to go to University. I noted in my reflective journal:

I can still vividly recall my first weeks at university, despite the passing of a number of years, which perhaps reflects the intense emotions felt in those formative weeks. I can remember feeling abandoned as my parents drove away and I turned to go back into the student hostel, my new home. A group of new arrivals were drinking coffee in the kitchen and so I joined them. I remember sitting there for what seemed an eternity, all I wanted to do was to go and unpack, but I didn't want to seem antisocial by scuttling off to my room. This sense of needing to be included remained with me for a number of weeks, I didn't want to do anything on my own for fear of becoming excluded from the "pack", my immediate concern was to fit in and make friends. University work was an incidental consideration.

Whilst I cannot identify with Lizzie's generalised anxiety, I can certainly appreciate her need to feel valued, and included. My approach to establishing my new lifestyle was however different from Lizzie's, whereas she chose to travel to and fro from home a number of times a week, I determined not to return home until the end of the first term, thereby making a clean break with my parental home.

In summary, this first interview deals with Lizzie's experience of her first year: one of making sense of her current journey and life situation, and of an emerging new identity. Her experience of her first year is imbued with overwhelming anxiousness, suggesting significant self-doubt and a lack of confidence. There are also some indications that Lizzie has a sense of drive and determination, as she grasps the many new opportunities and challenges.

6.2.3 Preliminary Discussion.

I have developed a preliminary discussion of the first interview, emphasising the longitudinal nature of the research. The themes are considered in the order they arose in

the analysis, although inevitably, because of the interrelated nature of much of the discussion, there is significant overlap.

Making sense

Lizzie considers her initial decision to study occupational therapy. She identifies that whilst she might like to work with children, she is attracted to occupational therapy because there is much variety and also opportunities to travel. In a study surveying 330 occupational therapy students enrolled at Brunel University between 1996-1999, the most highly rated reason for choosing occupational therapy was the variety of work setting (n=250) followed by challenge and variety (n=245), (Craig & Naphine, 2001). This concurred with Lizzie's reasons for choosing occupational therapy although opportunities to travel were not ranked by Craig and Naphine (2001). However, a second study carried out by Craig, Gissane, Douthwaite and Philp (2001) identified the reasons for career choice of sixty-four occupational therapy students who already had a degree. Job satisfaction was the highest ranking reason, with variety of work settings being third, and opportunities to travel ranked seventh. Interestingly, in all cases, salary and vacancy rates appear not to be influential factors. In both studies, personal contact was noted as an important means of learning about occupational therapy. It seems then, that occupational therapy students begin their journey with some clear expectations of their profession, often influenced by personal contact. It has been suggested by Adams, Hean, Sturgis, & Mcleod-Clark (2006), that occupational therapy students may have a relatively strong professional identity at the beginning of their training compared to other health and social care professionals, but it is not clear how this alters over the course of their professional education. Lizzie's professional identity at this stage of her education, given both her difficulty in articulating the concepts of occupational therapy and her reported low confidence appears questionable. Adams et al. (2006) suggest that the professional identity is based upon role models and student experience, and at this stage Lizzie has had both restricted exposure to role models and only very limited practice experience.

Despite this lack of strong professional identity, there does seem to be a strong confluence between Lizzie's personal and professional values (Denshire, 2002). Indeed, Trede, Macklin, and Bridges (2012. p 376), in their systematic review of 20 articles pertaining to professional identity development, highlight the importance of reconciling personal and professional "morals, values and dispositions which underpin practice".

Lizzie's preoccupation with making sure everyone else is ok is a strong feature of this interview and demonstrates her caring disposition. Lizzie's need to be needed was evidenced by her strong desire to identify with other members of the group, and perhaps

this was one way of her addressing her lack of professional identity at this time, by establishing her connectedness and belonging to her cohort. Whilst there is some literature pertaining to the importance of belonging whilst on placement (Levett-Jones & Lathlean, 2008) from a nursing perspective, there isn't any from an OT perspective. Establishing ways to enhance student belonging early in their professional education, may help to strengthen professional identity, and this needs further exploration.

Transitions: Coping with change.

Lizzie explores how she experienced the transition to university. Lizzie describes the turmoil as she left her parental home. This is a protracted affair, rather than an abrupt event, characterised by many comings and goings over the first two terms. These experiences are validated by the research of Chowa and Healey (2008) who emphasise the importance of establishing a sense of belonging both in terms of space and social relationships, over a period of time. However, that research focuses on the domestic arrangements of transitioning students and doesn't consider the academic demands or other lifestyle issues placed upon students. There is some research on how to support students with the transition into university life; much of which reports that students need support in becoming independent learners, making sense of university systems, and coping with both new learning and social environments (Kyndt, 2015; Leese, 2010). Whilst this is valid research, it does not focus on health care professionals, and there is a gap in the literature in terms of how to support this specific group of students, who in addition to the more general transitional support, as described above, may also need to address their professional identity issues of belonging and meeting professional expectations.

Lizzie demonstrates that she has difficulty, both using appropriate OT professional language and explaining what OT is to other people. She lacks the language and understanding to be able to articulate the dominant philosophy of OT. Additionally, she views herself as an outsider to the profession, perhaps because she is aware of her lack of knowledge.

Difficulty explaining occupational therapy is an ongoing issue for the profession which has been widely reported for many years (Fortune, 2000; Reilly, 1962; Turner, 2015; Turpin, Rodger, Hall, 2012). Certainly, Lizzie, at this stage of her education, is no exception, being unable to formulate an effective explanation. She compares her profession to physiotherapy, suggesting that not only is she unsure of her own professional paradigms, but that her profession is not able to stand alone and can only be understood in comparison to other health care professions. Further on as she describes her pre-enrolment visit she refers to "those OTs" placing herself outside of that

community of practice (Wenger, 1998) and is unable to articulate what she saw. She resorts to layman's language "playing" with locks and therapeutic putty. Her inability to frame her observations in occupational terms highlights lack of underpinning knowledge. Wilding and Whiteford (2008) consider the importance of using language to promote professional identity. It seems then, Lizzie needs to develop her professional thinking, understanding, and language to enhance her sense of belonging to the profession.

Lizzie comments on the positive impact that a sensitive educator had on developing her confidence and self-belief. Practice education has a pivotal part to play in the education of occupational therapists. Much research has been carried out around various aspects of practice education, including assessment methods (Duke, 2004; Roden, 2014), different models of placements (Martin, et al., 2004; Overton et al, 2009), preparation of students for practice (Spiliotopoulou, 2007) and quality issues (Knightbridge, 2014; Towns & Ashby, 2014).

Lizzie highlighted the importance of having a good role model as a practice educator; Rodger et al. (2014) considered the importance of open and honest relationships between the student and practice educator. Lizzie highlighted the pivotal relationship with her practice educator at this impressionable time in her professional education. Developing understanding and supportive relationships with practice educators may help to promote the student's sense of belonging into the profession by enhancing feelings of inclusion, and creating opportunities for participation.

6.2.4 Summary Year One

In year one Lizzie had certain expectations of the occupational therapy profession that were congruent with her sense of self. Her decision to study occupational therapy was influenced by her experiences, talking to others, her mother and her vocational interests. Her sense of agency is lacking, especially as she is engulfed by the enormity of academic, professional and new lifestyle demands. Enhancing a sense of belonging, with peers may help to provide some emotional security, and restore a sense of self and agency.

Practice education is a central development process for the embryonic student as they try to make sense of their emerging new identity. It provides opportunities to learn from clients which cannot be afforded in the academic arena, along with establishing meaningful relationships with practice educators in the wider professional community. Lizzie is not able to articulate the knowledge and parameters of the profession, and ways of supporting students to articulate their professional philosophy at this point in their professional education need to be established.

6.3 Year Two

Two interviews were carried out in year two, after successful completion of the first year, including a five-week full time placement in the summer. One was carried out in December after Lizzie had engaged with a term of teaching at intermediate level, just before going out on a six-week practice placement and the second was carried out in June at the very end of the second year, after completion of a second six-week practice placement.

6.3.1 Interview 2:1

Lizzie reflects back over her first year at university. She chooses not to draw a Kawa model. She notes that she finds things much easier now that her focus is in one place. In her narrative her focus is now firmly on the essence of being an OT student; her commentary is focused around her workload at university, her living space, her commitment to occupational therapy and her practice placement experience.

I was aware whilst carrying out the interview, of the tension between wanting to respond as a therapist rather than a researcher. This dilemma is a similar one to that which I experienced in the first interview and prompted this entry into my reflexive journal, upon my listening to the recording after the interview:

Already, twice now, whilst carrying out this research, I have wanted to respond as a therapist and found not even being able to respond as a personal tutor, a very real challenge. I intuitively want to jump in and help. Listening, and questioning to enhance understanding both for myself and the participant is something I need to improve, rather than jumping in with a problem solving approach.

The issue of my relationship with Lizzie was also evident at a later point in the interview, when she is somewhat reluctant to explain what she feels is a controversial point:

I've probably have conflicting views with you like erm, we had that lecture where that, someone came in about the business-side...of things and just, I don't know, I just, just, can't really under, er, explain it but just I think first, just need to be, I can't explain it, just, you need to be like really kind and client-centred and just.....caring (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 1041-49).

It seems that she is reluctant to express herself here and this may be because of the power differential, feeling she must say the things that validate what she assumes are my opinions.

The longitudinal nature of the research has had some influence on the data, and this can be seen in the opening part of the second interview, where we recap the things discussed last time. This is a useful approach, allowing me to check out my understanding and to provide a spring board for further discussions. As I prepared for the second interview, I was excited, wanting to listen to the next instalment; I was also aware there had been issues in Lizzie's placement and wondered how this should be approached. I decided that these issues would only be explored if they were raised by Lizzie. I wanted to hear the issues which Lizzie considered important and not impose my own concerns on the discourse. This was however an issue which was given considerable attention by Lizzie, as she reflected upon her performance on placement, her feedback, confidence and motivation to succeed.

Thirty emergent themes (see appendix 6) were identified which were organised into three super-ordinate themes:

- Moving on: "it's more of a, like a separate thing now it's, it's easier to deal with,"
- Second doubt: "it's like at work, I can do it, but ... I just, it's always that second doubt"
- Beginning to think like an OT, "It's just the differences that you can make.....to somebody's life are like really important

One of the smaller themes, "moving on" revisits the separation from home issues which were discussed in the previous interview. It is a useful bridging between the two interviews as a summary of the last interview and a contextual backdrop for the second interview. Lizzie acknowledges that she had gone through a grieving process and has moved onto the acceptance stage, ready to embrace new possibilities.

Lizzie spends a lot of time in this interview explaining and reflecting on her self-doubt, anxiety and lack of confidence. This super-ordinate theme has been labelled "Second doubt".

Lizzie focuses on her emerging new identity as an OT student, in which she explains her developing understanding of occupational therapy. The phrase "I like the way it makes me think" highlights how she engages with the philosophy of occupational therapy and sees this as congruent with her own values.

Finally, in the theme "looking towards the future", at the end of the interview, Lizzie anticipates her future as an occupational therapist and affirms her commitment to the profession.

As before, each super-ordinate theme will be analysed in detail.

6.3.1.2 Moving on: *"it's more of a, like a separate thing now, it's easier to deal with,"*

This super-ordinate theme is a small but important theme, with three sub-themes: Being in Between, Managing Separation, and Impact of Living Arrangements. As the title implies, Lizzie reflects upon the process of leaving home and moving to a new life. She refers to this, as a grieving process, highlighting the on-going nature of the process rather than a one-off event. This demonstrates her developing understanding of psychological concepts, something which Lizzie struggled to articulate in the last interview.

This affected many areas of her life, including home and friends. She now sees this stage of her life as complete and feels that she has reached the final stage, where she has completed the necessary psychological work and come to terms with leaving home, "I think I've finally reached the acceptance stage" Lizzie, 2.1, line 41).

It is interesting to note that she also uses the word "finally," suggesting both a closure of the process, but also that it has been a prolonged process over a period of time. It seems the process has been protracted as many of Lizzie's friends had a gap year and didn't leave home at the same time that she did, so she felt "stuck in-between".

Lizzie comments on her altered living situation compared to last year. She misses the sociability of her flat from her first year. She says:

I 'ave my door opens because...then people know I'm in and if they need to come... ..and talk to me they can just wander in (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 384-386).

This seemed to me more about Lizzie's need to feel wanted and needed, perhaps about her trying to overcome her own isolation and meet her belonging needs, rather than being available for others. It is reminiscent of her comments last year (Lizzie, 1, lines 997-1004) where Lizzie positioned herself as an emotional rescuer, as she demonstrated excessive concern about her friends' emotional well-being, and also carries forward to the next superordinate theme "Second doubt".

Lizzie's living arrangements and accommodation issues are important aspects of her lived experience of being a student. It is an issue that she brings up early on in the interview spontaneously and spends some time exploring how this compares to her experience last year.

6.3.1.2 Second doubt: "it's like at work, I can do it, but ... I just, it's always that second doubt"

The second super-ordinate theme to emerge was "Second doubt". Throughout the second interview, Lizzie repeatedly refers to her anxiety and self-doubt. This anticipatory anxiety is a feature throughout all the interviews. There is a real tension between Lizzie's self-doubt and anxiety and her slowly developing self-confidence:

It's like at work, I can do it, but ... I just, it's always that second doubt. It's alright with things ... that are just to do with me but it's like when it's got other people involved, like I'm doubting myself all the time because.....other people are dependent on me and.....things like that it's... ..silly (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 693-701)

Three sub-themes emerged in the analysis;

- Impact of the anxiety
- Anxiously motivated
- Anxious relationships

Impact of anxiety.

An outstanding feature of this interview is the tension and inner turmoil, as Lizzie oscillates between feelings of self-doubt and anxiety throughout, to feelings of confidence and competence:

It's like, if I, if I get into the roo, into the routine of doing it and I aren't force myself to do it and just go and do it I can do it...but if I'm left to think about it and plan I t and worry about it.....it, it is honestly up and down. It's so.....so strange It's not something I can build up and then keep it there it seems (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 548-559).

Lizzie shows some insight into managing this and acknowledges that it is perhaps a familial, idiographic issue which is going to need a long term management strategy. This has a pervasive impact on all aspects of her life, from managing her studies, to confidence on placement and into her social life. My suspicions that this inner turmoil must be extremely exhausting are confirmed by Lizzie; she states how tiring she finds being in both a heightened state of anxiety and also trying to constantly perform:

I feel like for me to be at my full potential I have to really really really concentrate and...really push myself and have a really constant high level of concentration and interaction and everything which I can't do all the time 'cos I just get tired.....like in lectures I get tired and things like that and in group conversations I get tired...'cos I'm constantly trynna think of things (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 599-611).

This anxiety is a major issue for Lizzie at this stage and is a topic to which she keeps returning throughout the interview. She describes how it pervades all aspects of her life, from driving to affecting her academic work and performance on placement. She seems embarrassed by this, referring to it as "silly" (693-701 see above). There are many examples in this second interview where Lizzie engages her critical parent, commenting that her feelings are silly. This internal critical voice of Lizzie's creates more pressure. This undermines her confidence further, which in turn increases her anxiety.

Anxiously motivated

Despite all the self-doubt that Lizzie has expressed, she also shows a very strong sense of motivation and determination to succeed, acknowledging this on many occasions throughout the interview:

I need to carry on going and just keep building it up and keep going and then [sighs], one day I'll realise that I am brilliant [laughs].....and I can do it (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 1184-1185).

There is a strong sense of determination and desire to succeed. Lizzie knows she needs to keep working on developing her confidence, although does not identify any particular strategies to do this. She is able to look forward to the next hurdles with some confidence:

I am looking forward to next year, I'm...I am really looking forward to it, like the case study, I'm looking forward to writing that, it's just the whole stress that comes with it (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 1149-1151).

This statement alludes to the ambivalence, the motivation and enjoyment but also to the underlying stress.

Anxious relationships

Lizzie's confidence is undermined by her feelings of inferiority; she comments that some people can easily do the things that she really has to work on. In the last interview, Lizzie talked about how this impacted upon her relationship, and I noted that she seemed to be an emotional rescuer in much the same way that she too wanted to be rescued. This feature was also noted in the impact of her living arrangements discussed above.

Lizzie's feelings of inferiority, her need to be needed and also the reassurance she gains from other people being in the same situation and resulting dependency, seem to be a feature of her relationships:

It's good to go and talk to her and say oh have you, have you done this, have you done that or, do you understand this like or have you got any books that I can read on this, just like support, but then again it can also be inhibitive 'cos I'm becoming dependent on her. I get really dependent on people. But yeah, no I do find that I get quite dependent on people...so it's, it's, it's stupid, it, it annoys me (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 732-54).

6.3.1.4 Beginning to think like an OT: "It's just the differences that you can make.....to somebody's life are like really important".

One of the main super-ordinate themes in this interview is concerned with Lizzie making sense of her emerging new identity which also follows on from the sub theme "emerging new identity" in the first interview.

Two sub-themes emerged;

- Everything's sort of coming together
- OT student identity.

Everything's sort of coming together.

Lizzie is able to see the progress she is making on her journey. She is starting to see the connections between different aspects of her studies, putting her learning into context and appreciating the reality of practice. Lizzie feels a sense of progress, but this is still overshadowed by her anxious thoughts which were explained in detail above:

everything's sort of coming together but at the same time I'm feeling very daunt, daunted about everything (Lizzie, 2.1, line 395).

There is, despite this, a noted increase in Lizzie's sense of determination, which appears several times in this interview.

OT student identity.

Lizzie's considers her emerging new identity, something which began in embryonic form in the first interview, but now is a much bigger feature, supported by her self-determination and anxious motivation.

Lizzie views OT students as different from other students, although she does see some similarities with other healthcare professional courses, which she regards as more "grown up" compared to non-professional courses. She compares her workload and professional expectations with her flat mates who are doing art-based subjects and sometimes feels resentful about the more serious nature of her curriculum, wishing that she could use her creative abilities more. There is perhaps some implied criticism here

about the course when she comments that she struggles to maintain her occupational balance due to the work load, but Lizzie does not voice this. There is an increased use of professional terminology, compared to the first interview, and application of concepts, recognising how the concept of occupational balance applies to herself.

Lizzie considers things which make her feel like an OT. Practice placement learning again features strongly here. She comments that being given responsibility on placement, and her educator seeking her opinions, validates her knowledge and competence and makes her feel more autonomous. Lizzie reflects upon her understanding of occupational therapy. Whilst she acknowledges that she still finds this difficult to explain, she equally gets frustrated at the wider public lack of knowledge of the profession. Although her explanation of the underlying concepts of the profession still suggests that she struggles to find the appropriate professional language, she is able to be more articulate about this than in the initial interview. She values the client-centred perspective and sees significance in the everyday and ordinary:

It's just the differences that you can make.....to somebody's life are like really important (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 492-494).

This is in contrast to her previous statement which has already been considered:

I don't know, it, I think it's almost, really a hard one to sometimes I just say to my friends it's like physio but not (Lizzie, 1, line 331).

Lizzie repeats this concept of the "little things" which make a difference on three separate occasions during the interview, thus emphasising the importance she places on it. She expands on this, saying she likes the way it makes her think and gives examples of how she is thinking about everyday things from an occupational therapy perspective, Lizzie shows a commitment to occupational therapy, she comments on how much she is enjoying the course and states:

I'm very, I am passionate about OT, I like the work that they do, (Lizzie, 2.1 line 420).

The use of the adjective "passionate", which she repeats twice during the interview, suggests commitment, strong emotional feelings and involvement with the profession. She does, however, say the work "they do" rather than "we do", suggesting that she still doesn't see herself as part of the profession, even though she is passionate about it. It is as though Lizzie is putting on a professional cloak, uniform or external appearance, but at this stage this remains a superficial exterior and is not embodied.

There is an assimilation of occupational therapy concepts into Lizzie's thinking, but she stops short from seeing herself belonging to the profession and is clear that she is a student feeling frightened by the thought of responsibility. I wonder why she mentions

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her age at this point. Perhaps it is because she feels that this emphasises her youth and how the prospect of responsibility frightens her:

That's the thing that...scares me. I don't know. I'm 19 and in less than two years' time I'm gonna be qualified and somebody's gonna be dependent on me like looking after them, (Lizzie, 2.1, lines 501-508).

All this shows that Lizzie is not only developing an understanding of the concepts of the profession, but is starting to internalise this so it has an impact on her thinking on a daily basis. She still views herself as an OT student rather than an OT.

In summary then this interview shows how Lizzie has dealt with the transition of moving from home and establishing her new life. She has begun to embrace some of the challenges of her chosen profession, and, whilst she still sees herself as an outsider and a student rather than an OT, she is aware of some of the tensions and dilemmas of practice. Lizzie shows a considerable amount of anxiety, but she also shows some insight into this and is developing some strategies to manage it. There is, in this interview, a stronger sense of self-efficacy and determination than in the initial interview.

6.3.2. Interview 2:2

The third interview was carried out at the end of year two after completing two practice placements. Lizzie begins reflecting on the perception of the passage of time and the anticipation of being qualified. Lizzie then considers her recent placement experience. In my role as practice placement co-ordinator, I found myself being drawn into these placement narratives. The description was rich and vivid, and I wanted to know more. I was also able to identify with the experiences as, thirty years on I still remember vividly my practice placement experience as a student. It seems that these high stakes, emotionally charged learning experiences are ones which have a significant impact on professional development and stay very clearly in the memory.

There are still some hints of a lack of self-confidence and lack of agency, but again this is fleeting and the focus of the discussion is Lizzie's improving self-confidence. There is a greater sense of Lizzie embracing change positively; she is managing her life and enjoying an increased agency.

This optimistic perspective may in some way be attributable to the timing of the interview, having successfully completed another year, approaching the summer vacation and anticipating the final year of her undergraduate training.

This interview is much more positive. There is some reflection and looking back, but again this is about making sense of what has happened, learning from experiences, and working out how to approach the rest of her studies. The whole interview feels more

positive, focusing on events and facts rather than the overwhelming turmoil and anxiety which had been a feature of the previous three interviews, to a greater or lesser extent. I noted in my reflexive diary, after my initial reading of the transcript:

I felt this interview had produced little new information and was not as rich as the previous two interviews, perhaps because it was less emotionally laden. I reflected upon my poor interview technique and felt that being an insider researcher had muddied the issue, as I was too close to the participants, as Lizzie began to ask me factual questions about the course and applying for jobs. I answered them and was acutely aware that this was not what I wanted to focus the interview on, but at the same time ethically felt I needed to hear and respond to her procedural questions about the course. The fact that Lizzie spent a lot of time asking questions about applying for jobs showed how there had been a shift in her thinking to becoming future orientated, looking ahead to jobs, imagining herself in work, being a practitioner.

Upon subsequent analysis, I was surprised to find that there was actually great richness in this interview and that my insider researcher position added to this. I probed around issues of professional development which I knew from my knowledge of Lizzie had been significant and added my own comments to promote deeper reflection, for example in line 150. I prompted her to reflect upon what lead to a successful outcome of practice, from what had initially been a challenging placement for her:

But you turned the first year one round didn't you? I mean it was very much if I'm right.....in thinking wasn't it about kind of just you finding your feet and being... kind, kind of learning... how to, pushing yourself out of your comfort zone wasn't it? (Jo, 2:2, Lines 15-158).

It is interesting to note in this interview, Lizzie talks about her placement and academic experiences, but these seem to be separate issues. She does not appear to integrate the two elements of her professional education. It is also interesting to note how she thinks in terms of clinical areas even talking about her future career prospects. It is as though these are two completely separate aspects of her life, her student self, which is familiar and her professional self which is uncharted territory full of hidden surprises. I was reminded of the comments she made in the last interview, about her loss of confidence when other people were involved.

I often ponder over how different students present when on practice, compared to when they are in university. In university, they may turn up late with coffee in hand, ill prepared and disorganised, looking tired. However, when visiting the same students on placement, they are alert, organised, and punctual. It is almost as if, upon their return to university, they leave their professional person in practice. Lizzie appears to be seeing

her professional and student selves as very separate identities at this point and not as an integrated whole.

In this interview twenty-five themes emerged (appendix seven), which were organised into four super-ordinate themes:

- Anxiously motivated
- I enjoy going on placement
- Into the big wide world
- I feel like I think more like an OT now

6.3.2.1 Anxiously Motivated.

The first theme links in with the same sub-theme in the last interview. Lizzie's drive to achieve is at the moment winning the battle with the self-doubt. There seems to be a sense that Lizzie is managing:

I did the presentation, I spent all the time on it, I wrote it... I knew it was my presentation and...I knew what I wanted to get out of it, so...I was really happy about my results for that (Lizzie, 2:2 lines 72-78).

This quotation shows Lizzie's willingness to take one step at a time and her perseverance. She clearly describes the arduous work involved in her progress and how she has to constantly strive to push herself outside her comfort zone:

I need to push myself to do it..... I can tell when I'm making excuses when I'm hesitant a bit and I'll be like oh I'll just go do this and then I sort of think to myself no, go do it, you need to go do it (Lizzie, 2:2 lines 170-174).

This captures both the anxiety leading to procrastination and the self-talk and discipline that she has to assert over herself to overcome the impasse.

Another feature of this theme is the significance that Lizzie places on external validation, suggesting how fragile her sense of self-esteem is. She is reliant on feedback from others to highlight her progress. Lizzie is understandably pleased with her improving grades, and reflects upon this. Later on, she comments on the feedback from her educators whilst on placement:

I think they were pleased with my progress and the other OT that was there she said can you come back (laughs) (Lizzie, 2:2 line 245).

Lizzie doesn't, however, comment on whether she was pleased with her own performance.

6.3.2.2 I enjoy going on placement

Lizzie reflects upon her practice placement experiences. She repeats on a number of occasions that she really, really likes going on placement. The repetition of “really” adds additional emphasis to this. Lizzie talks about the skills she gains from placement, the challenges she faces when engaging with clients, and managing her case load, in terms of priorities and time management, and communicating with other professionals. She does not make any reference to her academic work or any reference to making sense of theoretical concepts.

However, Lizzie emphasises the importance of relationships when on placement, including those with her educator, clients, the team and other professionals. She clearly values the feedback given from her educators and has noted in previous interviews that they act as a role model and give her hope. Lizzie has, in previous interviews stated that she felt more like an occupational therapist when she was given responsibility and was able to work autonomously, but here she clearly values a more nurturing approach:

My last educator was lovely erm, and he was, I think a bit like me, a bit on the cautious side, a bit like, he wants to do things properly..... I mean he, think he looked, he looked after me a lot more, a lot more than some others would do (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 195-209).

On reflection, she comments on the importance of being honest with educators, voicing concerns, but also being prepared to work outside her comfort zone, and embracing challenges. Sound advice to be given to any student!

Lizzie talks about the issues which contribute to her professional development as an OT. She identifies the professional socialisation which takes place in practice. Whilst this may appear to be down time, for example at lunch time, she sees this as an ideal opportunity to learn from others by hearing their stories. Lizzie is finding her way of being in the work place:

I mean I kind of was a lot quieter than some of the other members and they used to say like are you alright and I'd be like well yeah, I'm just, I'm just a quiet person,...I'm better at speaking to people on a one-to-one basis than a group which you.....probably know from class.....I like asking people about like their training, where they trained and things.....like that and their background and stuff...like that 'cos then I sort o' know where I could go and things like that... and places like that, yeah (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 369-392).

There is a growing sense of quiet confidence, and of finding her way of being in the work place here. However, despite this growing sense of self, Lizzie expresses a strong sentiment of wanting to please and trying to fit in:

I do feel like I, I feel like I could, with support obviously, but I feel like I could fit into a service.....erm, and do things like that. Erm, like when they said can we keep you [laughs] on the, the rehab ward, I was like, yeah I wish I could but I need to go and finish my degree first (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 784-786).

This wanting to please, rather than achieving and making a difference for oneself and the clients, along with fitting into the service, links in with Lizzie's need for external validation. It also reminded me of earlier comments which Lizzie made in Interview 2:1 where she hinted at her deference to what she perceived as power. She was reluctant to express an opinion which she felt contradicted with mine.

6.3.2.4 Into the big wide world

Lizzie focused on the future in a very positive way. She anticipated the third year with a strong sense of drive and positivity, a marked change from the earlier unconfident, anxious Lizzie. She acknowledges that there are some frightening aspects to being qualified, perhaps dealing with responsibility, but her apparent confidence and belief in herself overrides this:

So, that's a bit scary thinking about that. But I'm quite looking forward to it. I quite want a job now (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 80-87).

Similarly, she extended this to consider the impact on her wider life as well, and I got a strong sense of Lizzie feeling in control of her life, an increased sense of agency and focus:

it's like wow, like, I'm a grown-up now... ..with responsibilities and...a job. Oh I'm into the big wide world now aren't I, there's no messing about [laughs] (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 806-81).

Again Lizzie chose not to draw the Kawa model, but she does refer to the metaphor and uses the language to effectively communicate this renewed sense of positivity and direction:

There's rocks in my life but...those're in terms of going and training to be an OT ...it's, it's, yeah, it's good (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 1183-1186).

She adds a powerful statement which wonderfully illustrates her renewed confidence, and agency:

There's a lot more room for me to flow as an individual (Lizzie, 2:2, line 1246).

Lizzie is able to see the change and progression in herself. It is this development which delights me and makes my job worthwhile and which prompted this thesis. I am energised by Lizzie's renewed sense of purpose. It gives me immense pleasure to watch

her blossoming. However, I am still pondering what is it which promotes this change, and how can I ensure that I enable other students to be able to do the same? At this stage in Lizzie's professional education (end of year two) she is feeling very positive, as she anticipates being qualified. It is again another rite of passage, getting a proper job and becoming grown up.

6.3.2.5 I feel like I think more like an OT now.

Finally, this theme highlights how Lizzie is embodying the philosophy of occupational therapy, and taking on her professional habitus. It echoes the theme in the last interview; beginning to think like an OT. She is moving from being an outsider, in the first interview when she referred to "those OTs", to the second interview (line 420) when she put on the cloak of an OT, but yet not feeling like an OT or feeling assimilated into the profession. However, now Lizzie sees herself as an OT. She states that she endorses the philosophy of occupational therapy; its values seem to resonate with her own:

I like the idea of being an OT, I think it's a beneficial job and I think ...that it can make a lot of difference to people (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 887-890).

Lizzie demonstrates an ability to articulate what occupational therapy is and the appropriate use of the professional language and concepts. Again, this contrasts sharply with how she explained occupational therapy in interview 1 (lines 175-190), however, there is still a lack of confidence here as she depreciates herself:

Yeah, I'm still really rubbish at it but I basically say it's like rehabilitating people to do the things that they want to do...erm, their occupa, occupations" (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 405-406).

She shows a maturing understanding that there is no one simple explanation of occupational therapy and that this needs to be communicated in various ways to different people:

I know I understand it...it's just getting it across to everyone because OT means different things to different people that (Lizzie, 2:2, lines 419-422).

Lizzie also shows a developing understanding of the realities of practice and some frustration at the recognition that occupational therapy has more to offer than many current service delivery models. She feels that although she is able to think like an occupational therapist, this does not necessarily match what she sees happening in practice, as the occupational therapists try to manage people within limited budgets and service reforms:

I kinda think like I wish we could think about more things, more, just more about what, what people might need.... Like the wider picture of them going home and things like that (Lizzie, 2:2 lines 933-1004).

This contrasts with the sentiment that she articulated earlier when she felt that she could fit into a service. The complexity of practice is then, perhaps, undermining Lizzie's sense of professional belonging. Whilst she feels she could fit into a service, there is a hint here that professional dilemmas may cause her to question value base.

In summary, then in this interview Lizzie continues to develop the positive ideas expressed in interview 2:1. She suggests that her confidence is growing and shows an even stronger sense of drive and determination to develop herself personally and professionally. Lizzie anticipates the future and shows her thinking to be very future-orientated. She also reflects on her placement experiences and highlights the importance of placement in terms of her professional socialisation. She shows a closer sense of belonging to the profession, but is starting to recognise some of the implications and the realities and complexity of practice.

6.3.3 Preliminary discussion

In order to continue the longitudinal narrative, I have developed a preliminary discussion at the end of each year. In year two, yet again, Lizzie considers how she managed the transition from home to university. This was, understandably a major life event and it is still occupying her thoughts at the beginning of year two. She depicts it as process which took place throughout the first year, rather than a one off event. Lizzie shows that she has acquired some psychological knowledge, as she refers to her managing her transition to university as a grieving process. She is now able to use theory and apply it to herself, showing some application of knowledge. Lizzie emphasises the importance of her friendship circle and her domestic living arrangements, to her sense of well-being and belonging. The significance of student social support is highlighted by Wilcox, Winn and Fyvie-Gauld (2005). Their study focused on applied social science students rather than health care professionals, but the majority of its participants were females under twenty-one. It considers the complex social processes that students have to negotiate when managing the tension between their old life (friends and family from home) and establishing a new life for themselves, in much the same way that Lizzie graphically described the divided loyalties she felt between her two friendship groups. This study also highlights the importance of developing friends on the course and the need for sensitive supportive personal tutors. On packed professional courses it is tempting to focus on the academic development of the student, but this study is an important reminder about the inter-relationship between social support and academic success.

Lizzie demonstrates a high level of anxiety throughout her second year. This anxiety pervades all aspects of her life. This anxiety becomes less pervasive and more of a useful motivator in the second interview. The idiographic nature of the research highlights the intensely personal experience for Lizzie, however there is some evidence to suggest that others have had similar experiences. Mackintosh (2006) studied the socialisation of pre-registration nurses. The focus was on the impact that socialisation and coping in nursing had on their experience of caring. She identified that "fear of the unknown" and the student nurse's self-doubt was an issue (ibid, p.959). The issue of being unable to cope, whilst resolved for most of the participants in the second interview (6-9 months prior to completion), still remained an issue for some of them. There may be some parallels with Lizzie's anxious feelings and the nurses questioning their ability to cope. Additionally, Kasar and Muscari (2000) proposed a conceptual model for the development of professional behaviours in occupational therapists, based upon Erikson's eight stages of identity development. They suggest that during the first stage, the beginning student may experience a "sense of uncertainty", which may persist into stage two, the senior student as feelings of "shame, doubt and frustration" if autonomy and a sense of independence is not established. This model is hypothetical. However, Lizzie shows a high level of anxiety in the first interview in year two, as she deals with novel situations and doubts her ability to cope. In the second interview there are signs that she is learning to manage this. Lizzie does show a reliance on external feedback and validation and again this model suggests that "beginning students" need a high degree of external validation and support which reduces over time.

Lizzie highlights the significance of her practice education; it is whilst on placement that she feels she is an OT. Reid, Dahlgren et al (2008) remind us that participation is an important part of identity formation. Interestingly, Lizzie does not make any reference to her academic work in terms of helping her feel like an OT, perhaps this is not perceived as professional. Lizzie's sense of being an OT is entirely acted out whilst on placement. It is rather worrying that there appears to be a lack of integration between her academic knowledge and practice. These feelings of actually feeling like an OT for the first time, developing a sense of competence and belief in their own agency is also reported by Bagatell, Lawrence, Schwartz, and Vuernick, (2013). Their study is carried out in an American context, which has a very different education process for Occupational therapists than the UK, but, nevertheless, it identifies that these feelings are experienced on a level 2 placement which roughly correlates with Lizzie's reports.

Lizzie highlights the importance of establishing a good relationship with her practice educator. Mackenzie (2002) found that this was a common concern, especially amongst first and second year students, but this subsides in year three when students are more

concerned with how they are able to meet practice educator's expectations. These concerns highlight the need to support both parties in establishing relationships, by sharing each other's different perspectives and concerns.

Closely linked to the importance of establishing good relationships is that of fitting in with the wider team, which Lizzie explores, indeed she actually uses the words "fit into a service" (line 784). She is concerned with positioning herself within the wider team and shows a need to understand the unspoken rules of "being" in practice (Krusen, 2011). This concern has also been highlighted by Clouder (2003) who suggested that students who do not play the game may become disempowered. She suggests that professional socialisation may be a subtle form of ensuring conformity and compliance, but in reality is a very complex process. This research has already shown how the student's self-belief, feelings of competence and belonging can support or hinder their emerging, embryonic professional identity.

Lizzie shows a stronger sense of being an occupational therapist in year two. In her first interview she shows alignment with her profession, in that she notices the difference between her own professional course, compared to those of other non-professional courses. There is a strong identity with other health care professional courses and viewing of non-professional courses as separate and different. Indeed, Reid, Dahlgren et al. (2008) note there are different teaching and learning approaches used in "diffuse fields" (where the potential career is not clear) as opposed to "clear fields" of study (where there is a definite job and professional association to which to belong), and that students' developing sense of identity is influenced, not surprisingly by their choice of profession, but additionally is aligned with qualities derived from their potential profession.

In the second interview however, Lizzie sees herself as belonging to the occupational therapy profession. She has moved from referring to "liking the work those OTs do", (in interview 2:1) to "I like the idea of being an OT", (interview 2:2). She has moved inwards towards the centre of the community of practice from the periphery. She is also starting to appreciate the complexity of practice, recognising that she does not necessarily agree with everything that happens in practice. Disillusionment experienced by students confronted by the reality of practice is widely reported in the nursing literature (Pearcey & Draper, 2008). In the occupational therapy literature this is more of a reported phenomenon upon transition into practice (Tryssenaar & Perkins, 2001).

Finally, Lizzie's increasing use of occupational therapy professional language is highlighted in her ability to both apply terminology to herself, as she discusses her occupational balance in interview 2:1 and her own developing ability to explain

occupational therapy to others. It has been noted that this is an ongoing issue for many therapists but Lizzie shows a developing maturity by identifying that these explanations need contextualising. This change in understanding and explaining occupational therapy is reflective of the study carried out by Björklund and Svensson (2006), who found that occupational therapists' use of paradigms changed over six years from a "public view" on enrolment to a "theoretical view" on graduation, to a "contextual view" after three years of practice. However, Lizzie's recognition that explanations need to be contextualised may suggest a lack of engagement with occupational therapy's unique professional paradigms and instead focus on meeting other professional's expectations (Fortune, 2000).

The final theme of the "big wide world" highlights Lizzie's increased sense of agency as she anticipates her future career. It is a very positive theme, which focuses on Lizzie's increase in confidence as she looks forward to taking her place fully within her profession. Throughout the second year, there is evidence of Lizzie's increasing confidence which culminates in this eager anticipation of qualifying. Her active participation whilst on placement has resulted in the feeling that she belongs to the profession, that she is able to fit in. This subsequently results in her actually feeling like she is an occupational therapist, enhancing her sense of being a professional, which feeds into her sense of becoming and of taking her place within her chosen community of practice. Perhaps at this stage Lizzie's new found feeling of competence is somewhat unrealistic. Robertson and Griffiths (2009) investigated the preparedness for practice of past graduates between 1995-2002 from the Otago occupational therapy degree course in New Zealand. They found that, whilst graduates did not expect to find difficulty in transitioning from a student to a practitioner, they reported not knowing enough, and found it difficult to explain their role. The difficulty managing the transition into practice for graduate occupational therapists is well documented (Morley, 2009; Toal-Sullivan, 2006; Tryssenaar & Perkins, 2001).

6.3.4. Summary of year two

In summary it has been shown that transitioning from home to university may have ramifications into the second year of study, since students may need ongoing support to establish a sense of belonging, in both their new direction of study, as well as domestic areas of their life. As students become aware of expectations and challenges, they may face increased anxiety which they need help to manage.

Placement takes on an increasingly important role in their studies; it is on placement, through their doing, that they begin to develop a stronger sense of belonging within the profession and subsequently are able to feel that they are engaging with the paradigms

of their profession and are thinking like occupational therapists. Relationships with educators, have a significant impact on students' confidence and sense of being. Academic studies at this point do not seem to contain such significant points of reflection.

By the end of the second year Lizzie is feeling like an embryonic occupational therapist. She has developed a sense of belonging and professional alliance. She is showing an awareness of the complexity of practice. Whilst recognising she still has much to learn, there is a strong sense of agency and competence, in sharp contrast to the overwhelming first year.

6.4. Year Three

Two interviews were undertaken in year three, one in December towards the end of the first term which is very academically focused, and the second at the very end of the year upon completion of the course. In the second term, two practice placements are undertaken, one which involves a service development project for seventy hours, and a final placement which is an eight-week consolidation placement.

6.4.1 Interview 3:1

Fourteen emergent themes were identified, which were grouped together into three super-ordinate themes, (Appendix Eight)

- The big abyss
- Dip in the journey
- Being a student/ Becoming an occupational therapist.

In this interview Lizzie is primarily concerned about transitions again. She considers the future, which is an issue causing her considerable anxiety. She does, however, show some positive responses to transition as well as accepting that friendship circles will change over time and asserting her independence from the family home.

Lizzie also focuses on her academic work and issues which are impacting upon that. Practice gets little consideration at this point. She considers some of the experiences she had in an inter-professional learning module, and makes some attempts to make the link between her academic and professional learning. Lizzie comments that she doesn't feel like an occupational therapist at present and this perhaps is reflected in a focus of attention on her academic work. It seems that there is conflict between being a student

and becoming an occupational therapist, and at this point in time being a student “overshadows” everything else.

There are number of examples which demonstrate how reliant Lizzie is on external feedback, which she feels she is getting less of at this present time as she is not in practice, and this has an impact on her confidence. Self-doubt, which was a feature of the interview in year one particularly, reappears again. Hence the mood of the interview is less positive than the previous interview; indeed, Lizzie describes it as a “dip in her journey”. Anticipatory anxiety, mingled with the re-occurrence of self-doubt, overshadows the interview and the sense of progression forwards is lost. Lizzie states that she feels no different being a third year, at present, than she did when she was in the second year. However, there is a greater sense of self awareness and self-management. Lizzie acknowledges that self-doubt will always be an issue: “I always do that, that’s me”, (line 182), but she is showing greater insight into managing this, and she feels that she is managing other aspects of her life: I think it’s (my riverbed) alright at the moment really, (line 933). She has good support from her peers and has developed some organisational skills in terms of managing her workload and workspace, along with developing transferable skills from her jobs and volunteering.

There are two areas where my position as an insider researcher had a marked influence in this interview. At one point in the interview (lines 588 to 632), Lizzie began to ask me factual information about how the classifications were calculated. I did not want to discuss, as I felt that I was not getting to hear about Lizzie’s experience of becoming an occupational therapist from her life world, however, I felt that I needed to respond to her queries. I was immensely relieved when she then brought her focus back to placements, without me needing to re-direct her. This changing of roles, with the participant becoming the questioner and the interviewer becoming the respondent is not as likely to have happened had I not been an insider researcher. This was a very similar experience to what happened in interview 2:2, which prompted me to reflect upon both the advantages and disadvantages of being an insider researcher.

I was able to take advantage of this position, however, when I questioned Lizzie on the impact of a friend leaving the course. This was not an issue that she had introduced, but I was aware of it as a result of my position. I wanted to explore this with Lizzie, as I wrongly assumed it would have had a bigger impact than it did. Lizzie had clearly dealt with the issue and moved on commenting:

I’ve kinda come to this understanding in life where people come in and out of your life all the time and everyone’s got their own different pathway and they’ve got to do their own thing for themselves, what’s right for them a that sorta thing... (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 1016-1019).

This reflects my interpretation earlier, commenting on how Lizzie is embracing transitions in her life in a positive way.

Each super-ordinate theme will now be discussed.

6.4.1.1 The big abyss

Understandably Lizzie's thoughts turn to the future. She is facing another major life change and transition, which is anxiety provoking. This is uppermost in Lizzie's mind; it is the first thing she raises in the interview. Although she eagerly anticipates working and feels she is ready for this, there is more change and uncertainty to deal with:

That's one of the other things that's bad about this year is next year I know there's no, I've got nothing planned. When I finished school I knew I was going to college, when I finished college I knew...I was going to University and now I just think in June there's, when I finish here, what have I got thenQuite scared really, I do, I hate the uncertainty (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 24-35).

This is a significant point in any young person's life, as they contemplate leaving education and consider their life options. If a young person progresses into higher education, their life is mapped out until the point of graduation, and then, after this point, nothing is pre-determined, vividly described by Lizzie as the "big abyss".

I identified intensely with these feelings, and this prompted me to recall my memories of my final year as a student in my reflexive journal:

I wanted to savour every moment of being a student and living in the house with my friends. I wanted this stage in life to stay still and to last Working for the unforeseeable future was not what I wanted to do, even though I had enjoyed my course. I just wanted to stay in a time capsule at that point of my life forever.

Although Lizzie states she doesn't like the uncertainty, there is an effort to embrace this with positivity and consider what some of these options could be, in terms of further study, returning home, or working abroad. She appreciates the fact that she has no ties and family responsibilities and to some extent is in control of her own destiny:

It's kinda like a mouth of a river at the moment because it's into this big abyss really of what, I don't know what's gonna happen of all these different opportunities at the end of the river so, I think I can see the end of that and see finishing next year a lot more (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 581-583).

It is also interesting to note when she considers returning home, she does this in the past tense. It is almost as though her decision is already made:

I think that's one of the reasons I didn't wanna go home after university. Yeah (Lizzie, 3:1, line 527).

In this interview, as Lizzie is anticipating her future, she comments on a number of occasions that, whilst she is looking forward to being qualified, it is also a daunting prospect. It seems that she is engaging in reassuring self-talk as she reviews expectations and support that will be available:

they're not just gonna drop you in the deep end and expect you to.....just... .. know everything (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 735-741).

It is almost as though she is rehearsing her first few months of working in her mind and telling herself it will be alright.

Again, as in the last interview the theme of being anxiously motivated is still apparent:

I mean that scares me a little bit, taking that sort of role on, 'cos obviously it's gonna be quite demanding..... so I think that kinda gives me a bit of like.....confidence to do it and I think push myself to go do it (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 782-792).

Here, Lizzie is considering a potential employment opportunity, and expresses both feelings of anxiety and determination in respect to this. It seems as if mixed feelings are often going to be present in her life, especially when she anticipates something new. Indeed, Lizzie comments: "Yeah, I always do that, that's me" (line 182) in response to my comment that she seemed to be expressing self-doubt when contemplating some inter-professional work within university.

6.4.1.2 A dip in the journey

This sense of self-doubt and anxiety is reflected to a greater extent in the theme "dip in the journey." Lizzie notes that she is not feeling very positive at the present time, and that there are lots of rocks in her river. She uses the metaphor of the Kawa model well to graphically describe how she is trying to overcome one hurdle after another. Lizzie identifies that at present she is finding things difficult.

The focus on the higher level thinking in year three, the workload, lack of a practice focus, all seem to contribute to this sense of being overwhelmed. It is similar to the feelings described by Lizzie in her first interview, as she struggled to make sense of her new world:

I am finding it a bit hard at the moment...erm, a bit stressful and a bit, like you say, I, I self-doubt myself quite a lot sorta thing so like I said, when I'm on placement and I get that good feedback and my educator's saying,, you've

done this and you've done that and yeah, that's really good it boosts my confidence loads and then obviously when you're away from that and then it just, I don't know, it just, so, I don't know, maybe this, well obviously you're getting the whole journey but like this is kind of like a dip in the journey at the moment (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 259-282).

It is worth including this particularly long quotation as there are a number of significant points that Lizzie makes here: There is a temporal aspect to this, Lizzie uses the words "at the moment" which suggests that she sees this as a temporary issue rather than a long term one, and she frames this by saying "well obviously you're getting the whole journey" seeing this as one part of the journey. This suggests that Lizzie accepts the temporary setback and views it as just that. It highlights the sense of drive and determination that is a strong aspect of Lizzie's narrative. Her self-doubt is again fuelled by her reliance on external validation. She is worried about being shown up or found out when she is engaged in some inter professional work:

I thought oh well, it's gonna be all social workers and what if, I've not done dementia before and what if, what if they just think I'm rubbish at it and I don't know what I'm talking about and.....things like that (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 173-178).

Perhaps this sense of being found out, of not being good enough, is even more acute if this is highlighted in the presence of students from other disciplines.

Lizzie also expresses concern about making the adjustment to honours level study. This is an issue for many students, as their degree classifications are based to a large extent on the marks gained in the honours level modules. It is interesting to note that Lizzie is concerned with producing what is needed and pleasing the tutor:

I still don't know whether I've done it right and whether that's what, like, er, it, you wanted from me really erm, I'm worrying about whether it's third year level work (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 108-110).

She is more concerned with getting external approval than meeting her own learning needs.

Broader issues also impact on Lizzie's sense of well-being. She reflects on her domestic arrangements, noting that her basement bedroom which is dark "depresses her a bit". She is experiencing difficulty managing her sleep and getting into a regular routine. Perhaps the decreased amount of formal timetabled teaching and increase in self-directed study in the final year has had an impact here.

6.4.1.3 Being a student/Becoming an Occupational therapist

Lizzie is very focused on her academic work. The emphasis of the discussion is why Lizzie doesn't feel like an occupational therapy student. She is so immersed in her academic work that she says she hasn't thought about her professional development. She states that she feels more like an occupational therapist when she is on placement. This reinforces the comments she made in interview 2:1, acknowledging that she feels like an occupational therapist when she is given responsibility and allowed to work autonomously on practice:

I think the oh, all the other stuff overshadows it.... To the point where I don't even think about it. It doesn't, I don't know, hard to think about it, doesn't mean that I don't think I am but it is hard to think about it at the... ..moment...erm, 'cos I've just got all these other things to think about. Erm, I think I will do by the end of the year, especially as soon as I go on placement I'll think it. Erm, yeah so, I think it's more like when I go on placement that I'll feel like I'm an OT again (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 1090-1103).

Again, what is striking here, is the separation of academic and practice, as though they are two separate worlds.

Lizzie is eagerly anticipating her next placement:

I think it's a really important thing and I think it's a thing that should be really researched. I'm quite looking forward to going and doing that but I need to make sure I research it properly and really, do really well on it 'cos... ..I don't want to let XXXXXX (practice educator) down really [laughs] (Lizzie, 3:1, lines 636-658).

Again the self-doubt is creeping in as Lizzie anticipates what is involved and questions her ability to cope. The dichotomy of anxious motivation is again represented in this text. The influence of external validation as a motivating factor is apparent; she wants to do really well to please her practice educator. There is evidence of some intrinsic motivation here too, Lizzie expresses her commitment and recognises the value and significance of the research area (dementia).

In summary then, this is a less positive interview than the second interview in year 2 (2:1) and Lizzie views this point as a "Dip in the Journey". She feels separated from the practice of OT as she focuses on her academic work. Practice and theoretical work in university are viewed as separate entities. The pressure is on to perform in an academic setting, and this impinges upon other aspects of her life.

Lizzie is showing a developing maturity in managing her own life; she philosophically accepts that relationships change and is also establishing even more independence from her family home. She is very much becoming in control of her own destiny and making active choices.

6.4.2. Interview 3:2

The final interview is completed at the very end of the course, after Lizzie has completed her final placement and de-brief session. The final interview has a very different feel to the previous interviews. It is more of a summary of her story, once removed from the intense emotional feelings. There is still some anxiety about the future, but there is a stronger sense of self agency, and ability to cope with issues. As this is the final interview, it is also a taking stock point, a “fait accompli” and helps to provide a chronological overview of the overall narrative.

Very little new information is shared in this interview, and it seems as though data saturation has been achieved. There are a number of times when the interview goes off on a tangent. In my reflexive journal I noted:

I identified with Lizzie as she reflected upon how her career objectives have changed; she originally wanted to work with children with special needs. She has not gained any experience in working in paediatrics, but identifies that there may be transferable skills from other areas, namely working with people with a learning disability. I also recall that although I had gained paediatric experience whilst on placement, my first rotational position as a junior occupational therapist did not include paediatrics but learning disability. Although I had every intention of transferring into paediatrics, I found I loved working with people with learning disabilities so much that consequently the majority of my practice career was spent working with this client group. During the interview I identified strongly with Lizzie's frustration at wanting to move into paediatrics and wanted to reassure her that potentially there were many routes and many destinations to be explored

Lizzie asks for clarification around requirements for master's level study and asks about timings for job applications. As in previous examples, this placed me as an insider researcher in a position where I felt I had to respond. These examples also contribute to the more factual tone of this interview.

Lizzie chose to draw a Kawa River model. The complexity of this drawing contrasts to her drawing in fig 3 (p.94).

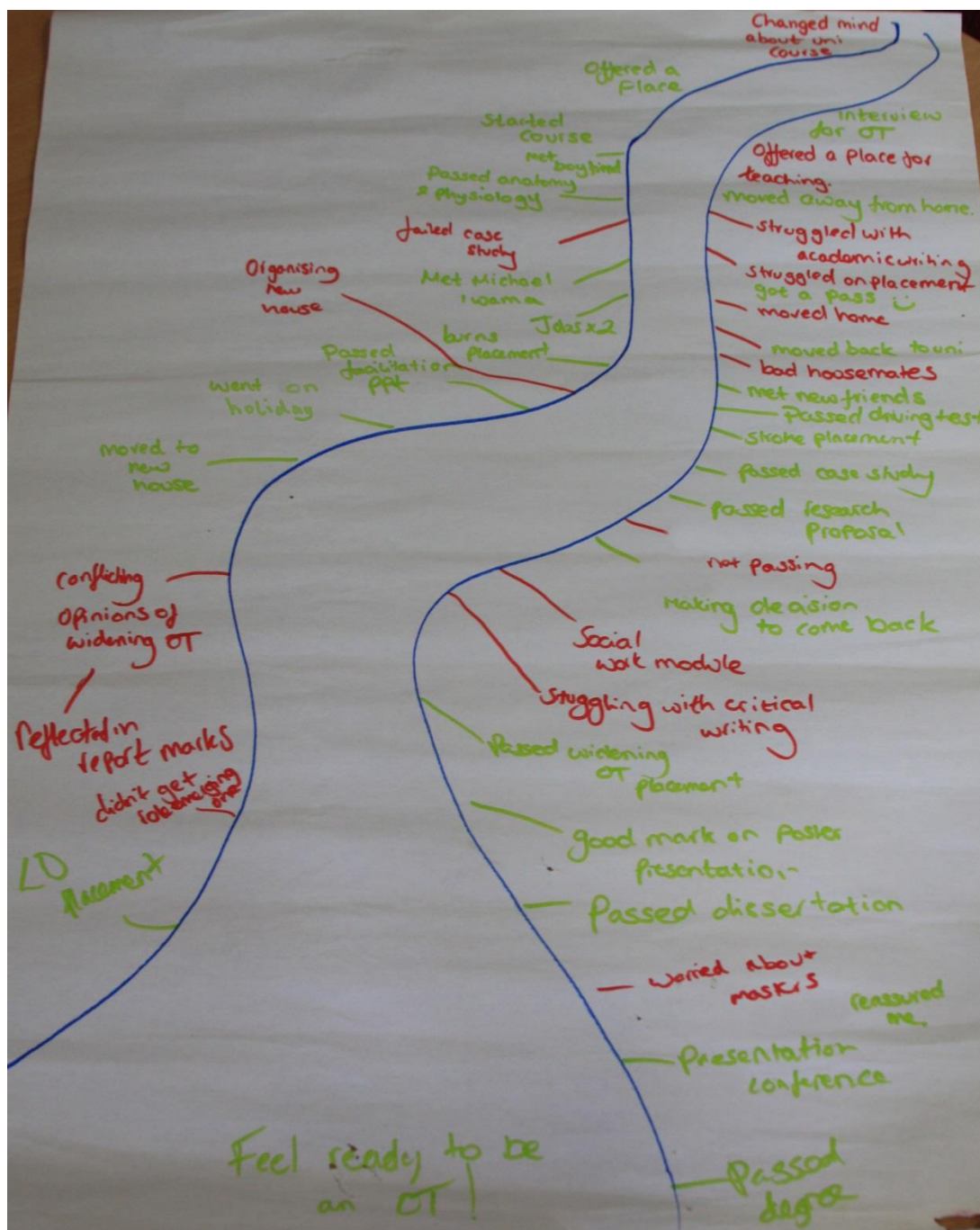


Figure 5 Lizzie's Kawa River Model final interview

Again she also developed a cross section. This contrasts to the first cross section, there is more space emphasising the free flowing water where as in fig.4 (p.94) all the rocks were banging up against each other impeding the energy.



Figure 6 Lizzie's cross section-final interview

I felt an immense sadness at the interviews coming to an end. I felt this was the beginning, not the end, of Lizzie's journey and I wished wholeheartedly that I could capture the next instalment as she begins her journey as a qualified occupational therapist. I wanted to be able to support her as I found the first year of working very stressful and wondered, given Lizzie's anticipatory anxiety, how she would manage. At the same time, I was so immensely proud of her, very much as a mother watching her daughter grow up and I wanted to protect her from some of the difficulties that lay ahead.

Eighteen themes (Appendix 9) emerged which have been grouped into three super-ordinate themes:

- The big abyss
- Taking stock
- Thinking and feeling like an OT

6.4.2.1. The big abyss.

This theme follows on from interview 3:1 as Lizzie contemplates her future. Feelings of uncertainty and loss of direction are evident. These feelings have not reduced from the last interview, in fact if anything they have become more explicit:

I don't like the feeling of not knowing what I'm doing next... it's like a new chapter in my life (Lizzie, 3:2, line 622).

There are echoes here again of the anxiety that Lizzie expressed at the beginning of her journey, as she dealt with the transition to university. There is also a sadness expressed which is often associated with moving on; tinges of nostalgia or wanting to stop the clock. Transitional life events for Lizzie, as for many people, are painful, unsettling times. As Lizzie thinks about the future, she again shares her passion for OT as a profession, appreciating its diversity:

I don't think I ever will be able to make my mind up, but that's one of the reasons that I like OT because.....you can go off and you can do different things and you're not stuck on one thing and it's so broad (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 158-160).

However, the opportunities opening up for Lizzie seem to make this transitional phase of life even harder, as she has many choices and decisions to make: She reviews the influence her parents had on her earlier decisions and then carries this forward to consider her future, making a pertinent comment:

I think they have been a very big influence and I think I need to sort of pull away from that and think about what I want to do. Erm, in terms of try, not tryna make other people happy I need to try and think about what's gonna make me happy and what's gonna be the best for me (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 660-661).

Lizzie notes that both her father and boyfriend are reluctant for her to move away and both would like her to stay locally. She adds that her father wants her to get an OT job, but doesn't realise how hard they are to get. It is easy to make assertive comments about meeting one's own needs, but often more difficult to action these, especially when loved ones are involved. It is heartening however to get a sense of Lizzie's increasing agency, which leads onto the next superordinate theme.

6.4.2.2 Thinking and feeling like an OT.

Lizzie feels that she now thinks like an occupational therapist, and is able to identify issues in her part-time carer's job that would benefit from occupational therapy input. The fact that she is able to identify areas not noticed by others, reinforces her feelings of competence and she appreciates her professional knowledge:

I liked that because that makes me feel like an OT, that makes me feel like I've, I've learned something and I've gained something and I can spot things like that

whereas other people can't. So.... That boosted my confidence quite a bit. And then my knowledge on conditions and stuff has really, I feel like that's improved (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 130-134).

It is interesting that Lizzie uses her carer's job to highlight her skills, she feels like an occupational therapist when comparing herself to lay people. She goes on to say that she doesn't think she is consciously aware of it, but finds she is able to draw upon her skills when necessary.

Lizzie makes a very important point in this final theme and interview, acknowledging the need for her on-going learning:

I think I have kind of come to an understanding that to be a good OT you don't need to know everything.....you just need to know what your limitations are.....what you can do and what you can't do (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 242-245).

Lizzie acknowledges that she still has gaps in her knowledge, something which she found difficult to acknowledge to students from other professional disciplines when engaged in inter-professional working. However, she is no longer anxious about needing to know everything. More importantly, she is aware of the limits of her competence and is therefore likely to be a safe practitioner. Lizzie uses the word "good" here, and I wonder if she equates good with being safe and competent, or getting it right. Surprisingly, she doesn't consider how she will manage her limitations. Perhaps this thinking is beyond the realms of a newly-qualified practitioner.

Lizzie considers the impact her final placement has on her journey. Lizzie states she has gained a lot from her final placement, increasing her confidence and professional identity, she now feels that she is ready to be an occupational therapist:

I feel like it's given me the foundations to go out and be an OT and the confidence to go be an OT (Lizzie, 3:2, line 916).

It is not clear why Lizzie separates "foundations" and confidence or exactly what is meant by "foundations". Lizzie's confidence is a separate entity which needed to be developed, whereas the use of the word "foundations" suggests underpinning knowledge or discrete building blocks of knowledge or skills, as opposed to a more general all-encompassing confidence. Lizzie's highlighted the issue of her lack of confidence throughout her narrative and when asked what has changed over the three years, the immediate response is her confidence:

I feel my confidence has grown, tremendously. Erm, when I started I wanted to be an OT and I wanted to be able to do it but I don't think I had the confidence to

think that I could do it, myself. Whereas now I've come to some sort of understanding and, and I feel like I could do it myself (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 114-118).

Lizzie is able to see a huge change in herself, from self-doubt to self-belief, but doesn't over-state this and is quite realistic, recognising that sometimes she feels more confident than at other times. The use of the word "could" rather than "can" here still suggests that there are conditions attached to the competence, or indeed, as Lizzie suggests herself, some remaining self-doubt.

The interview ends with Lizzie summarising when she thinks she will finally feel she is an occupational therapist:

I think I've been being an OT on placement...erm, and then when I go out and answer to it on my own for the first time, that's gonna be when I've become an OT (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 983-986).

Getting a job as an occupational therapist is the final validation for Lizzie; she does not view her graduation as a rite of passage into the profession. Neither does she emphasise her feelings of confidence and competence. It is that external mark of being employed as an occupational therapist that will validate her professional identity. This does raise questions, then, in terms of how Lizzie would feel if she works in a position which is not titled as an occupational therapist or in a role- emerging setting where her skills are not explicitly acknowledged.

Lizzie sees practice and academic learning as separate issues:

And my placement has been good, and I've had really good feedback from that but the academic side of it has been hard (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 75-76).

Whilst it is inevitable, to some extent, that students will view placement experience separate from their academic learning, Lizzie does seem to see them as separate entities and does not make explicit links between her theory and practice and how they support each other. Again, Lizzie places value and significance on external feedback and the importance of getting it right and therefore being accepted by her practice educators. In this example, that Lizzie sees herself as a more practical person, and this is reinforced by her further comments:

So to me, the practical side of being on placement is more important to me than the academic side..... I was really, that was kind of er, made me feel more positive about it that I got good marks on my placement... so, even though it is important 'cos it goes towards my degree classification it's not as important, I would've rather it been that way than me have failed my placement and got nineties, hundred percent on that report. A thousand times over I'd rather it be that way (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 87-96).

She does not show an appreciation of the fact that a good understanding of theory is essential for successful practice. She is concerned with getting it right, that getting good marks equates to validation and this is also echoed in her later comments when she considered her academic marks.

Lizzie's professional identity is reinforced on placement. She has commented before that having responsibility and autonomy contributes to her professional confidence and again notes here that having her own case load makes her feel like an occupational therapist. She gains confidence from being on placement, rather than from academic success. It seems that she has got her confidence from being valued and validated by her practice educator and by getting good feedback from placement. Lizzie does not refer to any internalisation of occupational therapy thinking or philosophy. As noted earlier, there is no reference to any underlying theory. I was struck by her use of the phrase "go out and be an OT". Lizzie views being an occupational therapist as something which is enacted, something outside, or external to herself. It is a public act, a set of behaviours which she has to display rather than a way of thinking or being.

Lizzie considers her recent placement and again shows how she tries to fit in and please her educator, recognising the pressure of the clinical environment:

I kind of wish that I'd been able to go on a, a, a role-emerging placement because I felt like they got more, because they could sort of... they could've took it, they can take it under their wing and go and, and sort of adapt it to how they want to do it whereas we were trynna fit into a service that was already under a lot of pressure and they actually admitted to us that they'd taken too much on..... whereas I think going to a role-emerging one then you can think about all these different factors from your own point of view (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 852-857).

Lizzie is confronted here by the reality of practice. She is developing an awareness of the difficulties of practice; that compromise is needed, and the issues mean trying to make changes from within an existing service. Perhaps there is a hint of resentment here, as she adds she wasn't able to think about issues from her point of view, it seems she felt a need to conform and fit in.

To summarise this theme then, it seems that Lizzie feels ready to be an occupational therapist. To her, being an occupational therapist is an outward manifestation of behaviours and something which is reinforced by external validation and getting it right. She has developed self-confidence and belief in her own abilities and professional education. She recognises that this is an ongoing journey, that there are still many things that she doesn't know, but has a realistic view of expectations of others and her own ability to fulfil these.

6.4.2.3 Taking stock of the journey

The final theme highlights the reflective nature of this interview, Lizzie reflects on transitions which she has undergone and others which she is dealing with, or about to deal with. She reflects back on how difficult she found it upon first coming to university:

It's been difficult I think. I've found it difficult erm, when I first came to Uni I was excited obviouslyerm, but the whole academic style of writing and the way, the referencing and the assignments just ... were completely different to what I'd done at 'A' level and it was completely different so that took me quite a while to get used to (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 37-46).

This is not unusual and is an issue which many students report. It is also not an issue which is unique to occupational therapy and all lecturers need to be cognisant of this transition as well as of supporting students in their professional development. It is interesting to note that another transition issue, which is sometimes a problem, is leaving home. Lizzie took this one in her stride, unlike adjusting to academic work. Lizzie comments that her family expected her to go home, and be homesick, however, this was not the case, and she loved her independence.

Lizzie identifies passing her driving test as significant point in her journey. She also talks about, having now finished her course and in the context of looking for employment, being "ready to be a grown up" (line 580). It is interesting she says ready to be and not actually grown up. Does she then become grown up when she gets a job? It seems that both passing her driving test and getting a job are rites of passage on the way to becoming a person who takes their own place in the world.

Lizzie spends a lot of time making sense of and explaining her journey in this interview. This theme therefore is more focused on Lizzie giving an account or explanation of her journey. Lizzie presents a succinct overview of the three years. It showcases Lizzie making sense of her experience, sorting it out and coming to an understanding for herself:

Year one was a bit of a struggle from my academic writing sorta side and then my final placement, that was hard 'cos I nearly failed that then second year was really positive. And that kinda made me wonder whether I'd got the ability to do it, erm, and I can remember now thinking about it, looking at the scale and thinking my dream is to be at that eight, to be at that point and for someone to turn around to me and say, yeah, I think you'll make a good therapist, you'll be able to do it, erm, 'cos I've always lacked a bit of confidence and that really did knock my confidence down erm, but I came through that and that gave me a little bit of a boost 'cos I turned it round and I managed to do it. Erm, and then second year was really positive ... I think that little boost had kind of given me more hope in doing it and my second year placements and then the final year I found a struggle again (Lizzie, 3:2, lines 57-74).

This quotation, albeit long, is an important one, worth considering in its entirety, as it sums up Lizzie's view of her journey, from her struggle to manage the challenges of both university study and professional demands in the first year, to a successful second year, through to a challenging third year. Despite Lizzie's lack of confidence, her sense of drive and determination is evident. She set her sight on getting an eight (the entry level practitioner grade on the practice assessment document) and used feedback to develop her professional confidence to achieve this. Lizzie's reliance on external validation, and how she uses this to motivate herself, is highlighted. She is primarily motivated by a fear of failure, but when she is successful, she uses this experience to boost her confidence. She demonstrates how important other people's approval is by imaging their positive comments. Lizzie turned this visualisation into reality by hard work and positive self-talk.

Lizzie reinforces the comments she has made in previous interviews about the importance of social support, in terms of peer support, friendships groups and living space. These comments echo assertions she has made in previous interviews and suggest that data saturation has been reached.

In summary then, this final interview has a different feeling from the other interviews. Lizzie uses the interview to make sense of her journey and mainly reviews previous discussions. Most of the issues discussed have already been raised, and this final interview largely validates these previous discussions. She reviews her journey over the course, considering how she established and developed her new identity as an occupational therapy student, and established her independence as a young adult. She considers how her self-confidence has changed and developed, so that she now feels ready to seek employment as an occupational therapist. She anticipates another major new transition, as she leaves the security of the structured life of education, into an unstructured future, uncertain of where she wants to live and work.

6.4.3 Preliminary discussion.

During this year, there is a change over the course of the two interviews. In the first interview Lizzie expresses a "dip in journey" and she reports a loss of confidence again. This rises in the final interview when we see a return to the sense of agency and determination seen in previous interviews. Lizzie's development is not a linear progression, but one with peaks and troughs. This contrasts with previously discussed models (Benner, 1984; Kasa & Muscari, 2000), which suggest that professional development may take a linear predictable process, but is supported by Lamote and

Engles (2010), who said that student teacher's professional identity construction was compromised by placement experiences, requiring constant reconstructions. During the first interview in the third year, anxiety again becomes an issue. This seems to be caused by anticipated transition into the workforce. It has already been noted that transition into practice is a time which is highly stressful for new graduates. The needs of new graduates have been widely researched (Morley, 2006; Toal-Sullivan, 2006; Tryssenaar & Perkins, 2001), which subsequently lead to the recognition that a period of preceptorship is needed to support newly registered therapists (Morley, 2009). Lizzie is thinking about this somewhat prematurely, and there is sense that we have been here before, a return to the "fear of the unknown anxiety" which was described in year one.

Her response is also fuelled by worrying about the academic pressures and expectations in her final year. Again, there is a return to the anticipatory anxiety about making the grade, and being good enough that was seen in year one. In their critical review, Robotham and Julian (2006) suggest that stress in students is an increasing phenomenon, but do not identify why. They suggest that sources of stress, amongst other things, may be caused by changes in sleeping habits and increased workloads, both things which Lizzie complains about. More specifically Pfeifer, Kranz and Scoggin, (2008), found that Master's occupational therapy students in Texas reported high stress levels, complaining of feelings of being overwhelmed. The different context and circumstances of the students limit the relevance of those findings to this study, but it does seem that Lizzie's concerns, both about managing her workload and anticipating forthcoming transitions, are substantiated by other students in similar circumstances.

The other major life transition that Lizzie is dealing with at this time is that of making a more definite break from parental influence. The process of leaving home is complex, leaving home to go to university is increasingly of a more transient nature, whilst returning home after the completion of higher education is becoming common, due to economic factors, (Stone, Berrington & Falkingham, 2014). Lizzie here is showing an increase in her own agency as she comments that she needs to make decisions that are right for her, not for others. This increase in self-efficacy has a knock on effect into her professional identity, as she develops a stronger sense of volition as a person; this carries over into her professional life, increasing her professional self-concept.

Lizzie explains that she now recognises that she doesn't need to know everything as a newly qualified therapist. She has enough insight and confidence to be able to ask for support when needed. It highlights the importance of mentorship as discussed earlier. This ability to ask also suggests that Lizzie has moved on from the senior student stage as developed in Kasar and Muscari's model to stage 3; New Graduate Occupational

Therapist - Orientation Stage (Kasar & Muscari, 2000). Lizzie shows a maturing professional understanding as she starts to appreciate the reality of practice, suggesting that she doesn't agree with everything she has witnessed on practice. She shuts up and concentrates on fitting in at this point, very much as Clouder (2003) identified. Kasar and Muscari suggest that new graduate therapists may experience guilt, anxiety or fear if their thoughts conflict with a colleague or supervisor. Lizzie doesn't articulate these feelings, but there was an implied resentment as she suggests one of her educators admitted that they had taken too much on, and she had to fit in. Lizzie also seems at this stage to have realistic expectations of herself, whereas Kasar and Muscari (2000) suggest that new graduates in stage 3 may have unrealistic expectations of themselves.

Lizzie does still seem to put on an external persona of an occupational therapist rather than internalising being an occupational therapist. She talks about "going out and being an OT" rather than I am occupational therapist. She does not seem, as yet, to fully belong to the profession. Indeed, she states she will only be an occupational therapist when she is working. Her practice and academic experience remain as two separate aspects of her professional learning, rather than as an integrated whole. Despite Lizzie feeling that her values are congruent with occupational therapy, her profession remains an external aspect of her identity. This is contrary to the literature which suggested that as competence increases, so too does professional identity (Gahnstrom- Strandqvist, Tham, Josephensson & Borell, 2000). However, Bjorklund (2000, p.106) found that newly qualified students described themselves as "acting as" rather than "being" occupational therapists. This perhaps is a closer representation of Lizzie's feelings at this time.

6.4.3. Summary year three

In summary year three sees the anticipation of yet another major transition. Lizzie has resolved one transition and now faces another one; leaving the planned trajectory of education into an unknown future, involving taking her own place in the world as an adult. This is a turbulent year with ups and down and highlights the emotional intensity of being a young student health care professional. The narrative ends on a very positive note as Lizzie reflects upon her achievements and increasing confidence and self-assurance.

Lizzie seems to only experience "being an OT" when she is on placement. The academic aspect of her studies hinders her in this regard. She has to actually do occupational therapy to feel like she is being an occupational therapist. Focusing on the academic and underpinning knowledge do not seem support her sense of belonging, or becoming an occupational therapist, in this final stage of her undergraduate education.

6.5. Summary

In this chapter I have presented the findings and developed a preliminary discussion from the five interviews over three years with Lizzie. In order to emphasise the lived experience and to give voice to Lizzie I have limited the interpretation. However, it was pertinent to develop a preliminary discussion to develop the longitudinal analysis and also to offer some context to the focus group findings.

Findings from a study such as this can only be considered partial. The nature of the study, my position as an insider researcher (Costley, 2010), and how Lizzie chooses to present herself to me, as one of her tutors, have influenced the findings and interpretations. It does, however develop a detailed, nuanced understanding of the experiences and the journey that occupational therapy students undertake. As such it can help to enhance the understanding provided by previous research.

The key findings emphasise the non-linear aspects of professional identity formation. Lizzie's journey highlights the gradual relinquishing of the old self and putting on a cloak of an emerging occupational therapist. Another finding highlights the anxiety that accompanies these changes, along with normalising some of these in light of ongoing life-stage transitions. A sense of coherence in terms of both continuity and new possibilities is important in helping students make sense of these transitional experiences.

First interview	Second interview	Third interview	Fourth interview	Fifth interview
Making Sense Making sense of how she came to be here Making sense of what matters. Making sense of her feelings	Moving on	Anxiously motivated	The big abyss	The big abyss
Transitions Coping with Change The big step: Feeling squeezed Emerging new identity	Second doubt Impact of the anxiety Anxiously motivated Anxious relationships	I enjoy going on placement	Dip in the journey	Thinking and feeling like an OT
	Beginning to think like an OT Every things sort of coming together OT student identity	Into the big wide world	Being a student/ Becoming an OT	Taking stock of the journey
		I feel like I think more like an OT now		

Table 4: Showing the super-ordinate and sub-themes emerging from the interview

Opportunities to experience the doing and being of occupational therapy are important, providing experiences to develop confidence, access to role models and congruence between personal and professional values. Developing a sense of belonging by establishing relationships with educators, the student cohort, specific friendships and the wider student population is important. The Kawa model was drawn during the first and last interview. It seemed, on both occasions, to help Lizzie make sense of her ongoing narrative and see connections between different aspects of her life. However, she chose not to draw during the other three interviews, but did make use of the language of the model to describe her experiences. It gave Lizzie a framework to organise some of her experiences, but did not take as much prominence as I had expected in the interviews.

The next chapter will consider the findings from the focus groups.

Chapter Seven: Findings from the Focus Groups

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the themes which arose from the three focus groups. As in the previous chapter, each focus group will be considered in turn, in keeping with the idiographic approach of interpretative phenomenological analysis. A preliminary analysis is then presented for each focus group. A further discussion, with a longitudinal perspective, of both the interviews and focus groups is presented in chapter eight.

The participants knew each other well as they were all volunteers from the same cohort. This fostered the sharing of personal and emotional experiences. The participants were supportive of each other, whilst confirming or comparing their experiences. Differing opinions were expressed appropriately and respectfully. The discussions generated large amounts of rich data, which generally flowed easily, as participants responded to each other's experiences and ideas. Some participants, inevitably had more air time than others, but all participants were encouraged to speak and share their stories. Only minimal facilitation was needed to ensure the inclusion of all. Again, this was reflective of the fact that all participants were used to working together in small group discussions.

I acknowledged that I was an insider researcher, as the group knew me as their course leader, module leader and in some cases, personal tutor. I asked them to try to put this aside and to speak freely. I wanted to avoid acquiescence, reminding them that I wasn't there to make any inferences or evaluations in any capacity. However realistically and in keeping with IPA, my presence did inevitably influence the data collection. This is reflected upon at relevant points in the analysis.

Table 5 shows the super-ordinate and sub-themes which emerged in each focus group. Each focus group is considered in turn. An overview of the progression, atmosphere and group dynamics of each focus group is presented. The super-ordinate themes are then considered. As in Chapter Six, I have developed a preliminary discussion of the focus group in situ, to emphasise the longitudinal nature of the research. In keeping with the idiographic nature of IPA the discussion is concerned with the points raised in this focus group and only minimal reference will be made to the interviews. The focus groups and interviews will be considered together in further discussion in chapter eight.

Focus group 1 (beginning of yr 2: 3 participants)	Focus group 2 (Beginning of yr 3: 2 participants)	Focus group 3 (final day of the course: 5 participants)
Exploring motivations	Placement is where it is all gonna click	The Journey Beginnings Going round in circles Back to where we started
Overwhelming first year Concerns about coping on the course Riverbed - other demands	Managing the Ebbs and Flows	Finding the Driftwood
My river is flowing	Changing sense of self	Doing It: The Final Placements
It's really good when you're out on placement		I am an OT.
Feeling like an OT		

Table 5: Showing the super-ordinate and sub-themes which emerged in the focus groups

7.2 Focus group one

This focus group was held at the beginning of the second year of teaching. Ideally, this should have taken place at the end of the first year, to keep it in line with the interview schedule and also to avoid any time lapse issues which may affect memory and recall. However, pragmatics, including participant availability, necessitated that this was postponed until early in the second year of teaching. Whilst this inevitably will have influenced the participant's reflections upon their experiences, in that they were recalling events from up to a year ago, their current position, knowing that they had successfully progressed into year two, facilitated their reflection on their progress and development in becoming occupational therapists.

Three students elected to join the group. Recruitment was done via email rather than face to face to lessen any coercion that students may have felt. All three participants were female non-traditional students, two in their mid-twenties and one in her early forties. Two students had previous degrees, and one student had completed an access course. All students had been in full-time employment prior to commencing their studies.

The participants chose not to draw the Kawa model, but frequently used the metaphorical language from the Kawa model in their discussion. The group agreed it was a useful model, but felt it was time consuming to draw the model, and since the group was recorded, felt that it would not be useful. One person commented that she was a very visual person and perhaps in other circumstances would draw it; whereas, another

one said she tended to use the headings to guide her thinking but would not draw it, preferring to use bullet points. As the facilitator, I was aware of encouraging the participants to use the metaphor by reminding them of the concepts and using it to inform my questioning. The participants then used this in their responses, sometimes in direct response to my questions using the Kawa language: "I felt as though there were these great big boulders stuck in the middle" (Betsy, line 366).

Generally, the focus group was very supportive and affirming of each other's opinions. They established a shared narrative, comparing stories and exchanging views and interpretations of their experiences. They began the focus group making sense of their stories of how they came to be in their current position, and why they chose to be OTs. As the focus group gathered momentum they explored some of the difficulties they had experienced in their first year. They shared their experience of coping with and, in some cases, failing assignments and exams. The participants spent time making sense of their relationships with their practice placement educators.

There was much consensus throughout. There were lots of comments such as, "Yeah mine's the same (Betsy, line 555)," and "Was like you was saying" (Zuni, line 200) which demonstrated the group establishing a shared understanding. They sought reassurance from each other, Zuni, in particular often ended her statements with tag questions as a way of inviting others to reinforce her comments; "We all feel the same when we've been chatting, don't we?" (line 234). Using questions in this way can also be a way of establishing common ground and seeking out other people's perspectives and perhaps seeking out consensus.

The group appeared at ease with each other enough to contrast and contest their experiences. They compared their experiences of assessment and being on placement, exchanging stories and validating or exploring differences in their accounts. Zuni feels happy when she is on placement, whereas Betsy sees placement as a "boulder", i.e. a difficult issue to be overcome. When discussing whether they belong to the OT profession, Betsy and Ellie both expressed ambivalence, recognising their sense of belonging is influenced by various factors, whereas Zuni challenged. The difference of opinion is expressed respectfully, "Well I feel like I'm an OT and part of everything" (Zuni, line 1306). This is stated emphatically and is not up for negotiation. However, ironically, Zuni does not complete the course, withdrawing from the course a year later for personal health issues.

The group engaged in personal disclosure expressing their fears, and anxieties, whilst offering mutual support. This is evident, both in the focus group itself and in the wider

cohort. Zuni describes the support she gained from other members of the course after she failed an assessment, and how they helped her prepare for her re-assessment.

The participants recount their stories of what led them to apply for occupational therapy. They all share their passion and enjoyment of the course and their experiences to date, describing how fulfilled they feel, confirming their decisions to give up jobs to embark upon the course.

They move on to consider their journey to date, using the Kawa metaphor. The atmosphere of the group changes as the participants begin sharing more personal concerns, their anxieties and what they have found challenging. The focus group develops a life of its own as the participants recount their experiences of assessment, their successes and failures.

They consider themselves as belonging to the occupational therapy profession; a long discussion ensued concerning their placement experiences, their practice placement educators and team working. It seems that their understanding of "Being an occupational therapist" at this stage is enacted whilst on placement, and their academic experience has little impact upon their professional identity. Finally, the group moved on to considering their future, their hopes and aspirations. The focus group ended with an evaluation of the usefulness of the Kawa model, promoted by the researcher.

Thirty-five themes were identified (Appendix Ten) which have been organised into five super-ordinate themes, (see below).

- Exploring motivations
- Overwhelming first year
- My river is flowing
- It's really good when you're out on placement
- Feeling like an OT

7.2.1 Exploring motivations

The participants explore what influenced their decision to pursue a career in occupational therapy. They recount incidents which influenced their decision-making, including: a friend's accident and a Gran experiencing a stroke. These stories highlight how a significant life event can cause someone to question their own current life circumstances. All participants describe the conviction and affinity they feel for the profession, using

phrases like, "It just felt so right" (Ellie, line 113), and, "I just got the bug for it" (Zuni, line 220).

There is something almost evangelical about the passion and fervour with which they describe their experiences:

But I just feel as though my whole life fulfilment is complete now whereas before I felt that there was always something missing and this has now bridged that gap, you know, so.... (Betsy, focus grp 1, lines 333-335).

They describe how much they are enjoying the course; both Betsy and Ellie agree they want to shout out in lectures "I love this". It seems that the things they are learning are congruent with their own values. They are clearly passionate and enthused by their studies. Zuni, however, experiences this same zeal when she is on placement:

See I feel more like that when we're on placement..... and I'm just a lot more happier in myself because I'm doing something that means something to me in a way, but yeah I come like home from placement I was like oh I love this so much and when like an educator says to yer, you're made to be an OT, or I can see you being an OT for rest o' your life and you've picked the right career choice and everything, you just get a really warm glow inside you don't you? (Zuni, focus grp 1, 168-181).

It seems a lot is being said here, which is why I felt it important to write it out in full. This is the first time that Zuni has spoken. Her feelings of satisfaction are established when she is on placement. It is not clear if she doesn't find the academic side of the course fulfilling. There is also a suggestion that her feelings of satisfaction are affected by external validation, which is a theme which arises frequently, both in the individual interviews and later on in this focus group, as a means of boosting confidence. Finally, she ends her statement with a question. Zuni does this on many occasions; it is not clear if this is her habitual way of speaking, inviting comments from the others, or seeking reassurance.

There is a consensus view of seeing occupational therapy as a worthwhile, fulfilling and meaningful vocation. All participants report high levels of satisfaction and fulfilment, validating their decisions to give up full time well paid employment. Some report their academic studies intensify these feelings, whilst others feel this is enhanced on placement.

7.2.2 Overwhelming first year

The focus group moves on to share the pressures they have experienced since starting the course. This is a large super-ordinate theme containing eleven themes, split into two sub-themes;

- Concerns about coping on the course
- Riverbed - other demands."

All participants describe feeling overwhelmed initially. Betsy (line 472) describes everything as "great big boulders", and Zuni vividly describes trying to come to terms with new ideas; she uses the words "thrown at," creating a chaotic image of being bombarded by new ideas and knowledge. There is a sense of being out of control here. This description of chaos surprised me, given the careful planning that goes into the design of the modules. It has highlighted to me the importance of not making assumptions, as student perceptions may be, indeed, very different from academic intentions.

Managing change resulting from major life transition is a reported issue (Sugarman, 2001), and especially for mature students moving into higher education (Watson, 2005). The participants report these issues, in terms of the chaos and boulders described above. Ellie explains "the first few weeks are so intimidating" (line 493). It seems that she begins to doubt herself, despite the fact that she is already a graduate, albeit from a different subject area. She describes this self-doubt as fear. It seems there is a sense of being found out here or being exposed in front of the other students:

Just made me doubt every single bit of, you know, knowledge I had to date but then everybody else was in the same boat but nobody was saying that (Ellie, focus grp1, lines 488-490).

The emphasis on how it becomes an all- pervasive self-doubt is noteworthy, affecting even things in which she previously felt confident. She describes questioning her vocabulary and her previous education. The fact that no one else is saying they don't understand, leads Ellie to feel that she is somehow inferior or lacking in knowledge compared to her peers. Ellie acknowledges that this was self-generated. However, it is important to consider, if a graduate is experiencing such extremes of self-doubt and ability to manage, then school-leavers without previous academic experience at degree level, must feel even more intimidated.

One of the issues that the focus group considers from different perspectives is that of their age. This is obviously in sharp contrast to Lizzie's experiences. It seems that maturity is a double-edged sword. It was highlighted as a worry by Betsy who was forty-two when she commenced the course:

I sort of walked in the room and I looked round and I thought oh my god I'm the oldest, you know, and, but having said that, nobody's ever made me feel old, if you know what I mean, I speak to everybody in the group and just on an equal par, you, as much as I feel like I mean probably half of the group I could be their

mum 'cos I've got a daughter who's 21, ... but nobody's ever made me feel like that (Betsy, focus gp.1, line 598-603).

She reflects that in reality age has not been an issue, and indeed Ellie comments that in fact age is a supportive factor because they have the maturity to learn from previous mistakes (lines 705-724). This is also alluded to by Zuni when she explains how she is able to learn from mistakes, dealing with challenges more effectively (line 728) and to direct her own placement learning confidently (lines 564-571).

These non-traditional mature students note that their expectations of themselves are high as a result of their previous skills and experiences. It is, perhaps, that more is at stake, having left well-paid jobs to pursue this career and being grateful to partners and significant others for supporting them in their endeavours.

River bed–other demands

With maturity comes other issues which may present added pressures on students. The participants identify external demands in their river bed, i.e. the wider context of their lives which have an impact on their studies. They frame these issues as driftwood, that is, whilst acknowledging that external pressures can be a hindrance, they can also be motivating factors.

Betsy explains the dilemma she felt when she was supporting her mother after the death of her partner. She describes the panic she felt:

I thought oh my god I'm never gonna get all this coursework done because I just feel as though I need to give my mum so much of my time (Betsy, focus gp.1, line 644).

However, she describes the time-management strategies she uses to manage these compromises:

I would get up at seven and make sure that I did three hours work before anybody else was up and then I could have the time the rest of the day if my mum came up so it's about organising your time and making sure that you utilise every minute that's available to its full extent (Betsy, focus grp.1, lines 657-633).

Indeed, Ellie identifies issues like these as motivators and sees external demands as driftwood, in that it ensures the participants manage their time carefully. Ellie viewed her time at university as an escape from caring pressures and an opportunity to totally focus on other things.

7.2.3 My river is flowing.

The third super-ordinate theme is a positive one in which the participants are able to acknowledge progress in their course.

All participants agree that after the overwhelming first year, things are settling down now (early in the second year). They all acknowledge that things are starting to make sense, and are falling into place. They note that practice helps to make sense of things:

but once you get to your last placement in first year, then it starts to make sense because you're.....out on placement and your educator uses these theories that, and models you saw on a piece of paper in context. I think it's hard in the class when you've never been on a placement and never been in that situation to understand how it works in real life... (Betsy, focus gp.1, lines 468-475).

This quotation highlights the importance of practice placement in their education in helping to position their academic learning into context. In this super-ordinate theme, the students identify others factors which support their journey. The participants identify that their age is a double-edged sword. They note that the supportive peer group is an important factor, recognising that the small cohort provides them with mutual support. Zuni describes how supported she felt, when, after failing a practical assessment, her peer group offered to help her practice. The impact of assessment is also a significant issue for the participants. Ellie reflects that the first assessment had a big impact upon her motivation. The first assessment has high stakes, in that the participants were unsure what to expect and failure at this point can potentially be devastating. Zuni reflects upon the fact that she could already write, due to previous academic experience, but had no experience of practical assessments. Betsy reflects upon the impact of struggling in her second practical, due to lack of preparation. They are able to learn from these experiences:

but that's quite a negative thing to stick out but I made a positive of it in the end...I thought it's first year, it doesn't go towards my final marks, if I'm making any mistakes it's gonna be in my first year (Zuni, focus gp.1, lines 849-853).

This discourse led onto further consideration concerning the impact of validation. This was initially highlighted by Ellie who discusses the first practical assessment:

I just wanted that bit of sort of validation that what I was doing was right and it was achievable and I could do it so I think for me that was really important (Ellie, focus gp. 1, 775-776).

Zuni supports this feeling that it is much easier on placement and Ellie further elaborates that the lack of feedback in a practical assessment situation contrasts to the constant feedback given in lectures and on placement:

I think the difference on placement is that you're getting constant validation about what you're doing as well and if you do look like you're gonna make a mistake they jump in and the same in lectures, you know, you're getting constant validation (Ellie, focus grp.1. lines 960-964).

It also resonates with Lizzie's reliance on external validation, which was a feature throughout her interviews.

7.2.4 *It's really good when you're out on placement*

Practice learning is discussed a lot throughout the focus group and is therefore worthy of its own super-ordinate theme.

Betsy describes placement as a boulder in terms of added expectations and pressure:

even sort of last year when I felt as though things were going nice and steady then along came the second placement and I was like, oh my god, you know, what are we gonna have to do (Betsy, focus grp. 1, lines 456-458).

Perhaps this should be seen as driftwood because she goes onto explain that placement can be a confidence booster, where academic learning is consolidated. This ambivalence is also confirmed by Ellie and Zuni who express concern about stories they have heard and the importance of getting a "nice" placement. Zuni focused the discussion on the relationship with the educator. This seems to be an issue which arises many times, both in the focus groups and the individual interviews:

but that is the most nerve wracking thing is getting an educator who you just can't work with and they won't...give you those opportunities, (Zuni, focus grp.1, lines 573-4).

The relationship between students and practice educators is a pivotal relationship, impacting upon the student's professional identity and confidence. It seems there is a tension between wanting to please the educator, getting the positive external validation (but at the same time wanting to extend their learning. Betsy describes the tension she experienced when she tried to share ideas about the Kawa model with her educator, which resulted in her feeling marginalised and exposed:

cos I felt really shy and timid, I'm just sort of sat there thinking god I daren't say now't now (Betsy, focus grp.1, lines 1191-1194).

Perhaps there is a power issue here; students, whilst wanting to question practices or share new ways of doing things, find this difficult. They don't want to rock the boat with the assessment constantly looming over their heads, which perhaps has an impact upon how questioning and outspoken they feel they can be. There is the constant tension in

their minds of when to shut up and when to speak out. This must be a very tiring process.

This highlights why the students see the relationship with their educator as a very significant one. Perhaps there is some work to be done here, both in giving students skills to challenge practices and with educators in terms of being receptive to new ideas.

Ellie is able to recount a positive side to this stating:

Yeah, and when I finished placement my educator said to me, she said oh erm, I was beginning to feel a bit stuck in a rut and you've really made me look at OT in a different way (Ellie, focus grp.1, lines 1265-1266).

Students have the potential to share new knowledge and the most recent research. In this way, the students may be seen as change agents whilst on placement. This will be explored further in other focus groups, as the students travel along their journey and develop professional confidence.

The participants report that they feel more like occupational therapists whilst on placement, suggesting that practice placement helps to promote professional identity. Zuni recounts the confidence that she gains when she is given some autonomy:

He threw me in t'deeep end quite a few times but he, I think he knew I'd cope (Zuni, focus grp.1, line 950-951).

This is quite significant as this is still early in the students' learning, so Zuni is right in that autonomy at this stage does indeed suggest the educator has confidence in the student, which helps to build their confidence and sense of their developing professional identity. Zuni also feels that her professional identity is validated on placement, when her opinions and observations are taken seriously by the multi-disciplinary team. She describes how this wider acceptance is a sign of her developing competence. Ellie is less certain about her professional identity being promoted on placement. She is concerned that she won't enjoy placement as much as she enjoys being a student and is struck by the theory practice gap, and the narrowness in which her educators appear to approach their practice:

But then I don't see that OTs on placement as being part of that, that bigger picture they're so sort of caught up in their own little environment... (Ellie, focus grp.1, line 1172)

There is a marked contrast here between the two participants' perspectives; one who finds placement validates her professional identity, and the other who engages more with the academic aspects and feels let down by placement when she doesn't see her educators engaging in the broader professional issues:

OTs I've met haven't been looking at the wider picture, you know, they don't read erm, journals they, so they haven't heard of the Kawa model erm, you know I find that quite depressing, because that's not, I wouldn't want to be, I wouldn't want to go down that road (Ellie, focus grp.1, lines 1180-1184).

In summary the discourse highlights the important relationship with practice educators and power issues. It considers how students perceive the reality of practice and deal with the theory practice gap. Finally, how professional identity formation is influenced by developing autonomy and involvement with the wider multidisciplinary team has been considered.

7.2.5 Feeling like an OT

Prompted by the researcher, they explore where they are on the journey of becoming an occupational therapist. Betsy and Zuni both feel as though they are occupational therapists, whereas Ellie is a little more cautious. She comments that she initially wasn't aware of the wider occupational therapy community. It seems that this is something she now values and recognises the importance of, but acknowledges that she is very much on the periphery of this:

I had no idea that that was, that was out there when I started so I think it's just building, you know your awareness of it as a, as like a community (Ellie, focus grp.1, lines 1137-1142)

It seems that it is important to belong to something bigger, which Ellie refers to as a community. However, Ellie expresses concern that she hasn't seen this happening in practice. Both Betsy and Zuni say that they feel like occupational therapists, when out on practice. They comment that being given autonomy helps to promote their feelings of competence and belonging.

All participants share their frustration at the lack of public knowledge and understanding of occupational therapy. This discussion arose spontaneously in response to considering whether they felt like occupational therapists. Betsy said she felt proud to say that she was studying occupational therapy, and then a discussion ensued about the lack of general awareness about occupational therapy. Whilst they are able to laugh about this together, sharing a commonality of feeling and getting support from that, it is significant that they felt they needed to talk about this in relation to their feelings of belonging. It is something that Lizzie was also concerned about and is an acknowledged problem of the profession (Fortune, 2000). Perhaps this lack of understanding of the profession, adds to the difficulties that those on the periphery of the community of practice, experience in establishing their professional identity.

The final points considered under this super-ordinate theme are those of future aspirations and long term planning. Again, unprompted, the participants share their ideas of how they see their future careers developing. They are aspirational and looking forward to taking their placement in the professional community of occupational therapy. They claim they want to be educators (Ellie and Betsy) working at the College of Occupational Therapists (Ellie) a lecturer (Betsy) and having their own business (Zuni). Betsy describes her contingency plan if she is unable to secure an occupational therapy job, recognising that she will have very many transferable skills:

But I definitely, I think once you've got the skills you've got those for life haven't you so whatever... (Betsy, focus grp.1, lines 1425-1431)

There is the recognition of the broader scope of occupational therapy. Indeed, all of them share an overriding concern of not being cornered in a narrow role early on in their careers:

so I think I'm not gonna corner myself in to a certain, like I said you feel like your educators boxed herself in and she's stuck in a rut... (Zuni, focus grp.1, lines 1465- 1466)

They all have a sense of "the world is their oyster" at the moment, that they can spread their wings and explore many aspects of their profession. This theme echoed some of the issues raised in the significance of practice learning. It is concerned with the participants' sense of belonging in their professional community, and their understanding of the public facing aspects of their profession and their longer term career plans.

In summary, this focus group raised a number of significant issues, particularly those related to professional identity, as the participants recount their experiences to date on their journey to becoming occupational therapists. They begin by vividly describing their adjustment to their professional education and the impact that this has on their sense of self. They consider wider contextual influences, both the positive and negative influence of families and other support mechanisms. They are concerned about their relationships with their educators, power issues and how to challenge practice. Finally, they consider their developing professional identity, in terms of belonging to the community of occupational therapy and their future aspirations.

Upon completion of analysing this focus group, I noted in my journal:

My reflection after analysing this focus group caused me to ponder on a number of points: My immediate concern was the stressful nature of those overwhelming first few weeks. To listen to this, so graphically described, by a mature student who was already a graduate, caused me to wonder how the school leavers ever manage to cope with this

transition into professional education. I also questioned what we can do to support the students more in the first couple of months.

The importance of really understanding individual circumstances was highlighted in this focus group. Betsy described how she found her opportunities to study were compromised due to caring responsibilities within her family. Her response to this was to rise at 7 a.m. on a Sunday morning so that she could work whilst the rest for the family slept. This remarkable motivation highlighted Betsy's commitment to the course. Her situation resonated particularly with my own, in terms of my study time being significantly impacted upon due to family responsibilities and indeed I felt ashamed that I hadn't risen to the challenge of using early Sunday mornings to study.

Listening to students recount their stories of being on placement and the importance of their relationship with their educators, it caused me to recall a practice placement I experienced during my training. The head of department was certainly one those educators whom Ellie described as stuck in their own little environment. As a third year student, I developed an intensive intervention plan with a young woman who had just been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. I was particularly pleased with my client's progress which culminated in a home visit, which I facilitated. However, I was evaluated on my "tidiness"! I felt powerless to be able to challenge my educator's assessment and indeed was certainly not impressed at all by her own practice. The fact that this memory was evoked by the participant's conversation, suggested to me that it was an unresolved issue from my own training and it impressed upon me how some students may feel disempowered in a practice environment. This reflection reinforces a number of issues for me, namely: the significance of tutor support for the student whilst on placement; the importance of current well trained educators and systems which promote students being valued and listened to.

7.2.1 Preliminary discussion.

The focus group began with participants considering their reasons for studying occupational therapy. All three participants gave up well paid jobs, in search of greater fulfilment. This concurs with Craik, and Naphthine's (2001) study, who found that people who already had degrees, entered occupational therapy in search of job satisfaction. None of the participants had previous work experience in the health service, despite research suggesting that this was the most prevalent method of finding out about the profession (Craik, Gissane, Douthwaite, & Philip 2001; Craik & Zaccaria, 2003). They all felt that OT was a worthwhile profession, which suited their values and outlook. Personal contact was also noted to have an influence on career choice; all participants reported personal contact through witnessing OTs working with their relative or through

personal conversation. However, Price, (2008), who explored early socialisation amongst nurses, cautioned people joining the profession with preconceived ideas and felt this may contribute to poor retention, as students face reality shock when practice does not match their ideals. It is noteworthy that Zuni left the course at the end of the second year. This was largely as a result of changing life circumstances, but her decision not to continue may have been in part influenced by reality shock.

The participants comment on the congruence between their own values and the philosophy of OT. Comments like "I love this", "I just got the bug for it", "I just get a warm glow" all highlight the personal satisfaction they are experiencing. Occupational therapy demands the therapeutic use of self in order to practice authentically, and it is difficult to separate the personal from the professional (Denshaw & Hooper, 2008). Wright and Sugarman (2009, p.151) comment that many occupational therapists report a "fit" between themselves and OT professional philosophy. The integration of the personal and professional values is highlighted as a key factor in professional identity formation by Trede, Macklin and Bridges (2012), in their review of the higher education literature which has application to a wide range of professions.

Despite their satisfaction with their career choice, the participants reported a difficult transition period, in much the same way that Lizzie did. However, for these non-traditional students, the context of their lives and life stage is different from that of Lizzie. They may have made difficult and significant financial decisions. They may also have different demands on them in terms of caring responsibilities, and other life stage issues. Supporting non-traditional students has been identified as a priority. This group of students are more likely to withdraw (Watson, 2005). Stressing the importance of maintaining occupational balance is an important consideration for all students, but especially for this group (Wilson & Wilcock, 2005). Whilst all students report time and money as a hindrance to achieving occupational balance, this group also report environmental factors, including complex living arrangements and cultural norms (Ryan, 2001; Wilson & Wilcock, 2005, p.322).

The only direct reflection the focus group made on the academic content of the course was that of how occupational therapy philosophy is in accord with their own values. However, they do consider the impact of assessment. The first piece of assessment is seen by Ellie as crucial; the feedback gives students an indication of their progress and has a big impact on motivation. Not all students will respond or be able to utilise their feedback initially, especially if they are not familiar with higher education feedback, and may benefit from ensuring that the feedback is explained and that they are supported to take this on board (Price, Handley, Millar & O'Donovan, 2010). This is particularly

relevant because, as Ellie suggests this is a highly emotionally charged assessment. Feedback at this early stage of learning may have far reaching implications on the professional confidence of the emerging professional. Holland (2013) highlighted the links between confidence, competence and professional identity. Eraut (2006) has also emphasised the link between feedback and developing professional identity and students' subsequent orientation to professional development.

Like Lizzie, the participants reflected upon their practice placement experience. Also like Lizzie they considered the relationship between themselves and their practice educator. However, the focus group participants have slightly different concerns from Lizzie at this stage of their training, as they consider the difficulties which they face as they assimilate into the practical environment. In contrast, Lizzie seems to experience these concerns at a later point when she is in year three. This focus group explored their difficulties as they try to share their ideas within the practice environment and their feelings are very much reflected in Clouder's (2003) research, exploring how students learn to fit in and play the game. The power that practice educators have over students must not be underestimated. They are the gatekeepers of the profession and make evaluations on the student's competence (Duke, 2004).

Whilst there is a lot of research into what makes an effective educator (Mulholland, Derrall & Roy, 2006; Rodger, Fitzgerald, Davila, Millar & Allison, 2011; Rodger, et al., 2014), there is perhaps a need to work with both educators and students, exploring issues of how to help new students integrate into practice. Helping students understand, work with and challenge the "unspoken" rules (Krusen, 2011; Webb, Fawns & Harre, 2009, p.58) is needed, along with encouraging there to be "mutual or reciprocal development of knowledge", (Rodger, et al., 2014, p.165). Mackey (2007) argues that there is a need to move beyond rules, roles and traditional power bases to building ethical relationships in which professional identity can be re-defined and co-created at an individual, local and particular level. Students need to be able to understand the dynamic contexts of practice and take their place in the broader community of practice.

The importance of belonging is also voiced in this focus group. Zuni comments upon the support that she received from her peer group after failing her assessment, and how that encouraged her. It seems then, that they have established a sense of belonging within their student group. Zuni and Betsy also report that they both feel that they are occupational therapists whilst they are on placement, thereby suggesting that they have achieved a sense of belonging within their particular placement context Ellie is more cautious because she considers the broader community of practice and recognises that she is still very much on the periphery of this. She is aware of different professional

discourses and is concerned that she hasn't seen this reflected in the placements that she has experienced. At this stage, Ellie doesn't feel she is disillusioned by practice, but she does show concern that she may not find practice as stimulating as being engaged in academic study. Ellie is aware that she is not fully immersed in the community of practice and wants to move from legitimate peripheral participation to a more central position. There is a research gap here in terms of what strategies are effective in helping students do this.

The focus group concludes with the participants exploring future possibilities. There is no doubt amongst them that they will not qualify as occupational therapists. All three participants have high aspirations. There is some recognition here that there is a broader community of practice, as none of them seem to envision themselves in an established area of practice as clinical occupational therapists. The curriculum framework (COT, 2009), identified the need to encourage entrepreneurial principles in the undergraduate curriculum. This has gained momentum in recent years and has now been embedded in occupational therapy undergraduate curricula (COT, 2014) influencing undergraduate thinking. Some therapists struggle to reconcile business skills with a caring ethos, which may (as Lizzie expressed in interview 2.1, lines 1041-49) add to the sense of dissonance of practice as discussed earlier.

7.2.3 Focus group one summary

In summary this first focus group acts as a back drop against which to situate Lizzie's experience and many similar issues are raised.

The participants considered the beginning of their journey, focusing on factors influencing their career choice. Like Lizzie, they reflected upon their initial feelings of being overwhelmed. They also reflected upon their first assignments in terms of success and failure and the support gained from their peers. Also, like Lizzie they reflected upon their experience on placement and their relationship with their practice educators. Whilst on placement, they experience their "doing", they feel like occupational therapists. There was some dissent among the participants; two of them felt like they are already occupational therapists, especially on placement, whilst one participant was aware she was not yet part of the wider community of practice. This participant also enjoyed and valued the academic aspect of the course. The participants all referred to the Kawa metaphor noted that their river was flowing freely. The focus group ended with the participants anticipating the possibilities in their career.

7.3 Focus Group Two

This focus group was held at the beginning of the third year of teaching. This should have taken place at the end of the second year, but again pragmatics, including participant availability necessitated this was postponed until early in the third year of teaching.

The students have now completed two years of their education, finishing their second year with a six-week placement. They are now completing their inter-professional research project, along with an inter-professional module concerned with policy issues, and a module concerned with developing their business acumen.

This time only two students joined the group. Both participants were female, one non-traditional student, in her early forties, who also attended the first focus group. The other participant was a traditional student, having begun her university education straight after leaving school.

One of the participants was more dominant, and there was some talking over, which necessitated intervention at some points to ensure that they both had "air time". There were some differing perspectives, as would be expected, given their different life stages. Generally, they worked well together, establishing commonalities and comparing and contrasting experiences. They were supportive of each other, and when there were differences of opinion these were expressed respectfully. This reflected how they were used to working together as part of a small professional cohort, learning from each other.

Again, the participants chose not to draw the Kawa model, but frequently used the Kawa metaphorical language in their discussion. The participants used the Kawa metaphor in their discourse, but this was not until line 448, after the metaphor was re-introduced by the researcher. The metaphor is used on a number of occasions in this focus group. The participants used it to clarify their progress and to explain how they are sensing their development as a professional:

I think it starts off as a rock when you think oh I can't apply this I'm not really sure, but then when it clicks, and now I'd say now that it's driftwood (Millie, focus grp.2 lines 456-458).

They use it to make sense of what is happening and find commonalities in their journey. Millie considers that her deepening understanding of the complexity of practice has progressed, and she now views it as a positive asset, whereas she initially perceived her lack of application as a boulder. This common language is a useful means of communicating complex ideas, "Yeah definitely, yeah" (Betsy focus grp.2, line 455).

It is also used to explore their journey on a longitudinal basis

Yeah, I think that's, I think that's the same for me really. I think it's just stopped the flow of it really, the flow was going nicely and then really, the last two placements I thought ooh yeah it's picking up (Betsy, focus grp.2, lines 568-572).

The power of the metaphor is displayed as they compare and contrast their experiences. They also used it as a reflective tool; the concept of the rocks and drift wood prompts them to consider what has been difficult. Millie recounts how failing her first assessment caused her to doubt herself, but then how placement got her back on track (lines 1040-1068). This prompted Betsy to consider her difficulties in contrast to Millie's, which were more around her academic writing (lines 1087-1116).

The focus group began, with the participants considering their experiences of the first two years. They then considered their experiences on placement: how they sensed an increasing sense of autonomy as budding occupational therapists; their relationships with their educators and fitting into the service area. They reflected upon how they have progressed and coped with failure along with managing their own expectations of themselves.

Initially, because there were only two participants, I thought that the focus group would not yield much data, however, analysis proved me wrong and twenty-five emergent themes were identified which were organised into three super-ordinate themes;

- Changing sense of self
- Placement is where it is all gonna click
- Managing the ebbs and flows.

Some ideas were also raised in the previous focus group, especially those around the significance of placement and the changing nature of the professional self. Some reference will be made to these similarities, but, in keeping with the idiographic nature of IPA, the focus will be on considering this focus group and more detailed comparisons will be completed in the longitudinal analysis.

The consideration of the themes is not necessarily in order of importance, but in the order they emerged in the focus group.

7.3.1 Changing sense of self

The first super-ordinate theme was concerned with how they were changing as professionals and people. They reflected upon their sense of being occupational therapists, experiencing autonomy and developing their therapeutic sense of self, along with internalising these behaviours into their persona.

The focus group began with the participants considering their progress on becoming occupational therapists. They both commented that they felt that they were being occupational therapists on their first placement in the second year. They were in agreement that this was promoted by having some autonomy on placement, and also by the expectations of others. Millie described her self-doubt and almost panic on being asked to work outside her comfort zone:

and I thought, no I can't do that I'm only in my second year but then straight after it was like oh no I can do that and I've got the skills to do that kinda thing (Millie, focus grp.2, lines 55-64)

This was also supported by Betsy, who compared each practice placement to starting a new job. It is interesting to note that this reflection was in response to my question of whether they felt like occupational therapists. This prompted them immediately to think about placement. They do not appear to consider any of their other thinking or skills development outside placement as contributing to them feeling like occupational therapists.

They note that their professional identity is changing, but that is very context specific, and it is in response to external validation from practice educators and service users/carers. It is a coming together of expectation, self-belief and confidence:

I'd probably say with the placements in the second year. Do you think? That was when I'd start be, yeah, yeah I am an OT, but just because it's that responsibility and that, when you experience being able to do like, I did the whole OT process, from the beginning to discharge and then to be able to do that it's like oh I can do this, I can, I am an OT (Millie, focus grp.2, lines 802-809).

The statement "I am an OT" is a powerful self-assertion, a claiming of a status, demonstrating integration into the self. This is in contrast to "I feel like an OT", which is more tentative and hesitant. There is certainly an embodiment of being an occupational therapist into their persona at this stage, with comments like "when you're out on placement now you are an OT", (Betsy line 832) and "I think it's...ingrained now...and that, I know that's what I want to be", (Betsy 774-776). The choice of the word "ingrained" suggests more than surface absorption. It suggests that occupational therapy has been rubbed into their soul, and it is not going to be easily removed. Millie also views trust as a helpful means of overcoming the self-doubt considered earlier:

I think I did an, an initial assessment on my own and her pushing me to achieve that by the end of that first placement laid all of them fears to rest really cos I actually did do it by the end (Millie, focus grp.2, 1057-1059)

Being given space to experience autonomy is important, it helps them explore their therapeutic use of self:

And then I think when that, that, in my second year I went away from that [feeling she has to replicate exactly how the educator would do it] and that's when it all started clicking really (Millie, focus grp.2, 1016-1017)

Millie highlights the importance of being able to develop her own professional style, rather than having to carry out the interventions exactly as their educators would do. It seems that their sense of professional sense is enhanced by being given responsibility, and opportunity to explore their own way of doing things.

Both participants identify that structure is important to helping them organise their learning and development. Having deadlines and multiple assessments helps them focus their academic efforts, and more independent learning and less structure causes them to feel less connected. They also note that having access to supportive personal tutors and a small cohort helps with their studies, in that they can learn from each other and respect each other's differences. It seems that structure promotes a sense of belonging and mutual support.

7.3.2 Placement is where it is all gonna click

This focus group considered various aspects of placement, demonstrating the high importance that the participants place upon their practice experience. Various aspects of their placement experience are discussed: their relationships with their educators; fitting into the service area; integrating therapy and practice and their developing sense of professional identity, which links in closely to the previous superordinate theme considered.

so I think placement is the place where it is all gonna click and come together...and I would've been very worried if it hadn't 've done for myself particularly erm, because I think that's where it should, that's what placements are for, it's where it's all supposed to come together... (Millie, focus, grp.2, 482-488).

This quotation sums up this theme and demonstrates the centrality that placements hold for Millie in her professional education. Betsy firmly agrees with this. They both explore how they experience feeling like an occupational therapist whilst on placement, and how this was particularly evident on their last placement at the end of the second year, when they felt confident in their role. They both agree that feeling competent in practice and the experience of being part of the team, promotes their feelings of being an occupational therapist.

The task that the students face integrating themselves into the teams when on placement also gets consideration. They explore the difficulties of meeting practice educator expectations, which are not necessarily clear. This is a perilous venture, which

necessitates a delicate balance of fitting in with the team, demonstrating their competence and knowledge, whilst also demonstrating their continued desire to learn. I called this emergent theme “walking the tight rope,” as the participants describe the precarious balance they have to achieve:

and I was, always thought like am I saying too much? When do I actually chip in? It's quite hard to get that balance of getting your point across but then not kind of taking over or, I don't know... (Mille, focus grp. 2. lines 219-222)

The students are keen to please their educators, and this demonstrates the power and control the educators have over the students. This desire to please, is perhaps one of the reasons students spend a lot of energy and concern over the relationship with their educators. This links closely to the next emerging theme, that of “being under the microscope”. The participants describe how difficult it is to feel that they are constantly being observed and assessed:

You had to sort of really be willing to be questioned and listened to all day long about what your OT philosophy was and,you sort of felt continuously throughout the day, even at lunchtime people were still eavesdropping as to what you were saying and in some ways that was very difficult because you didn't have a moment where you could sorta switch off (Betsy, focus grp.2, lines 139-150).

Despite this constant pressure and the demands that an approach like this must generate, the participants also comment that they gained an awful lot from this experience, as they were pushed to work beyond their comfort zone.

Under “Changing sense of self,” the importance of working out how to do it your own way and developing your own therapeutic sense of self was identified. Closely linked to this is the significance of having opportunities to develop some autonomy, which was also alluded to as a means of relieving self-doubt:

Actually, just doing it on my own and looking around and thinking it's just me and the patient was very like, was the, good (Millie, focus grp.2 lines 959-965).

Millie creates a picture here akin to sailing a dingy for the first time, of her suddenly looking up and realising that she was unaccompanied, and a long way from shore, feeling a little forlorn and very small. As you work out everything for yourself, it is at this point that those seemingly pointless drills help, and as you set your sail and the sails fill, your confidence rises as you chart your progress though the waves towards your landmark. This autonomy that Millie describes seems to be fundamental in the students' development, and opportunity to exercise it is essential to developing professional identity.

The participants considered the reality of practice; This also arose in the first focus group when they considered the limitations of current practice and their role as change agents:

They become a little bit erm, bogged-down by, well we do this and we do that and we do that. And there's none of the thinking outside of the box type thing...a lot of things are regimented I've found (Betsy, focus grp.2, lines 330-335).

Whilst initially this can be uncomfortable for students, they describe the benefits they gain from feeling that they can contribute fresh ideas, moving the service forward, and that practice placements provide benefits for all involved. The participants both describe a feeling of enhanced belonging and satisfaction when they realise that they have something to contribute:

whereas we then go out and because we're still thinking of everything...that we've learned we've got all the sorta new bubbly ideas going on around and, and you sort of go in and you might actually see things that they wouldn't necessarily even look for because they've done so many home visits it's just a matter of routine... I think they can learn from us in a way, (Betsy, focus grp.2, lines 360-375).

7.3.3 Managing the Ebbs and flows

The final super-ordinate theme captures the journey that the students experienced. This is only a small theme, which highlights the progress the participants feel they are making. Again, it uses the language from the Kawa metaphor as this is what the participants use. The words capture the sense of constant change, and transfer in energy in much the same way as a tidal river. The languaging of the theme suggests that the progression to becoming an occupational therapist is not linear or steady, but involves constant changes in the rate of progress. They use the Kawa metaphor as a reflective tool to review their progress:

I can't believe we're in our third year but erm, I don't know, I think ... I think in the first year mine was relatively slow flowing with probably lots of, 'co, because there was an awful lot to learn you just felt as though you were coming to grips with something and something else was thrown in the way... you know (Betsy, focus grp.2, lines 660-663).

This is, however, experienced differently by the two participants:

See I quite like that I real, I liked the first year 'cos it was all coming in from different angles but that made me realise that it was the right thing that I was doing (Millie, focus grp. 2 lines 664-668).

It is not clear in the discourse why this is perceived differently though it may be due to the fact that the participants are in very different life stages. Millie perhaps rises to the challenge of the different subject areas, having come straight from "A" level study, and being used to following a more academic study comprising of various subjects, whilst

Betsy, a non-traditional student from an access course with more focused study, may have found dealing with many modules and different assessments at the same time more challenging. Millie notes that it is not all smooth sailing, but she is accepting of the turbulence.

The participants describe their current progress as slow, as though they have hit a boulder. They are now in the first term of the third year and note that at this point in the curriculum, there is a focus on policy and multidisciplinary working, with a less direct focus upon specific occupational therapy skills or knowledge. In contrast to this, at the end of the second year when they were on placement they both reported a surge in their development and felt that their energy and progress at that point was good; "Kawa model would've been quite free-flowing with no ripples (Betsy, lines 619).

In summary, this focus group, whilst smaller in participants, is still rich in data. They explored their journey with an emphasis on the changing nature of themselves and their professional identity. It seems that they do indeed see themselves as occupational therapists. The majority of this change is brought about via their placement experiences, they discuss at length, including: experiencing autonomy; fitting into the service; their relationships with their educators and changing practice.

I made the following entry in my reflexive journal upon the completion of this interview;

Whilst I knew Millie, having taught her for two years now on various modules on the OT course, I did not know her well, as I was not her personal tutor. I was, however, really impressed with the clarity and confidence with which she spoke. As she alluded to in the interview initially, she had presented in the early part of her training as a young, easily lead student, who could on occasions lack focus and I wrongly assumed her contribution to the focus group may lack substance. However, upon re-listening to the recording after the focus group, I was astounded by her honesty, self-appraisal and insight. This was a stark reminder to me not to categorise students and allow my initial impressions to influence my assumptions, given that after all I am trying to chart student development.

It is playing some part in this change and development in students that I find so rewarding in my profession and what prompted me to undertake this research. The students continually surprise me and challenge my expectations.

7.3.4. Preliminary discussion

This focus group raised many similar issues to those discussed in the previous focus group. There was a brief mention of the experience of failing an assessment, which

supported the findings from the previous focus group. These comments were made by Millie who was not in the first focus group, but her response to failing her first assessment was an echo of those made by Zuni. Trede, Macklin and Bridges (2012), note that assessment regimes can have a big impact on professional identity development.

The participants were concerned with their experiences on placement and again expressed similar concerns to those raised in the first focus group. They discussed how they felt like an OT whilst on placement and that being given autonomy and responsibility reinforced these feelings. The statement "I am an OT" (Millie, line 809), makes a strong professional claim. This sense of "being" was noted on the first placement in the second year, but reinforced and extended by the end of the second year, especially on their second placement. Their sense of developing autonomy and new found confidence, enables them to separate from their educator and "stand on their own two feet", beginning to develop their own unique ways of knowing and being as occupational therapists. This is in line with the "Senior Student" which Kasar and Muscari (2000, p.46), identified in their conceptual model. The participants acknowledged that they still want and need external validation, again, also identified by Kasar and Muscari (2000), who note that it is not a linear development and may include many crises of confidence.

Whilst the participants valued external validation from their practice educator and other members of the team, they also wanted to develop their therapeutic use of self by developing their own approaches, and not necessarily just replicating what they saw their educator do. This however, was a complex problem for them as they try to fit in with the service, but at the same time want to be change agents, introducing their own ideas and new ways of seeing things into the service. Walking the tight rope describes the tension they experienced between fitting in with the team and being a change agent.

The previous preliminary discussion of focus group one considered both the research done by Clouder (2003), who found students were concerned with fitting in and also that by Krusen (2011), who explored the importance of understanding the implicit unspoken rules of the service area. However, in this focus group the participants explore even more explicitly the difficulty they experience as they aspire to be assimilated and please their educator, but also are starting to have their own ideas. They explore the stagnation they have witnessed on placement, making comments like "They become a bit bogged down", "a lot of things are regimented", and "I think they can learn from us in a way". This however, does show a real development in both their thinking and confidence, as they can challenge the status quo. Mackey (2007) highlights that there are multiple

ways of knowing occupational therapy and that the profession needs to be comfortable with many different changing ways of explaining itself. To challenge a more powerful and dominant discourse is a difficult process for students who only have an embryonic and faltering identity. It seems then that students need to learn to deal with ambiguity in their quest for development; they need to be able to make connections between external validation and their own inner knowing (Trede, Macklin, Bridges, 2012, p.376). This view of a negotiated, socially constructed professional identity concept aligns itself with Lave and Wenger's (1998) theory of communities of practice. The participants articulate how that sense of acceptance, approval and belonging within a placement enables them to further develop their own professional identity, and how this aligns with Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of moving from legitimate peripheral participation towards a more central position. The position of acceptance as a legitimate member is an important one, emphasising the students need to belong to the community of practice, so that their learning is seen as development, rather than a cause for exclusion and rejection, (Wenger, 1998 p.101) The students must demonstrate that they have potential to make it as full members and must therefore be able to espouse the expected level of knowledge and behaviour for their educational stage. The participants capture the ongoing nature of their professional identity project as they consider their faltering journey. It is non-linear with many rocks to be negotiated, including: development of knowledge and skills; personal, social and emotional attributes; contextual and temporal demand.

7.3.5 Focus Group Two Summary

This smaller focus group takes place at the beginning of year three. The participants consider their fragile, but nevertheless emerging professional identity. In contrast to the previous focus group, they consider how they are starting to develop their own way of being an occupational therapist. The participants in the last focus group were concerned with fitting in, and learning any unspoken rules. In this focus group, whilst fitting in is still important, the participants are showing a stronger sense of themselves emerging as practitioners in their own right. There is also dissatisfaction expressed as they start to recognise the limitations in some areas of practice. This resonates with the concern that Ellie expressed in the first focus group.

The focus group again uses the Kawa model to reflect upon their progress. The metaphor of "ebbs and flows" highlights constant change; their journey to becoming occupational therapists is not a smooth process, but a journey with many challenges.

7.4 Focus Group Three

This final focus group had a different feel again compared to the two previous ones. It was carried out on the student's final day of the course. Five students elected to join this focus group. This included one male who joined the course a year after leaving school, and another school leaver, Eva, who was 18 when joining the course. The three other participants were female, all in their mid-twenties, who had given up full-time paid employment. Two of them had completed an access courses and one a degree.

This was the only focus group which chose to draw the Kawa River model (see figure 7). There was no discussion about this; one of the participants just starting writing and drawing as the group began. This may have been because of a higher number of participants. Indeed, it was useful to have a scribe who kept the group on track and provided a useful summary. The scribe chose to colour code the diagram, "red things just make you stop and you can't carry on and then green things help you get going again" (Eva, line 1874). The group used the Kawa language and metaphor and it seems that this helped them achieve clarity and understanding of each other's experience, even though they are able to recognise that they all have unique perspectives.

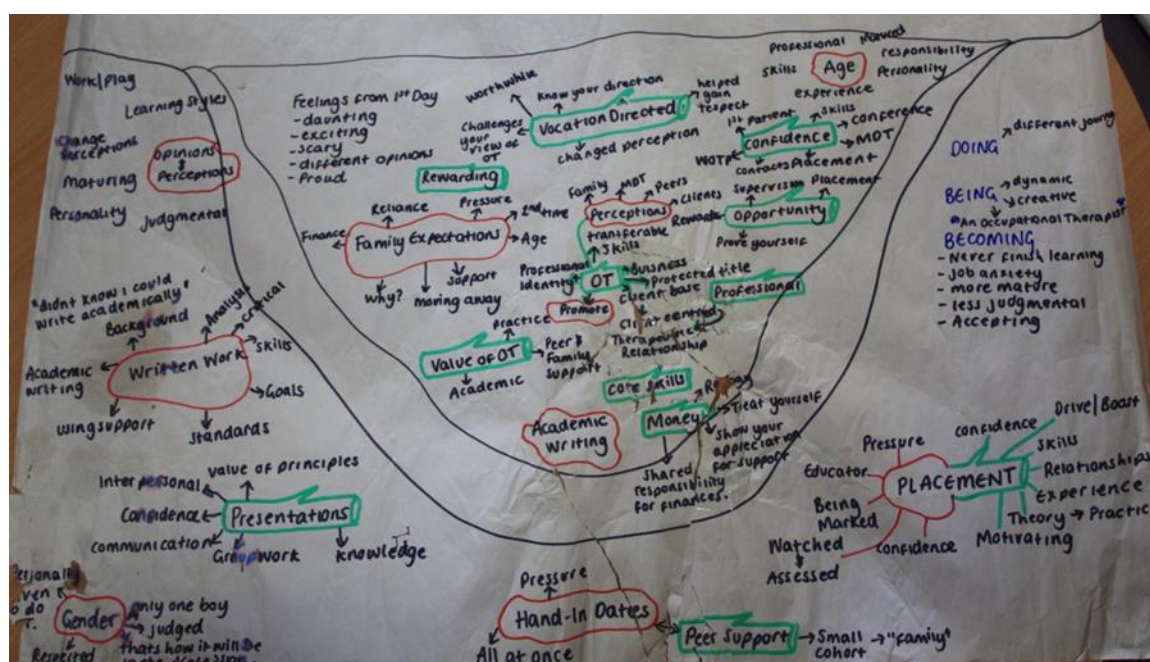


Figure 7: Focus Group 3 Kawa Model

Because this was a larger group, I had to ensure all participants had equal "air time". Inevitably some members were quieter than others. Elaine was the quietest member; she was very affirmative and supportive, but didn't tend to offer much in terms of initial responses. Mark was the most dominant member of the group- he spoke a lot; both Kath and Eva were particularly supportive of him. Ellie spoke a little less, but was often the first person to speak in response to a prompt from myself; equally, Ellie often moved

the discussion onto another relevant perspective. The atmosphere was celebratory and congratulatory as would be expected on their final day. The participants affirmed their own story by comparing and contrasting it with others. They considered their own challenges in the light of other people's experiences, but yet were also supportive and affirmative to each other.

The focus group began with reflections from their earlier days of the course and the reasons that they chose occupational therapy. They considered the implications of this decision, particularly on their finances. They considered aspects of the course which they found difficult, identifying both their rocks and driftwood. They reflected upon their experience on practice placements and the role these have played in their development. They discussed their next steps and explored their employment options.

Twenty-four themes were identified which were organised into four super-ordinate themes, (Appendix twelve):

- The Journey.
- Finding the Driftwood
- Doing It: The Final Placements
- I am an OT.

7.4.1 The Journey

This large super-ordinate theme captured the reflection of the participants, as they consider their experiences throughout their three years, in a similar way to which Lizzie did in her final interview.

It has been organised into three sub-themes which capture the different stages of the journey as described by the participants:

- Beginnings
- Going round in circles
- Back to where we started

Beginnings

The focus group opens with the participants debating whether this is the end of their journey or indeed the beginning:

I think we're just at the beginning. Just starting at top of mountain I think and, just forming that river, so... (Mark, focus grp.3, line 6)

This is an eloquent and succinct use of the Kawa metaphor which enables the participants to immediately identify with the imagery. I noted the phrase "at the top of the mountain". This captured the celebratory mood of the focus group. They are now on the mountain top looking out over their future. What is also interesting is Mark's use of the imagery; they are at the source, where the river springs to life. This is an effective metaphor for the beginning of their professional life; they have lots of energy, a narrow focus, but no depth and breadth of vision.

They consider their feelings upon commencement of the course. Kath responds with "it felt daunting 'cos everybody's new" (line 21). Beginnings are often anxiety- provoking situations as people do not know what to expect; there is the fear of the unknown. The word "daunting", not only suggests intimidation and fear, but also being afraid to start and is perhaps suggestive of a personal or individual feeling. Kath develops this, reflecting on the fact that everyone is in the same situation. These feelings of mutual support are also commented on in the interviews and other focus groups. Knowing that other students are in similar situations provides reassurance.

The participants consider some of the wider implications of commencing on the course and note the pressure that they put on themselves, as they are supported by family, both financially and emotionally. Mark notes that he doesn't want to let his family down. He is the first generation to go to university:

To take on from that it's probably been t'first child to go to university and looking to do something that's unfamiliar (Mark, focus grp.3, lines 62-64)

He sees himself as a trailblazer. However, also implied in this statement, is the problem he experiences as his community don't really understand what he is doing. He feels it is important to get social support as this gives him confidence and encouragement. The group reflect on their initial impressions of each other and how they have changed. Eva's recounts her experiences of being on a professional course, compared to other students she was living with, whom, she felt, were able to miss lectures:

it's just I'd come to Uni and I did... live the uni life... a little bit as well (Eva, focus grp3, lines 1272-1274).

She talks about the tension she experienced as she wanted to join in Wednesday student night, but did not, knowing she had to be in lectures on Thursday morning. Her friends, however, seemed to be able to miss lectures without falling behind. The group comment

on how the course encourages them to consider occupational balance, but has professional demands and makes them mature quickly.

Going round in circles

The second theme deals with the processes of the journey. Kath describes how she has struggled with some aspects of the course, although she doesn't give specific examples:

I think there've been times along the course where I've thought actually it's not what I want, you know It's never all been plain-sailing...and, you know, I think, but I think for myself what I struggled with others they might have enjoyed (Kath, focus grp,3 lines 189-195)

She acknowledges that she wouldn't leave the course because she tends not to give things up lightly and that she was always able to find something in the curriculum which did she did enjoy. There is strong message of pushing and perseverance, suggested by words such as "struggle, barriers, breaking through, and knocking it down". They all agree that the support of each other has helped them, and Kath also identifies that her previous work as a therapy assistant reinforced her decision to keep going.

The circularity of the process is identified. Ellie highlights that she felt as though she was progressing, but then on each new placement she feels like she is starting again. She likens it to the occupational therapy process:

I think it was...more like backwards and forwards...you know...all the way through it, you know, your confidence levels go up and down and...you know,getting experience in a particular area and then you move onto the next placement, it's a completely different area...of OT and you're back to square one, ..., so I think it's, it's not erm, I suppose it's like the OT process, you know you just go, it's a cycle isn't it... (Ellie, focus grp.2 lines 695-713)

It seems then it is important to remind students that their journey may be ongoing and difficult at times. This statement normalises those dips in confidence that most students experience.

This concept of circularity is an over-arching concept throughout the focus group. They debate as to whether they are beginning or ending their journey, and the same point of discussion is reached again towards the end of the group, when they suggest that they are back to where they started. The participants compare and contrast their rocks, (the things they have found difficult) on the course. They note that, this is different for each of them; "It's about being individuals isn't it..." (Elaine, line 203). Ellie describes how tiring and difficult she found placements:

I used to find that really, really tiring erm, so although it's an opportunity...erm, it's also a real, for me it was really, I found it very, very difficult (Ellie, focus grp.3, lines 972-975)

The repetition of “really” and “very” add weight and gravitas to what she is saying. Ellie also voiced similar feelings in focus group two when she described feeling that she was “under the microscope” all the time when she was on placement.

Mark, in contrast, loved his placement experiences, but he found academic writing very difficult. The words he chooses to use for example “combat and attack” (lines 857 and 867) depict a battle he fought. He displays a great deal of determination and tenacity as he develops his skills.

For Kath, her main rock was doing presentations, but she has now turned this into an attribute and “absolutely loves” (line 880) doing them now, whereas Eva found working in inter-professional groups difficult. The fact they all experienced different areas of difficulty, highlights the importance of not making generalisations about students, and being student-focused.

They all describe overcoming their hurdles and are immensely proud of their success. However, they also note that it took them a long time and that progress was gradual:

You become more confident in what you’re doing and what you’re saying...but it’s taken three years (Ellie, focus grp.3 line 1045).

This emphasises the need for time to embed professional skills, and the support needed to maintain three-year degree programmes, rather than trying to offer condensed intensive programmes. The fact that Ellie, who was already a graduate, highlights the longevity of the process adds weight to this. Finally, they all agree that the constant pressure was a rock: “just seemed never, never ending,” (Kath, focus grp.3, line 1091). This comment was made in the context of the final push, when a lot of assessment deadlines came towards the end of the course. Again, they all rose to the challenge, enjoying successful outcomes, and note that peer support was instrumental in keeping them going.

The participants indicate how their understanding and knowledge of occupational therapy is very different to their initial ideas:

Yeah, I think, I thought...I knew what it was but I didn’t.....actually, realistically (Ellie, focus grp.3 lines 413-415).

The participants think the main issue is that the public don’t really understand occupational therapy. They appreciate they have a broad set of skills which can be transferred into many areas. They view this as a positive employment feature, whereas in the past there have been accusations that occupational therapists are the jack of all trades and masters of none, or gap fillers (Fortune, 2000). They comment, however,

that occupational therapists need to be extolling the power of occupation, and express frustration at the lack of broader knowledge concerning their role. They are proud of their unique perspective and are clear that this is a central part of their function:

I still think the, there's no, people still don't understand how powerful occupation is and I think that's our key...that's what we are, that's our identity, occupation how can we use that and I still think that needs more promotion (Mark, focus grp.3, lines 480-484)

Whilst this statement doesn't capture in its entirety how the participants operationalise their professional identity, it does highlight their confidence in their profession. This clarity in their role contrasts to the findings of Turpin, Rodger and Hall (2012), who claim that some occupational therapy graduates experience difficulty explaining this. Despite what has been written concerning lack of clarity amongst students about their professional identity (Hodgetts, Hollis, Triska et al., 2007; Turner, 2011) it seems that these participants are clear about their unique role. They are unanimous about the centrality of occupation in their professional thinking.

Back to where we started

The final sub-theme is concerned with the ending of their undergraduate professional education. The participants reflect upon their final weeks of the course and consider their future. There is some irony as they reflect upon their feelings and note that they have gone full circle. As they anticipate moving into employment as qualified occupational therapists, Eva claims:

It's terrifying. It's so exciting. When I think about it you get like butterflies 'cos it's scary and exciting all at the same time isn't (Eva, focus grp.3, 1598-1599).

There is a real mixture of emotions here, terrifying in terms of responsibility and expectations, yet also the exhilaration and anticipation of new challenges.

This reminded me of Kath's opening statement about it being daunting, and this was shared with the participants. Ellie agreed with my assertion:

Yeah.....I think it's fear of the unknown again 'cos we don't know what's gonna... happen next (Ellie, focus grp.3 Line 1611).

There is apprehension as they contemplate an unknown future and more life transitions. The word "again" here makes reference to when similar feelings were experienced at the beginning of the course.

They raise the question whether is this end or the beginning of their journey.

7.4.2 Finding the Driftwood

The second super-ordinate theme that emerged was "Finding the Driftwood". The participants identified issues along their journey and how they managed them. In the Kawa metaphor, driftwood is the term given to assets and liabilities, personal attributes and resources which can be helpful, or an obstruction, for example, special skills or talents, or a particular character trait, or life situation. As the metaphor suggests, driftwood is temporary in nature and when pushed up against the rocks it may help re-establish the flow by removing an obstruction or cause further obstruction.

The participants note that they all had different challenges. However, what is really important here is the determination that they describe as they learn to overcome their issues. The language that Mark uses is forceful, as he describes "knocking it down, and "attacking it head on", it conjures up the picture of a battle. Mark is quick to identify his allies in this battle, things which can help him along the way. He comments that you need to use what is there, in Mark's case it was other people and the support he got from his colleagues. All the participants agree; the supportive peer group has been a big asset for them. It seems, though, that it took a while for the cohort to develop trust with each other, and that this largely developed by the third year.

7.4.3 Doing It: The Final Placements.

As in the previous focus groups and interviews, the significance that the participants all attach to practice placements comes up time and time again.

The participants debate at what point they actually feel ready to be an OT. Some of them feel that this happened at the end of the second year, but acknowledge that this is only partial, and that they would only feel confident going into a similar service. Others feel the final placement is the one that matters; that this provides opportunity to consolidate all their professional education. Ellie states:

A lot rides on the final placement in third year...I thought eight weeks is, that's a lot to fit in, you know, that's a big step to take. But actually when you, you're getting in there and you're doing it, it (focus grp.3, lines 665-677).

The significance of "doing" is emphasised here. Getting involved helps the students realise they do actually know what they are doing. There is a sense of wonderment here. It is a high stake, high pressure environment, but achievement brings satisfaction.

The importance of being given autonomy and responsibility is also highlighted earlier in the discourse. Eva expresses a very similar sentiment to Ellie, but highlights anxious anticipation:

I think at first it's terrifying because you don't think, you know, I don't, I didn't feel like I knew enough to do it, but then when you actually get given it and you have to do it, you realise that you do know (Eva, focus grp. 3, Lines, 611-613).

This sentiment of being given autonomy and responsibility as a means of enhancing student performance is a recurring theme. The participants also highlight the value of role-emerging placements. Elaine and Ellie share their realisation of the importance of structure, professionalism and professionalism boundaries; it is when these are absent that they especially notice the significance:

And when it's not there and, and you're there you're like, how can this not be happening, you know (Elaine, focus grp.3, lines 510-511).

Mark also notes the impact his role emerging placement had on his professional thinking:

it's just broadened my understanding and my whole view of everything (Mark, focus grp.3, lines 531-532).

Both these sentiments are referring to implicit knowledge, not explicit scientific reasoning. It is knowledge used to inform situational reasoning, making sense of the context. Perhaps then, role-emerging placements are useful in encouraging students to think in different ways, seeing the importance of systems, developing application of their own professional reasoning in differing contexts, and thereby enhancing confidence in their professional identity.

A comment at this juncture by Kath, is imbued with meaning on different levels:

Yeah don't you find to us, a lot of things are just common sense but people... just would not and we take it for granted because that is just the way we think (Kath, focus grp.3, lines 516-522).

She is talking about the subtlety of occupational therapy here. Because occupational therapy deals with everyday activities or occupations, it often appears to the untrained eye to be common-sense and therefore perhaps does not always get full recognition.

Kath uses the pronoun "us"- she is addressing the focus group- but I suspect that she is referring to the broader profession here, and her inclusive language suggests that she sees herself and all the other participants in the focus group as belonging to this wider community.

The phrase "the way we think" suggests that occupational therapists think in way which differentiates them from other health and social care workers, and possibly that this "thinking" is distinctive and shared by all members of the profession. How this is enacted is not established, but it does suggest that Kath believes there is a commonality

in how occupational therapists think. A sense of pride and belonging is inferred in this statement.

7.4.4 I am an OT.

This final theme refers to the participants developing a sense of belonging to their profession and celebrating their professional membership. The participants all share frustration at the lack of public knowledge of occupational therapy; some of them suggest that they still struggle to explain what occupational therapy is. However, Eva refutes this perspective, claiming that she had lots of experience on her placement in a paediatric setting. This links closely with the discussion they had previously, in terms of how they realise that their own understanding of occupational therapy has changed. Mark, again, demonstrates a strong commitment to the power of occupation.

The participants consider their future and whether they are going to apply for occupational therapy jobs. It is interesting to note that they consider their skills can be applied more broadly than just to their immediate profession. However, they demonstrate pride in their achievement and note that they do not intend to settle for jobs which do not attract similar remuneration, as they feel they have worked hard to gain their qualification:

I'm a bit precious about that... and that's what we've done (Eva, focus grp.3, line 770).

Eva conveys a real sense of pride and achievement. "A bit precious" is an understatement, as she considers the successful completion of her professional education. This sense of pride in their chosen profession is mirrored in their earlier discussions about the serious nature of the course and its commanding of respect from their friends and families, along with the pressure that they put upon themselves. The participants perceive their chosen profession as a "good job" (Mark line 1212, Elaine 1244). Not only are they proud of their professional status in terms of "being precious", but they also feel they will gain altruistic rewards:

And that's a good, in a sense that's good job in't it, you, you, you're earning good money to look after yourself, your family and you're getting something outta your job and that's what you want (Mark, focus grp.3 1224-1226).

Elaine describes the rewards she gets:

when I see someone progress or something, that we've done, I just get so excited, I can like hardly contain meself... (Elaine, focus grp.3, 1232-1234)

Elaine effectively conveys enthusiasm and passion for her vocation. This was also echoed by Ellie, as she considered her progress when working with people autonomously on placement.

The intrinsic rewards that the participants describe, demonstrate congruence between their personal and professional values:

my personality fits well within the ethos of the profession I think (Mark, focus grp.3, line 1209).

The focus group considered how they changed to meet the professional demands of the course. Eva and Mark, being younger members of the group, note that they needed to mature quickly and found some conflict between being a student and being an occupational therapy student. Mark feels the conflict he experienced was due to himself, and his current stage in life:

I think to be fair I don't know if it's the course, I think it's me as well... (Mark, focus grp.3, lines 382-384).

Again he speaks in the present tense here, suggesting that this is still work in progress. All participants note that they have altered as the course has progressed, whether that has been maturing or learning not to judge others, or gaining new skills; but there has been a coming together of like minds. This felt conciliatory in mood, as though all participants wanted to explain themselves to each other.

Finally, the participants consider their sense of being an occupational therapist. This is experienced differently amongst the group. Some of them felt that this happened at the end of the second year on placement, and others felt it wasn't until the middle of the third year when things came together. Ellie, however, felt that she finally felt like an occupational therapist when she went to conference. Her confidence was increased, as she realised that she already knew things which were new to others. There is a sense here of being part of something bigger, belonging to the wider profession.

Mark experienced efficacy when he was working in inter-professional learning groups with other students. He felt that he was able to make a difference by offering an occupational therapy perspective.

Eva sums up:

It's been amazing and it's been hard and brilliant and we've got a job out of it, well not a job, but we've got a profession out of it (Eva, focus grp.3. lines 1910-1911).

In summary, this focus group has explored their experiences over the three years of their occupational therapy education. Supporting their discussions with drawing the Kawa model they reflected upon their journey. They considered their developing competence, confidence, changing attitudes and perspective and, most importantly, claimed the power of occupation for themselves and their profession.

This group had touched me as a tutor, rather than a researcher and I made the following reflexive commentary after facilitating this group:

This lively, celebratory focus group reinforced to me why I do this job. I was absolutely delighted to be able to witness their achievements, and listen to their journeys, knowing that I have supported them through some of their difficulties. I felt like a proud parent. Their pride in themselves was a joy to behold. Three years is long time, especially for a school leaver (a fifth of their entire life to date) and the journey is full of unexpected twists and turns. Watching each person develop and grow into a healthcare professional for the next generation makes my job worthwhile. I particularly enjoy working with the school leavers, supporting them to grow, mature, develop their personal and professional skills as they unfurl and blossom. Some students had more challenges but they established solidarity and offered each other emotional and intellectual support, as they addressed their various personal challenges.

Mark vividly described some of the challenges he had to overcome, and as I listened and re-listened and read and re-read the transcripts, I wanted to know what was it that drove Mark on when many would have given up. Was it the family support? The very important comment he made about the values of the professions matching his own? How then can we encourage that tenacity and motivation in other students? Similarly, Kath had also said there were times she felt like giving up, however she had previous experience to draw upon. Encouraging students to keep going and helping them manage their challenges is a key role for me as a personal tutor and I often feel frustrated at the limited ways there are to support students. Listening to these stories will at least, I hope, help me to be more sensitive and understanding to future students.

7.4.1 Preliminary discussion

The group reflected upon their journey and raised similar themes to that which Lizzie raised in her final interview, as well as those raised in the previous focus groups. In comparing the themes of Lizzie's final interview and this focus group, two of the themes are very similar; "The Journey" and "I am an OT". As Lizzie did, they reviewed their experiences over the last three years, beginning with their initial experiences and overwhelming feelings. They also contemplated their future possibilities, but with

perhaps more confidence than Lizzie; for Lizzie it was an abyss, whereas, for the focus group, it was the beginning of yet another adventure.

They also considered their professional identity and sense of being an occupational therapist. The “peaks and troughs” of their professional identity formation again comes to the fore. This is in line with the premise that occupational therapy professional identity should never stagnate, and needs to be responsive to temporal, political, and contextual influences (Mackey, 2014). This is, problematic for embryonic therapists, who struggle to make sense of complexity and cope with ambiguity. Additionally, as the participants identified that their professional identity formation is also influenced by things such as external validation, feelings of confidence and competence and personal congruence, this, then becomes even more problematic. The professional identity formation for student occupational therapists is not a linear progression, but a complex evolving process. Turner (2011) calls for occupational therapists to have a cast iron professional identity, and indeed, this is certainly needed in the context of target-driven, highly politicised financially-driven services. However, perhaps a better metaphor, recognising the ongoing development needs of both the profession as a whole and its emerging members, is one of a willow tree with a strong, dense root system, which can stand firm in the face of adversity and storms, but be flexible and responsive to changing wind directions.

The focus group considered their placement experience, covering very similar issues around belonging, fitting in, and autonomy, to those considered in focus group two. Their “doing”; placement experiences reinforced their sense of being an occupational therapist. They considered the impact of non-traditional placements. Lizzie she wished she had had an opportunity for a non-traditional placement, because she felt she had to try and fit into a busy service area, whereas in a non-traditional placement she might have been able to work from her own perspective more. The focus group felt that these types of placements reinforced their understanding of the importance of structure, boundaries and professionalism. It helped them value their skills and gave them the confidence to apply these in novel situations. Clarke, Martin, de Visser and Sadlo (2014) suggest that role-emerging placements help students embed their occupational philosophy into their practice and help them to become agents for change. However, they do question the longer term impact, and whether this will lead to disillusionment when practicing in traditional settings.

This perhaps links into some of the concerns that Ellie explored, when she said she didn’t want to get trapped into narrow ways of working. Whilst reflecting upon the experience of non-traditional placements, Kath also commented on the subtlety of occupational

therapy reasoning, which simply would not be evident to lay people. Turner and Alsop (2015) support this view, theorising that the unique core skills of reasoning concerning occupational needs, performance and outcomes are largely invisible. The challenge to occupational therapists is to make explicit the implicit reasoning, to support the visible practice.

The participants share their frustration at the lack of public understanding and awareness of the profession. Lizzie also considered this in the first and second interview. indeed, lack of public recognition of occupational therapists continues to be an issue for the profession (Turner, 2011). The participants have clearly articulated their commitment to their chosen profession. They have considered the fact that it is a worthwhile profession and congruent with their own personal values. The lack of understanding and, in some cases, de-valuing of occupational therapy is likely to have a big impact on students. In terms of social identity theory, dominant more powerful groups (in this case public or other healthcare professionals) are making judgements on a group of people (student occupational therapists) whose own personal identity conflicts strongly with those judgements. In occupational science terms, occupation is important in expanding possibilities and creating social recognition (Lahberte-Rudman, 2002), therefore the impact of lack of recognition must be particularly acute for student occupational therapists, who value their own occupations, and have assumed a professional philosophy that is congruent with their own beliefs. The consequence of undervaluing their profession is a dismissal of their core identity. For students, this is also a dismissal of their aspiration and achievement. It is a high priority that students develop the skills to explain their profession to the uninitiated.

The participants reflect how their own understanding of the profession has changed and developed. It is to be expected that attitudes and understanding will change (McKenna et al. 2001; Björklund, Svensson, 2006), as knowledge and expertise is developed. The participants emphasised their commitment to occupationally focused practice. This commitment seems to have been reinforced by completing non-traditional placements. It is heartening to hear the participants be bold and confident in claiming their clear understanding of occupational philosophy. This is in contrast to some of the more dated research (Fortune, 2000; Tryssenaar & Perkins, 2001) which suggested that graduates had difficulty realising their professional identity and working within occupational paradigms. Perhaps the occupational paradigm has now come of age (Turner, 2011) and is embedded into practice (Brown & Bourke-Taylor, 2012), although this may still be work in progress (Gillen & Greber, 2014). Certainly, these graduates are keen to espouse occupational philosophy, but how this will be affected in practice is beyond the remit of this study.

Finally, the participants anticipate their future employment with excitement and ambition. They are proud that they have chosen a worthwhile profession and comment upon the fulfilment they experience when they see service users succeed. Similar feelings of satisfaction and fulfilment were reported by Clarke et al. (2014) in their IPA study on the impact of role-emerging placements suggesting these feelings can lead to a more authentic professional identity. The participants have broad ideas about their future employment, not confined to working in areas of traditional practice, but are open minded, keen to explore all avenues. Whilst this can be seen as a positive development for the profession Clarke et al. (2014) question the longer term impact this may have on statutory services. Quite rightly, the participants are immensely proud of their achievements and success and state that they are not going to settle for simply any job, but want to keep their focus on occupational therapy jobs. Even when the position may not be titled as an Occupational Therapist they want recognition and to be valued and remunerated for their skills.

7.4.6. Focus group three summary

The final focus group added depth to previous focus groups and the individual interviews, but many of the themes and ideas had already been explored, suggesting that data saturation has been reached. The group reviewed their journey, comparing and contrasting their rocks and driftwood. They questioned whether they were at the end or the beginning of their journey and suggest that they have come full circle. They noted that a significant support factor in their tenacity has been the support provided by each other. This celebratory focus group sees the participants eagerly anticipating their future with confidence and a strong professional identity. They claim they feel that they are occupational therapists and that this is enhanced by their doing when given autonomy on placement. There is a sense of belonging to the wider professional community, and this is tempered by an understanding that the reality of practice may lead to some tension between their ideals and service constraints. They have a strong commitment to occupational philosophy and values, which are congruent with their own beliefs. Unlike Lizzie, they are looking forward to the future with confidence.

7.5. Chapter Summary.

In this chapter I have presented the findings and developed a preliminary discussion of the three focus groups.

Focus group 1 (beginning of yr 2: 3 participants)	Focus group 2 (Beginning of yr 3: 2 participants)	Focus group 3 (final day of the course: 5 participants)
Exploring motivations	Placement is where it is all gonna click	The Journey Beginnings Going round in circles Back to where we started
Overwhelming first year Concerns about coping on the course Riverbed - other demands	Managing the Ebbs and Flows	Finding the Driftwood
My river is flowing	Changing sense of self	Doing It: The Final Placements
It's really good when you're out on placement		I am an OT.
Feeling like an OT		

Table 6: Showing the super-ordinate and sub-themes for the focus groups

In order to emphasise the lived experience and to give voice to the participants, I have limited the interpretation. However, it was pertinent to develop some further discussion to develop the longitudinal analysis and to situate the individual interviews. Developing lived experience from focus groups is challenging, and is inevitably influenced by both the researcher and other group participants. However, the group dynamics have, in this case, added an additional dimension to the research. In all cases the participants exhibited significant personal disclosure, showing that they were comfortable and safe with each other. Given that they have been working as a relatively small group for three years, sharing many trials and tribulations and also developing significant personal skills in terms of team working and non-judgemental attitudes, this was to some extent anticipated. Whilst the discussions were not as personal as the individual interviews, there was still space for individual narratives to be heard, but these were co-constructed by the other group members. There was much consensus building but equally, difference did emerge, and the participants were able to explore their differing perspectives.

One of the key findings, supporting Lizzie's experience, was the non-linear aspects of professional identity formation. The subtle transformation, the butterfly emerging from the chrysalis as the students gradually relinquish their old selves and emerge as occupational therapists was apparent. Perhaps what was more evident in the focus groups was the sense of belonging. The participants spent time exploring their involvement with the wider occupational therapy community, considering their sense of belonging to the profession. A common theme related to this sense of belonging was that of the participants' frustration at the lack of public knowledge of their profession.

Considering that the students are passionate about their vocation, to discover that in some cases this is not recognised or valued, may have an impact upon their fragile professional identity.

The Kawa model was only drawn in the final focus group. This focus group was concerned primarily with reviewing the whole journey and, therefore, it was useful to capture the very many different perspectives and experiences that the participants considered.

The next chapter draws together the findings from the interviews and focus groups.

Chapter Eight Discussion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter brings Lizzie's interviews and focus groups together demonstrating the resonance between the two data sets. In so doing the credibility of the research is reinforced. In Chapter Six, keeping with the idiographic focus of IPA, the individual interviews were considered with a preliminary discussion providing a longitudinal perspective. Chapter Seven considered the findings from the focus groups and also developed an idiographic and longitudinal focus. This chapter will explicate the three overarching themes and discuss them in relation to the extant literature.

IPA, in the hermeneutic tradition, emphasises the importance of understanding the whole as well as the parts, neither is mutually exclusive and the analysis of both is essential to developing multiple perspectives (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.28). The hermeneutic circle proposes that the analysis is iterative, moving back and forth, inwards and outwards as different layers and understandings are developed. This chapter brings together the data into three overarching themes, established by merging 27 super-ordinate themes from the analysis, (fifteen from the individual interviews and twelve from the focus groups). The three overarching themes are:

- Establishing Occupational Coherence
- Managing Occupational Adaptation
- Claiming a new Identity

These themes were identified using the same processes described in Chapter Five to determine the super-ordinate themes. Following Gee (2011, p.19) I grouped and regrouped the super-ordinate themes written on post-it notes. Having considered Wilcock's (2007) framework of *doing*, *being*, *becoming*, and *belonging* I thought similar overarching themes would emerge from the analysis. However, no amount of organising and reorganising the post-it notes seemed to follow that framework. I realised that I was trying to impose an external framework on the data rather than letting the themes emerge. Once I let go of this framework and my own pre-conceived ideas the three overarching themes emerged as I focused on the essence of the super-ordinate themes. The first theme *Establishing Occupational Coherence*, was immediately striking. It highlights how the participants constructed a socially acceptable account of themselves as they made sense of their professional journey. The second theme which emerged as I studied the post-it notes was *Claiming a New Identity*, containing super-ordinate themes such as *Feeling like an OT*, and *I am an OT*. This theme conveyed elation as the participants celebrated their achievements. Finally, the remaining super-ordinate themes

were gathered together and these reflected dealing with transitions, challenges and a changing sense of self, hence I labelled this overarching theme *Managing Occupational Adaptation*. This final theme to emerge felt ponderous; it reflected some of the difficult processes the participants encountered as they developed their professional competence and confidence. The themes are presented in this chapter as they are represented in the participant's narratives rather than in the order which they emerged from the literature. As explained above *Establishing Occupational Coherence* and *Claiming a New Identity* were prominent concepts which "leapt out" as I studied the data, whereas *Managing Occupational Adaptation* took me some time to think, and rethink. Once I had established the three themes it was then possible to present them in a way which reflected the longitudinal development of the participants. As emphasised in Chapters Six and Seven professional identity development is a circular iterative process rather than a straightforward linear progression. Table 7 presents the organisation of the super-ordinate themes into the overarching themes. The longitudinal aspect of the study is demonstrated, highlighting the point in the data collection the super-ordinate themes emerged. This table can be read vertically to consider the overarching themes as a whole or horizontally to consider the temporal dimensions, (shown in stages). As before there is much overlap between the themes, they are not mutually exclusive.

Establishing Occupational Coherence	Managing occupational adaptation	Claiming a new identity
Making sense (interview 1)	Transitions coping with change (interview 1)	Significance of practise learning (focus group 1)
Exploring motivation (Focus group 1)	Overwhelming first year (focus group1)	Feeling like an OT (focus group 1)
Taking stock of the journey (interview 3:2)	My river is flowing (Focus group 1)	Beginning into think like an OT (interview 2:1)
The journey (focus group 3)	Moving on (interview 2:1)	I enjoy going on placement (Interview 2:1)
Finding the driftwood (focus group 3)	Second doubt (interview 2:1)	I feel like I think more like an OT now (Interview 2:2)
	Anxiously motivated (Interview 2:2)	Placement is where it is all gonna click (focus group 2)
	Into the big wide world (Interview 2:2)	Being a student/ becoming an OT (interview 3:1)
	Managing the Ebbs and flow (focus group 2)	Thinking and feeling like an OT (Interview 3:2)
	Changing sense of self (focus group 2)	Doing it The final placements (focus group 3)
	The big abyss (Interview 3:1)	I am an OT (focus group 3)
	Dip in the journey (Interview 3:1)	
	The big abyss (Interview 3:2)	

Table 7 showing how the super-ordinate themes have been organised into overarching themes

Stage one (interview 1 focus group1)

Stage two (interview 2:1, 2:2, focus group 2)

Stage three (Interview 3:1, Interview 3:2, Focus group 3)

8.2 Establishing occupational coherence.

Establishing Occupational Coherence featured in year one and year three of both Lizzie's and the focus group's narratives. This was a reflective theme; the participants positioned themselves at the beginning of their journey reflecting upon what had influenced their decision to study occupational therapy, along with reviewing their journey. This overarching theme was concerned with how the participants made sense of their developing professional identity, what influenced their decision to pursue occupational therapy, and how this fitted in with their ongoing occupational narrative.

Given Christiansen's premise (1999), that occupation is the principal means through which people express their personal identity, any change in occupation could be expected to bring about turmoil and uncertainty until the new occupation is integrated into their identity. Similarly, occupations which are already a key part of a person's identity role and routine may take higher precedent in an attempt to achieve stability (Blair, 2000). This over-arching theme captured the difficulties that the participants encountered as they adjusted to their new situation.

The participants explained what influenced them to pursue occupational therapy, including parents, social contacts, and life experiences. Other research also reported similar influences affecting occupational choices making (Craig, et al., 2001; Price, 2008; Richardson et. al., 2002). This thesis shows the importance the participants placed on situating their new unfolding professional identity within their own unique life story. They went to great lengths to present a coherent story explaining their motivations and influences on their career choice and explained how this was congruent with their personal values. Christiansen (2014) highlights the role of occupations in integrating events over time, therefore it makes sense that the participants needed to embed this new identity into their ongoing construction of self. This is supported by the work of Wiseman and Whiteford (2007), who used life history research as a method of exploring coherent identity construction across the life span.

The participants highlighted the significance in establishing a logical progression or coherence in career decisions, in order to present a plausible self. This premise is supported by the professional entity project (Reid, Dahlgren, Petocz, & Dahlgren, 2008) which suggested that professional identity amongst students could be enhanced by encouraging a personal engagement with learning and integration into other areas of their life. My research found that the participants rationalised the changes they had gone through as evidenced by the *Taking Stock*, and the *Journey* themes. The participants also emphasized the impact that their studies had on other aspects their lives as they considered the difficulties they experienced managing their own occupational balance

especially in the early parts of the course. Encouraging students to develop an ongoing narrative of their professional journey alongside promoting personal and cognitive engagement with the curricular may strengthen their professional identity.

As the participants concluded their course they reflected upon their journey. They celebrated each other's achievements forming their professional story into a coherent whole. They considered future employment and lifestyle possibilities, as they constructed their occupational coherence. Markus and Nurius (1986) consider how possible selves, the imagined future self, supports motivation and goal directed behaviour. Markus and Nurius suggest that past selves enable patterning for future behaviour, whereas the current self adds context for interpreting behaviour affecting the construction of a future self. The example given by Markus and Nurius particularly resonant to this study is a poor exam result may lead to a temporary view of one self as a failure because possible selves are vulnerable and responsive to changes in the environment. There were examples in the both the interviews and in the focus groups when participants discussed the impact or threat of failure on their confidence. Helping students vision their future selves at difficult times may support their progress. Markus & Nurius (1986 p.966) suggest that the possible self is a "bridge between motivation and cognition". My study therefore confirms Markus and Nurius' theory of possible selves, highlighting how past, current and possible future occupational selves are intertwined. The concept of occupational coherence extends Markus and Nurius' theory by focusing on developing ongoing coherent narratives, contextualised and meaningful for the individual. Attention needs to be given to the role of past, present and future selves and also how these selves are experienced and enacted in meaningful occupations which are congruent with personal values. Exposing students to a variety of ways of enacting the occupational therapy profession from the beginning of their journey may help them develop future possible selves enhancing their occupational coherence and professional identity.

This overarching theme highlights how the participants engaged in constructing a coherent story, integrating a new occupational focus into their life, supporting their sense of being along with creating a social impression. They needed to create both internal and external occupational coherence. Lizzie compared herself to others, possibly in an attempt to gauge her progress, position herself and to normalise her experiences. She also placed a great deal of emphasis on external validation throughout her narrative highlighting the importance she placed upon other people's perception of her. The significance of the approval by the experts to novice practitioners has been reported (Clouder, 2003; Mackintosh, 2006). The concept that identity is related to what we do and how other people interpret our actions is embedded into the occupational science literature (Christiansen, 1999; Unruh, 2004). The ability to situate occupations within

the social environment has a large impact on self-image, indeed the premise that the individual essence emerges from social interaction is a fundamental tenant of symbolic interactionism (Falklöf & Haglund, 2010, p.269). It follows then that the participants would want to create a plausible socially acceptable construct of their developing professional identity. However, as Turner and Knight (2015, p.670) warn, care must be taken to ensure that students and practitioners are able to explain themselves by referring to occupational therapy's unique paradigm. This supports Howell's (2009) study, which found that occupational therapy students often experience difficulty explaining their own profession and differentiating it from other health care professions. My study has identified that the ability to give a socially plausible explanation of occupational therapy has an impact on students' professional identity development, confirming Turner and Knight's (2015) findings that facilitating occupational therapy students to explain their profession using occupational focused language must be given priority in the curriculum

8.3 Managing occupational adaptation.

This second overarching theme of occupational adaptation is concerned with managing challenges dealing with transitions and a changing sense of self. Kielhofner (2008, p.107) defines occupational adaptation as "constructing a positive occupational identity and achieving occupational competence over time in the context of one's environment". I explored various ways of naming this theme to convey the ongoing work involved. *Seeking* occupational adaptation suggests that the participants were still trying to resolve the challenges whereas *achieving* occupational adaption sounded as though the job was concluded. I finally settled on *managing* occupational adaptation as this suggests that developing occupational identity and competence is work in progress. This theme is concerned with how the participants develop their occupational competence and subsequent changes to their professional identity while responding to the challenges they encounter on their journey.

Occupational adaptation occurs in all three years, but particularly throughout year two, (see table 7, p.187). It is during the second year that my participants primarily managed their changing sense of self and their competence. In year one they were dealing with the overwhelming confusion and settling themselves into their new occupations whereas in year three they were consolidating their competence and identity. Very loosely then, at this stage in their professional journey they are at the uncomfortable point which Benner (1984) identified as the conscious incompetent, when they start to realise what they don't know. Essentially this overarching theme is concerned with three aspects: how the participants coped with transitions, the challenges they encountered, and their

developing competence. It attempts to capture a sense of confusion as the participants experience an unfolding of new ways of *doing and being* which challenge their current occupational identity.

The transitions are experienced generally in three cycles; namely feeling overwhelmed at the commencement of the course, the ongoing day-to-day issues of adjustment, and then finally another major transition (described evocatively by Lizzie), the *big abyss* which captures new anxieties as the students leave the safety and predictability of education. *Establishing occupational coherence*, as considered in the first overarching theme, is a coping strategy, which helps manage uncertainty and creates stability during turbulent times. Laliberte-Rudman (2002) highlights that having control over occupations is important if the benefits of occupations are to be realised. Her work focused on older people, people with mental health problems and caregivers, whereas my thesis extends these ideas to student occupational therapists. The role of occupations in maintaining normality during times of transition is largely ignored in the literature (Blair, 2000), and needs further research, especially in relation to higher education. A related issue here is the need to experience agency and control. This was discussed in detail by the participants in relation to their practice based experience; they valued the opportunity to practice autonomously. Grant (2013) similarly found that qualified occupational therapists who exercised clinical autonomy and discretion experienced strong professional identity. Whilst Grant's work focused on qualified occupational therapists, my research has a clear message for practice educators to create opportunities for students to experience autonomy within a supportive supervised environment and thereby promoting the professional identity development in students.

These cycles of transition suggest ongoing processes of change, and becoming. My participants certainly experienced difficult challenging times. This was especially apparent in year two as they grappled with self-doubt, and anxiousness. A weakening of professional identity is noted in the literature at the start of the second year (Adams et al., 2006; Boehm, et al., 2015; Turpin, et al., 2012). Boehm et al (2015) suggest that this may be due to a developing awareness amongst students of their limited knowledge. This is also congruent with Benner's (1984) concept of the conscious incompetent learner. The literature also recognises that progress relies on support, feedback and affirmation (Hatchard, Missiuna, 2003; Hitch, Pepin, Stagnitti, 2014). Similarly, in my study, the participants did emphasise the support they had received from others as being instrumental to their success. The participants described their progress as cyclical involving moving backwards and forwards. The fluctuating and cyclical nature of developing professional identity has been widely noted in the literature (Coster et al., 2008; Davies, 2008; McKenna, Scholtes, Fleming & Gilbert, 2001). My study extends

these findings by emphasising the importance of explaining these cyclical processes to students. Helping students to understand, and normalise their experiences may provide reassurance and support during times of difficult transitions. As the participants developed in competence, they described how they managed the tension between “playing the game” (meeting the teams and their educator’s expectations whilst on placement,) described by Clouder (2003), and developing their own ways of being. As students experience their own autonomy, they explore their own unique ways of practicing. Integrating feelings of increased agency and confidence into their occupational identity strengthens professional identity (Clarke, Martin, Sadlo & De-Visser, 2014; Trede, Macklin & Bridges, 2011). From my study it seems that students start to claim their unique identity at the end of year two; however, my participants describe difficulties coming to terms with the complexities and dilemmas of practice. These findings are recognised in the literature which suggests that even students about to graduate need preparing for the dilemmas of practice (Sutton & Griffin, 2000). Furthermore (Robertson & Griffiths, 2009) found that a lack of confidence underpins new graduate’s successful transition into practice. My study highlighted, from a student perspective, the importance of managing occupational adaptation, in terms of their competence and confidence. The theory of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000) considers the need to integrate competency, autonomy and relatedness thus supporting the importance of integrating the concepts of occupational coherence and occupational adaptation in developing robust professional identity. Ways of promoting occupational adaptation amongst student occupational therapists needs further research

8.4 Claiming a New Identity.

The final overarching theme of *claiming a new identity* was a prominent theme. It represents the culmination of the journey as the participants’ claim and celebrate their professional identity. Expressions such as *I am an OT* and *I think more like an OT now* are indicative of how students assert their new identity. Being a facilitator and witnessing their journey made me immensely proud of them, as their hard work and determination ensured their success. As would be expected, given that the theme is concerned with becoming an occupational therapist it gathers momentum as the participants progress on their journey and is the most significant theme in stage three (see table 7, p.187).

In my study, Lizzie begins the process of claiming her new identity narrative in stage two but the focus group consider this earlier in stage one whilst they were on practice. This highlights the idiographic nature of professional identity development. Therefore, Kasar

and Muscari's (2000) premise that professional identity development can be explained using a linear model is not supported by my research.

As discussed in chapter two, occupational identity - a central theme throughout this thesis - is concerned with "becoming who we are through what we do" (Christiansen & Townsend 2014, p.102). This theme captures how students claim their new professional identity as they progress through their course, developing their competence and subsequent confidence, embedding their developing knowledge, skills and, attitudes into their occupational identity. My participants reported four aspects to this new identity, thinking, feeling, being and doing. These themes demonstrate that the participants needed opportunities to practice as autonomous professionals engaging on both emotional and cognitive levels to embed their new professional identity within their occupational identity. These findings are in accord with recent studies around the benefits of role emerging placements which found that increased autonomy on these types of placements strengthened professional identity (Clarke, Martin, de Visser & Sadlo, 2015; Clarke 2014). However, role emerging placements are only one aspect of the curricular and other ways of providing opportunities for autonomous working in undergraduate students needs to be a focus for future research.

Throughout their journey my participants reflected upon their increasing commitment to their chosen profession and espoused compatibility between professional and personal values. Professional and personal values need to be congruent to establish occupation integrity and embed emerging professional identity into their broader occupational identity. In a similar vein, although not from an educational perspective, Pentland and McCall (2008) propose that occupational integrity is concerned with integrating occupational choices and values. They argue that a person's well-being is enhanced when occupational choices and values are congruent, that is the extent to which someone is able to develop an occupational life compatible with their values. Meaningful occupation, as discussed in section 2.4, involves engaging in occupations which are congruent with one's values, providing intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards. The participants consider the positivity they experience when they witness services users achieving, or improving;

it's just the differences that you can make.....to somebody's life are like really important (Lizzie, 2:1, line 496),

When I see someone progress or something, that we've done, I just get so excited, I can like hardly contain meself... and I think that's more than money.... and to me that's a good job (Elaine, 1232-1244)

Such expressions lead them to the conclusion that OT is a "good job", (Mark, focus grp.3, line 1212). The centrality of congruent values which involves, matching of

personal and professional values is evident here. It is a way of life, they embed their professional identity into their occupational identity, they have joined not only a profession but found their vocation. My research has demonstrated that educators need to enable students to articulate why they are occupational therapists alongside what occupational therapists do, they need to explain the means as well as the ends, explaining both their being and their doing.

8.5 Doing, being, becoming and belonging in professional identity formation.

Given that *doing, being, becoming* and *belonging* dimensions within Wilcock's occupational perspective of health were central tenants of this research I had expected that these four dimensions would be prominent in the participant's narratives. However, the four dimensions did not capture the nuances of the participant's life world. Equally it was apparent as the themes emerged that these four dimensions were referred to implicitly throughout the narratives but not necessarily articulated. To separate them out into single concepts would have been imposing an external structure at an early stage of the analysis. It is acknowledged by Cronin–Davis et al. (2009) that it is extremely difficult to bracket external knowledge and assumptions, especially as higher order theoretical interpretations are needed at the analysis stage. I was aware of the ideas of *doing, being, becoming* and *belonging* influencing my thinking throughout the analysis, however, even when developing the higher order themes, these ideas could not be separated and elements of them were noticed in each of the themes.

Whilst Wilcock's dimensions are useful to make sense of the processes influencing professional identity development in occupational therapy they are not representative of the participant's life world whereas the overarching themes of *Establishing Occupational Coherence*, *Managing Occupational Adaptation* and *Claiming a New Identity* reflected the transitions that the participants were dealing with. The dimensions of *doing being becoming* and *belonging* were influential processes within the overarching themes, which were reflective of both the focus group and individual student experience

I did think the four dimensions might be experienced in logical progression, that *doing* perhaps came first as a precursor to the feelings of *being* occupational therapists, and that subsequently the participants would feel that they were taking their place in the OT community of practice thereby meeting their *belonging* needs which would support their *becoming*. However, upon analysis the dimensions appeared interrelated and featured in each of the overarching themes.

Doing, as experienced on placement, seemed to promote both *being* and *becoming*. All my participants viewed their practice placement experience as an essential contributor to

establishing their professional identity. Placement was the place where things were consolidated. The *doing* of occupational therapy provided opportunity for the participants to experience *being* an occupational therapist. The experience of working with and gaining feedback from service users was significant in both experiencing meaning and developing their skills. The participants were particularly concerned about their relationships with their practice educators, looking to them as role models, for feedback and direction. Having responsibility and increasing autonomy promoted their sense of both *doing* and *being*. Dissonance between the realities of practice and academia proved challenging, impacting upon their professional identity and their sense of *belonging*. Similarly understanding the *unspoken rules* (Krusen, 2011), and *learning to play the game* (Clouder, 2003) hindered their sense of *doing, being and becoming*.

The congruence between personal and professional values are recognised as fundamental to being an occupational therapist (Denshire, 2002; Hooper, 2008; Wood, 2004), and my study validates this. Similarly, my participants demonstrated an ability to claim the power of occupation and its centrality in their thinking, demonstrating a commitment to core occupational science philosophy. They experienced conflict between *being* a student and *being* an occupational therapist. The high expectations of health care professionals limited their ability to fully engage with student life and at times they saw themselves as 'different' from other students. Confidence was also an issue affecting their sense of *being* and at times they felt as though they were *acting as* rather than *being* occupational therapists. Role emerging placements have been identified as having an impact upon autonomy, professional development and professional identity formation. In spite of this, my research has raised the difficulty of resolving the *being* and *acting as* an occupational therapist and ways of addressing this need to be explored further. Feeling separate and not belonging to the occupational therapy profession reinforced this sense of acting rather than *being*. Bjorklund (2000) similarly found that nearly qualified occupational therapists tended to *act as* rather experience *being* an occupational therapist. Perhaps it is the lack of power and agency which the students often experience within the practice setting which undermines these feelings. This does contrast sharply however with the final focus group when the participants powerfully claim their new professional identity; "I am an OT". The participants in my study at the point of graduation, appeared confident in their professional identity, they were able to articulate occupational philosophy boldly and use this to explain themselves and their profession. This was a very pleasant surprise for me and contradicts with other research which found that on graduation the professional identity may be fragile (Robertson & Griffiths, 2009; Tryssenaar & Perkins, 2001).

Whilst Hitch, Pepin and Stagnitti (2014) claim *becoming* and *belonging* are less developed than *doing* and *being* they were found to be significant processes in the professional identity formation in my study. In my study *Becoming* was found to be an important contributor to developing occupational coherence. The longitudinal approach of my study highlighted the cyclical nature of professional identity development. Additionally, *becoming* was a fundamental part of my participants managing transitions and developing their skills. My participants also considered other aspects of their life and rites of passage such as passing their driving test, leaving home and changing friendship patterns as part of their professional journey. Positive feedback, from both academia and practice, as a facilitator of *becoming*, featured in all three overarching themes and helped the participants manage their self-doubt. Gahnstrom- Strandqvist, Tham, Josephensson and Borell (2000) found that feedback increased feelings of competence which strengthened professional identity. The final focus group ends with the participants considering whether they are at the end or the beginning of their journey as they seize their new identity. The complex process of developing professional identity is understood to be ongoing dynamic process (Dinmohammadi, Peyrovi & Mehrdad, 2013). Whilst some recent work has been carried out concerning on going professional identity development (Clarke, Martin & de-Visser Sadlo, 2014; Morley, 2009; Toal-Sullivan, 2006) this is an important issue which needs further research.

Belonging is recognised as a prerequisite for clinical learning in nursing by Levett-Jones and Lathlean (2008) and is also noted in the occupational therapy literature (Clouder, 2003; Mackintosh, 2006). Belonging was a key theme in my research. My participants emphasised the importance of fitting into the practice environment, being valued as a member of the team. Belonging increases in strength as the course progresses. Lizzie viewed herself initially as an 'outsider' and as she gained understanding of the philosophy her professional identity and sense of belonging increased.

My participants also recognised the wider community of practice of occupational therapy noting, that they didn't feel part of it early on in their professional education. There is a need to facilitate students' movement from the periphery to the centre of the community of practice. The participants placed great value on the supportive cohort. Promoting belonging within both the immediate and wider community of practice appears to support professional identity development. Belonging is promoted by shared doing and strengthens connectedness (Hitch, Pepin & Stagnitti, 2014). These findings suggest that supporting occupational therapy students to experience *doing* together promoting shared values in both local and wider communities of practice may support their professional identity development.

In summary Wilcock's four dimensions are interrelated processes relevant in facilitating professional identity development. They are each represented in the three overarching themes, which demonstrates that these dimensions are integral, related and ongoing processes in professional identity construction, emphasising how the four dimensions support professional identity development may help students manage the complex, difficult and ongoing journey. Educators need to be aware of the processes involved and create suitable learning opportunities for the four dimensions to be experienced.

8.6 Review of research aims

The discussion of the three overarching themes, bringing the interview and focus group data together, has identified a number of implications for education and practice. These will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Nine, which presents a critical evaluation of both the approach and effectiveness of the research. It is pertinent at this point however to review the research aims, and the contribution to knowledge that this thesis makes. These implications will then be developed in the subsequent chapter.

To begin the review, the research aims, as presented in Chapter One (p.21) are reiterated:

1. To explore the journey that the student occupational therapist undertakes throughout their undergraduate occupational therapy professional education programme.
2. To explore how students' professional identity develops during their undergraduate education.
3. To contribute to original knowledge by using the Kawa metaphor to support data collection. This thesis will critically evaluate the Kawa model as a data collection tool in educational research.

The research has expounded and explored the journey that undergraduate occupational therapy students have undertaken during their initial professional education. It has considered the motivations for such significant life-changing undertakings and explored the perseverance needed to see this through to a successful outcome. It has exposed the personal, cognitive, social and emotional challenges that emerged over the three years.

This research has also explored how students felt their professional identity had developed over the three-year course. The three overarching themes of establishing occupational coherence, managing occupational adaptation and claiming a new identity, have expounded the processes which the students managed. The research has

highlighted the idiographic, and cyclical nature of professional identity development. Using an occupational perspective, it has also considered how the processes of doing, being, becoming and belonging, support professional identity development in occupational therapy students.

The above summary therefore demonstrates that the first two research aims have been met.

Research Aim Three was to evaluate the Kawa model as a data collection tool in educational research. The Kawa model was referred to throughout the data collection in terms of its metaphorical language, assisting the participants to organise their thoughts into a structure with which other people familiar with the Kawa metaphor could identify. Using this metaphor therefore, made their experiences accessible and facilitated the interpretative process. However, the Kawa model was only illustrated by the participants on three occasions; during the first and last interviews and in the final focus group. This proved a useful way of focusing the discussions and promoting reflection, and I was surprised that the participants did not choose to make more use of the visual representation. The partial use of the Kawa model in this particular research does not dismiss it as a useful, relevant data collection tool in occupational therapy research but further evaluation as to its effectiveness is required. This research did demonstrate that it is a useful reflective tool which lends itself to be incorporated into curricular delivery. Research Aim Three was therefore partially met and requires further evaluation. The use of the Kawa model in this research is discussed further in section 9.1 (page 212).

This study has added to the body of knowledge concerning professional identity formation of occupational therapy students. The literature review in Chapter Three considered the research into professional identity focusing upon health care professional identity and more specifically occupational therapy professional identity. It considered the problematic issues that novices face in a profession which is somewhat misunderstood, whereas this thesis has captured the issues that students deal with throughout their professional journey from a longitudinal perspective. Some of the literature reviewed in Chapter Three considered specific aspects of professional identity development in isolation; Bagatell, et al. (2013) and Clarke et al. (2014) focused on issues faced by students in practice placements whereas Morley (2006) and Sutton and Griffiths (2000) were concerned with readiness for practice. My research has captured the whole experience and as such has made a significant contribution to the knowledge base around professional identity development due to its longitudinal approach, and its focus on student experiences. Other studies that have taken a longitudinal approach again focused on a particular aspect of professional identity development: Clouder

(2003) focused on socialisation; Bjorklund (2000) Bjorklund and Svenson (2006) studied the students' understanding of paradigms Therefore, this study is unique with its longitudinal idiographic focus on the journey itself. Additionally, this research has highlighted the importance of using an occupational perspective to understand the processes which occupational therapy students engage with during their professional development. It emphasises the importance of embedding occupational language and thinking throughout the course. This not only promotes understanding of the occupational circumstances of clients but also enables students to apply their developing professional knowledge to their own circumstances, facilitating their own self-awareness and professional identity.

Whilst the focus of this research is the professional identity formation of undergraduate occupational therapy students, it should also have resonance to pre-registration masters students. It also has wider applicability to other health, social care and educational professions as it is concerned with the broader issues of professional socialisation, professional confidence and belonging to a community of practice.

The implications of this knowledge for education, practice, students and curriculum delivery are discussed in sections 9.3.1-9.3.4. in the next chapter.

8.7 Summary

This chapter has brought together the interviews and focus groups into three overarching themes. These themes capture the life world of the participants during their undergraduate journey of becoming occupational therapists. The themes highlight the importance of students integrating occupational transitions into their sense of self. Students need supportive processes in both academic and practice environments to promote the development of their skills and confidence. The impact that these changes have on how students present themselves to others and how they are perceived is fundamental to successful transitions. Finally, my research highlights how the changes need embedding into the student's identity. The values and philosophy of the occupational therapy profession are pervasive and far reaching; the participants highlighted the impact that the course has had on their identity and perception of themselves. They belong to a vocation not just a profession.

Taking an occupational perspective, my study suggests that the dimensions of doing, being, becoming and belonging are interrelated processes which need addressing throughout the journey.

Chapter 9 Critical Evaluation

An essential part of the research process is an evaluation considering the research's strengths and limitations. I have considered this in two phases, a critique of the overall approach of the study, that is the coherence between epistemology and methodology and a consideration of the method and findings using Yardley's four criteria as discussed in section 5.11. This evaluation is my evaluation and as such represents my reflexive engagement with the process.

To remind the reader of the research aims they are re-iterated here:

1. To explore the journey that the student occupational therapist undertakes throughout their undergraduate occupational therapy professional education programme.
2. To explore how the students' professional identity develops during their undergraduate education.
3. To contribute to original knowledge by using the Kawa metaphor to support data collection. This thesis will critically evaluate the Kawa model as a data collection tool in educational research.

9.1 Evaluation of methodology

The congruence between IPA and occupational therapy has already been discussed. However, IPA also proved to be congruent with the longitudinal approach taken in this study. The overarching themes which emerged highlighted the ongoing sense making that the participants were engaged in, they were not simply telling a story or constructing an account but making sense of their experiences and therefore the double hermeneutic approach was a relevant and sensitive research methodology to capture this. The occupational perspective focusing upon doing, being, becoming and belonging, hermeneutic phenomenology focusing upon people's situation, along with the longitudinal process of in situ sense making come together to form a robust and coherent perspective. Whilst IPA is increasingly being used by occupational therapy researchers primarily to explore identity or occupational issues with people experiencing illness or disability there is only limited research using this approach to explore educational issues within occupational therapy. However, as discussed, Clarke, et al. (2014) found IPA useful to explore occupational therapy student experiences in role emerging placements. Although their study focused on only one aspect of becoming an occupational therapist, some of their findings resonated with the findings in my study.

My study however appears to be the only one to date which uses both an IPA approach and an occupational science framework to capture the ongoing process of becoming an occupational therapist.

My study has developed a detailed rich interpretation of the journey of becoming an occupational therapist. It does not claim to be absolute, but it has identified possibilities. Above all else this study has highlighted the intensely idiographic and nuanced nature of the journey of becoming an occupational therapist. It has interpreted one person's experience situated alongside other people's experiences within a similar context. It has captured the intensively idiographic story of becoming an occupational therapist whilst at the same time broadened issues from the particular to the general. I have told the story, in a detailed rich and evocative way to honour the participant's time and commitment which was freely given and to reconstruct a convincing and relevant interpretation. I hope that this has resonance for students, occupational therapists, educators, and the wider health, social care and educational community.

IPA has been criticized for being too descriptive and cautious (Larkin, et al., 2006). However, IPA provides a means to position its interpretative claims within a specific context and then make sense of this, i.e. what does this mean for this person in this context? (Larkin, et al., 2006 p. 117) and in so doing can foreground the participant's voice whilst encouraging the lived experience to be interpreted (Cronin-Davis, et al, 2009). It can therefore result in research which portrays the richness and ambiguity of lived experience within a complex social world (Finlay, 2011). Initially my analysis tended to the descriptive however with supervisory support and feedback I deepened the analysis to be interpretative to capture the complexity and nuances of the lived experience. I was perhaps too cognitively focused, which IPA may tend to encourage with novice researchers (Finlay, 2011), and needed support to focus more on the holistic embodied experience. IPA does provide a structured step by step approach which I found useful. These guidelines could be criticised as stifling creativity, leading to a mechanical approach (Finlay, 2011; Gee, 2011), but the structured process helped me to move from the descriptive to interpretative, and whilst time consuming, gave me reassurance that I was being thorough and attentive to the data.

Longitudinal research designs are congruent with IPA capturing developments over time, however they can be problematic. Recall, especially around emotive and challenging events, can be difficult or unreliable resulting in distortions. I gathered data at regular intervals to try to minimise this but there were still some inevitable time delays. Drop outs are a frequently reported issue in longitudinal research design, which indeed happened in my study (I originally had a sample of two) however this led to a

modification of my research design resulting in a single case study approach which ultimately added additional strength and my study embedding the phenomenological understanding of possibilities. The inconsistency of membership of the focus group is perhaps a weakness in the study but a pragmatic approach was taken to ensure timely convening of the group throughout the study.

I have taken the bold move of using a single case methodology. This is not without criticism mainly from a positivistic paradigm concerned with numbers and representation. However, as I discussed in section 5.3, not only are IPA and single case study methodology compatible there are calls for their increased use in both occupational therapy (Salminen, et al., 2006,) and in doctoral level IPA studies (Smith, et al., 2009). Single case methodology focuses on existence not incidence (Yin, 2014) as IPA explores possibilities rather than fact. Situating the single case of Lizzie within her cohort by the additional use of the focus groups has added understanding whilst at the same time refuting any criticism of insufficiency. Indeed, the complexity of the data and the amount of it was overwhelming for a single researcher, resulting in the need for selectivity. Details, depth and sensitivity would inevitably have been lost if an increase in participants had been sought.

I expected the Kawa model to be a more significant feature of the research than it actually was. It was used primarily as an adjunct to data collection although initially I thought it would be the main data collection tool. As the research developed it was used primarily as a metaphor. Having a shared language with a symbolic element helped the participants construct a shared understanding. Its usefulness as a reflective tool was demonstrated as both Lizzie and the focus group constructed their final narrative; it helped the participants make sense of their story. I did initially think that I would use the metaphor to order my analysis identifying the participant's rocks and driftwood however this was too limiting and didn't capture the idiographic life world of the participants. It felt that I was trying to squeeze the data into apriori categories rather than allowing the themes to emerge from the literature as demanded by IPA and hermeneutic phenomenology. I do not think that I used the Kawa model as effectively as I might and should have taken a firm commitment to this or left it out in its entirety. I think that I tried to do too much and should have focused on the IPA allowing the data to emerge without the use of the Kawa. The use of the Kawa model could be a separate study perhaps more appropriately situated within an emancipatory framework focusing on visual analysis.

9.2 Evaluation of method

I have used Yardley's principles of validity to evaluate my method as these appealed to my critical realist position and are congruent with IPA and recommended by Smith (2008). Before considering the principles in turn I would like to offer some thoughts about the effectiveness of my research endeavour. My position as an insider researcher, as considered in chapter 4 (section 4.4) was a fundamental aspect of this research and as such needs critical exploration. Undertaking my own undergraduate occupational therapy education at the tender age of eighteen was a life changing process for me. Leaving home, making new friends, entering the world of work albeit it as a student, working alongside people twice my age, and being confronted with the harsh reality of some people's lives and the devastating impact of illness and disability all were challenging situations. Yet it was also a time of excitement, fun, and expanding horizons, as I moved up and down the country every six weeks for another placement. Inevitably as I have I relived this journey with the participants it has evoked my own memories. IPA does not demand bracketing, as Husserl's descriptive phenomenology does, but follows the hermeneutic tradition recognising that this is a difficult task and that the researcher's own views along with the interaction between the researcher and participant are integral to the research. A phenomenological attitude of openness and self-awareness is called for (Finlay, 2011). Therefore, the research was co-constructed and throughout I tried to be aware of my influence both as an occupational therapist, and a lecturer. Reflexivity and discussion in supervision were important in helping explore these influences.

It is also relevant to consider my own journey throughout the research. It has been extremely problematic completing a PhD part time whilst having a very demanding, time consuming professional job and significant caring responsibilities. These issues have led to a protracted research journey which was not as fluid and focused as I hoped. It has meant that I have identified intensely with the participant's organisational issues and self-doubt. I have learnt throughout the process to really listen. Using phenomenology has helped me put my taken for granted experience aside and look somewhat deeper into people's stories. Whilst as an occupational therapist I considered myself as individually focused, I think that completing this research has revisited this and reminded me to engage on a deeper level. I have also become more aware of my own ontological and epistemological assumptions. As discussed in Chapter Four I initially considered myself a relativist but now understand that I have a more critical-realist world view. I hope this will enable me to continue to develop non-dualistic approach to my life and professional work.

I have identified a number of pragmatic issues around data collection which I feel could have improved. I considered my interviewing skills to be well developed, given my practice experience, however research interviewing requires a different lens. More careful thought around my questioning and development of my interview technique may have assisted in more searching focused questions. The first interview was held late in term two. An earlier interview may have been more effective in capturing the overwhelming emotions of the initial weeks of the course from Lizzie's perspective, although it may at that time have been too raw for her to engage. Similarly, if I were to repeat the research I would refine the timings of the focus groups, ensuring one was held at the end of year one. Consistency in the focus group would also improve the coherence of the participant's narrative

More critical evaluation of the study using Yardley's principles of validity is now considered.

9.2.1 Sensitivity to context.

Yardley's first category is concerned with how the study is situated within the existing theory and literature. I have drawn upon the existing work in occupational science to situate the study. There is an increasing amount of research which has drawn upon the occupational perspective of health however there is a limited amount which has actually applied these principles to research its own professional behaviours. My study's use of both an occupational perspective and a data collection tool (developed by its own members) establishes contextual sensitivity. Ethical considerations, as discussed in section 5.12 are also an important aspect of contextual sensitivity. Given my insider researcher position I needed to manage power differentials as much as possible but these will inevitably have impacted on my findings. Using email to recruit participants rather than face to face was an attempt to avoid coercion. The participants constructed their narrative for my ears. However, I attempted to minimise acquiescence by reassuring the participants that I wanted to hear their voice. I had anticipated that drawing the Kawa model would dissipate the intensity of the interview, providing a visual focus drawing immediate attention away from the participants onto the emerging drawing, but only limited use of the visual aspects of the Kawa were utilised as discussed above. I also attempted to put the participants at their ease by conducting the research in a familiar seminar room which was private but more neutral territory than in my office. As discussed in section 8.7.1 above I have attempted to show sensitivity to the situation in my analysis by avoiding as much as possible my own preconceived meanings and remaining open to other interpretations allowing the themes to emerge.

9.2.2 Commitment and rigour

The longitudinal approach facilitated a rigorous approach to the study ensuring that a comprehensive data set was obtained over three years. Detailed analyses are presented and supported throughout with extensive quotes from the participants demonstrating in-depth engagement. Whilst using a single case study approach could be criticised for insufficiency there was so much data that it was almost overwhelming. Having more participants might have identified stronger patterns, or even disconfirming cases, but it would have inevitably meant that less detailed analysis could have taken place and some of the idiographic nuances may have been lost.

The longitudinal approach ensured there was continuity throughout the interviews. After the initial interview each subsequent interview began with reflection and recap over previous discussions. I did not, however, seek participant feedback after the detailed analysis as I felt this was problematic especially given my role as an insider researcher. I was unsure whether the participants would question my interpretations and felt it may be somewhat tokenistic. Given the timescales involved and the participant's progression I was also aware as Finlay (2011, p.223,) warns what may have been true for them at the time of interview may no longer ring true for them at a later date as they had moved on in their professional identity formation.

9.2.3 Coherence

I have emphasized the methodological coherence of my study in section 8.7.1 and this coherence has also been carried through into the method. I have become aware whilst progressing through my PhD that I tend to fall back into positive language and thinking and needed to use supervision and reflexivity to guard against this. Of course any findings in this research, given the epistemological context and methodological approach are of emergent possibilities rather than absolute truth.

I have attempted to ensure that the work is transparent by developing a clear, convincing argument supported with detailed data analysis demonstrating how the interpretations arose. I have provided detailed explanations of the context and the situation of the participants, along with interview schedules. Exemplars of transcripts for both an individual interview and focus group are included in the appendices along with tables embedded into the text to enhance transparency and a paper trail.

Finally, my ongoing use of reflexivity has attempted to demonstrate how the research has been co-constructed.

9.2.4 Impact and importance.

Carrying out this PhD has had impact upon my professional development, both in terms of the process and product. I have gained an enormous amount of knowledge and skills, which is difficult at this point in time to articulate in its entirety. Essentially this includes learning to withhold judgement and preconceived ideas and approaching situations and data with fresh eyes. It has highlighted for me the intensely idiographic nature of each student's development. Whilst this is not new knowledge it can often get lost in the business of packed professional curricula so this opportunity to slow down and claim afresh my underpinning professional approach and knowledge has been invaluable. I will approach my personal tutor responsibilities with increased sensitivity being aware of how tiring and complex student's professional journeys can be.

In these ways, I would suggest that the research findings will have relevance to all occupational therapy educators I also hope that this study will have impact and relevance for students, that they will be able to identify and normalise some of their own unique experiences, and that this will provide support for them to build strong professional identities based upon an occupational perspective.

9.3 Conclusion

This is the only longitudinal IPA study to date exploring professional identity development in occupational therapy students throughout the entirety of their undergraduate journey from enrolment on their professional course through to graduation. It is also the first study to use an occupational perspective to examine professional identity formation amongst occupational therapy students.

The study has suggested that there are three tasks which occupational therapy students need to focus upon in order to build a strong professional identity; establishing occupational coherence, managing occupational adaptation and claiming a new identity. These three tasks are supported by the occupational processes of doing, being, becoming and belonging.

Practice education is understandably central to professional identity development and students report when they are afforded opportunities to experience autonomy in practice education their professional identity is enhanced.

The study has found that robust professional identity is supported by personal values which are congruent with occupational philosophy. The students in this study conveyed a passion for their developing occupational identity and demonstrated a high degree of

congruence between personal and professional values. Their commitment to the profession was evident suggesting that this was more than a profession but a way of life. Whether these congruent values are in place at selection or are developed during their profession needs further exploration.

The students in this study emphasised the importance being part of both a supportive cohort and feeling part of the wider professional community in supporting their professional identity. Ways of enhancing the experience of belonging within the profession may also help to support student retention. This is both an educational and professional issue and strategies to promote this need further attention.

Finally, the study highlighted the complex cyclical process of professional identity formation with implications for both education and practice. The process of becoming an occupational therapist is an on-going process, whilst there may be patterns and possibilities identified which may help to make this journey smoother and develop robust professional identity, it is an intensely idiographic and personal journey.

9.3.1 Implications for education

The study has identified a number of implications for education along with areas for future research.

Education needs to give consideration as to how the curricula can support the students to establish occupational coherence. It is important for students to develop a sense of continuity; to develop an understanding of their past, present and future. Helping students to engage in an ongoing construction of self, developing their professional selves alongside their developing personal selves is important in enabling them to embody their professional identity. This needs addressing throughout their professional journey and not just at the beginning or during transitions. However, my research noted that there were particular times of transition that were more problematic, including upon commencement of the course, prior to placement, and around assessment times. Ways of supporting students through difficult professional journeys are on-going projects for higher education. Encouraging students to understand the ongoing cyclical nature of their identity development may help to normalise their intense feelings and provide a cognitive rationale to help manage the process.

Further research is needed to explore how congruence is achieved between personal and professional values, whether these are present upon recruitment or if they develop during professional education, and how they can be embedded within student's occupational identity. Attention to the process of doing, being, becoming and belonging

in curricula design may be a useful strategy. Indeed, the importance of having a strong underpinning unique professional philosophy was highlighted by the participants in this study along with ways of operationalising this to help students understand and apply an occupational perspective to their own situation needs further exploration.

The centrality of occupations in people's lives and the roles of occupations in integrating events over time is not a new concept to occupational therapists. However, students would benefit from reflecting upon this power of occupation in their own lives so that they can then share this with their clients. Similarly, education needs to find ways of enabling students to use occupationally focused language to promote their professional identity. The participants in this study identified that they had difficulty explaining their profession to others but were in contrast able to celebrate their unique professional role. Academia needs to facilitate students understanding, thinking and sharing of occupationally focused concepts to develop both their own professional identity and to gain external recognition. This research highlighted that external recognition is particularly valued by embryonic professionals.

The essential role of practice education in the development of professional identity was emphasised by this study. Relationships with educators, fitting in with the team, dealing with the reality of practice and being change agents were all concerns for the students in this study. Ensuring that students had opportunities to develop their autonomy was highlighted as a significant concern for them. Further research into ways of promoting competency, autonomy, relatedness and confidence in practice settings is needed.

This study emphasised the significance for the participants of belonging to a profession of which they were proud. The benefits of a being a member of a supportive cohort and feeling part of a team both in practice and university were important to the participants. Additionally, it was noted that being part of something bigger, feeling part of a wider professional network upon which they could draw when the immediate practice context lacked an occupational focus provided motivation and resilience. This research has then highlighted the importance of promoting professional belonging and ways of enhancing this beyond encouraging involvement with the professional body needs to be further investigated.

The Kawa model was not used as much as I anticipated in this study. However, the participants did use the language of the metaphor in their discussions and on reflection felt it was a useful tool. Indeed, Lizzie said she "loved the model" and found the visual

tool useful to summarise her progress, (personal communication, 2016). The final focus group felt it contributed to their professional identity:

And that's quite nice that it's...an OT thing and... it's ours (Eva, line 1828 focus group 3)

It's an identity in't it (Mark, line1833, focus group 3)

Despite the Kawa model not being prominent in this study this does not mean that it is not a useful model. Further exploration of how the Kawa model can support student reflection and professional identity development may be worthy of attention.

9.3.2 Implications for students

Many of the issues discussed above include implications of the study from a student perspective. However, it is worth considering these as a separate section to emphasise the student perspective.

This study has sought to expound the lived experience from a student perspective so it is hoped that students will be able learn a great deal from this. Reading other people's stories may help to normalise their own experiences and provide them with reassurance. The ongoing cyclical nature of the professional journey has been emphasised and this may help students to manage their difficulties and develop strategies to overcome issues.

The study has emphasised the importance of using the student's own experiences of occupations to promote occupational coherence. Students should therefore be encouraged to reflect upon the central role of occupations in their lives and be encouraged to develop an occupational narrative to help them manage their transitions and integrate events over time. Similarly, the participants in this study also highlighted how important it was for them to gain external recognition and to be able to present a cogent explanation of their chosen profession to others. Students need to be able to draw upon an occupational perspective to give account of their profession and to convey not only what they do but why and the resonance it has for themselves.

Occupational congruence, that is the synergy between personal and professional values has been found to be essential in developing a robust professional identity in occupational therapy. It is important that applicants are fully aware of their personal values before undertaking their professional education. They are joining not only a profession but a vocation and need to be fully committed to this demanding programme

of study. Ways of communicating this to potential applicants therefore needs further research.

The participants in this study emphasised the importance of developing autonomy and confidence whilst on practice placements as a means of developing their professional identity. Strategies to do this included being prepared to work outside of one's comfort zone, and accepting more responsibility in a graded and structured manner. Students need to reflect upon how they approach their practice experience in an organised, prepared and professional manner to ensure that they position themselves to make the most of the learning opportunities.

The processes of doing, being, becoming and belonging have been found to be integral to developing professional identity development. Students need to engage with all four aspects to support their development. Doing has been considered above in terms of students positioning themselves to maximise their placement opportunities. Being has been emphasised whilst considering occupational congruence and occupational coherence. The ongoing cyclical process of becoming has been considered. Finally, the impact that belonging has on the developing professional identity formation has been highlighted in this research. Students need to find ways of engaging fully with their cohort, the wider occupational therapy student body, and their professional association. Whilst on placement students need to integrate themselves fully into the team. This study found that experiencing belonging was important in promoting professional identity. Ways of promoting student feelings of belonging and integration into the community of practice need to be further researched.

9.3.3 Implications for practice.

Whilst the focus of this study has been on education and the student experience, these issues need to be considered in the overall context of the practice environment.

This research has highlighted the importance of students being able to use an occupational perspective to explain themselves. Practice educators can support this by ensuring that they demonstrate an occupational perspective throughout their professional interactions and clinical reasoning, thereby encouraging students to use the same approach. The importance of role models has been considered by the participants in this study. Practice educators need to be willing to share their occupational narratives with students and act as inspirational role models. Similarly, students should have access to effective professional role models in both the practice setting and academia.

The impact of experiencing autonomy and its role in promoting professional confidence and self-determination has been expounded in this research. Students reported that they experienced increased professional confidence when they were able to enjoy some independence in practice and felt less intimidated when they were not being directly observed or assessed. This then, challenges practice educators to be more creative, finding ways in which students can experience increased autonomy whilst continuing to provide appropriate supervision. Certainly, role emerging and non-traditional placements have been found to promote professional identity (Clarke et al., 2014) and this has been supported by my research. Other ways of increasing autonomy need to be explored.

9.3.4 Implications for the immediate context.

This research has identified strategies which can be implemented within the programme of study around which the research was based to promote professional identity development.

Values based recruitment is already being used during student selection but the vocational aspect of the profession could be developed further. Exposing applicants to early role models, recent graduates, practice educators and current students who can share their occupational narratives may promote occupational congruence and occupational coherence.

Similarly, encouraging students to reflect on their own occupational coherence, placing occupations as a central focus to their narratives and using occupations as a means of integrating transitions into their lives, needs to be given early focus in the degree programme. This research highlighted the importance of students being able to use occupationally focused language to explain their profession and to be able to explain not only what occupational therapists do but why they do it. Again students can be supported to do this early on in their education and be encouraged to revisit this as they proceed along their professional journey.

The processes of doing, being, becoming and belonging and the circular nature of professional development is something which students can be encouraged to reflect upon individually in personal tutorials, in personal reflection, in their portfolios and also as a group. This will facilitate sharing of experiences and develop support and cohesion which was something which was valued by the participants in this study. Focusing on the four processes throughout the curricula will help to focus on all aspects of professional identity development. Doing will ensure that access to practical experiences, placements,

and role models is addressed, being will ensure that occupational congruence and coherence is achieved and that students are encouraged to develop personally as well as professionally. Becoming will create times for reflection to integrate past present and future selves, using occupation narratives. Finally belonging is a significant process which was highlighted as very important by the participants. Attention to belonging needs can be addressed by facilitating the development of a cohesive cohort using the techniques discussed above. Promoting belonging to the student body by extracurricular activities, networking and student union supported groups such as the OT society need to be promoted. Students also need to be encouraged to be involved in the wider professional body engaging in special interest groups, regional and national groups and professional issues at a national level through conference and student groups.

9.4. Recommendations arising from this research and areas for further research

The discussions above and in Chapter Eight have identified many implications for education and practice along with areas which would benefit from further research. They are summarised and reiterated here:

- Promote the use of occupationally focused thinking and language throughout the profession with particular reference to embedding this at an early stage in the curriculum to promote occupational coherence and congruence.
- Emphasise the idiographic and circular process of professional identity development to promote occupational adaptation amongst students.
- Use the occupational concepts of doing, being, becoming and belonging in the curricula to promote reflection on professional identity development.
- Further research into ways of promoting student autonomy, in both academic and practice settings.
- Further research into ways of promoting belonging to the professional community of practice and the impact that this has on professional identity development.

9.5 Closing thoughts

This study has shown that professional identity formation in occupational therapy is a complex personal construction. It is a dynamic and ongoing endeavour, requiring

integration of personal and professional values into a coherent occupational identity. Indeed, as Mark said in the final focus group:

I think we're just at the beginning (Mark, focus grp.3, line 6)

The study has emphasised the fundamental impact that an occupational perspective has on both accounting for and strengthening professional identity development in occupational therapy. Understanding the interaction and complexity of the occupational dimensions of doing, being becoming and belonging in professional identity formation must be an ongoing professional endeavour.

Lizzie has recently been successful in securing a senior occupational therapist position and sums up her journey to date saying:

I feel really lucky to be able to say that I really do love being an OT! (Personal email communication)

Finally, I would like give heartfelt thanks to all the participants for freely sharing their time to make this research possible. I would particularly like to thank Lizzie for sharing her intensely personal story. I hope that all the participants felt the research to be worthwhile. I am now tasked, in their honour, to disseminate the findings and contribute to the ongoing debate in professional identity formation amongst occupational therapists.

Appendix One

Interview schedule

Becoming an occupational therapist in the 21st century

In-depth interviews-Scene setting

Please relax and enjoy the opportunity to reflect upon your professional journey to date. Please remember to speak from your own experience and avoid generalising.

2. Please be reminded that no value judgments will be made. There are no right or wrong answers or opinions here. It is your own experience and making sense of that experience which matters.

3. Please feel free to challenge any assumptions or interpretations which I make.

4. You do not have to respond to anything you do not wish to.

Please turn off your mobile phone.

At the back of the room there are cards giving details of how to access student services should anything we discuss today bring up any painful issues for you.

Please also remember that there is a personal tutor system for you to use.

Please remember that you are free to discontinue the interview at any time if you want.

Interview schedule 1 (introductory interview -appreciate the context)

Why did you choose to enrol on the Occupational therapy course?

What do you think influenced this? *Friends, parents, teachers, experiences?*

What education have you undertaken? *A levels etc?*

How do you think this education will help you as you become an occupational therapist? *Was there anything relevant that you studied?*

What work experience have you gained so far? *Part time jobs, school visits? Voluntary work, work shadowing?*

How do you think this will help you on your journey to becoming an O.T

Can you explain in your words what occupational therapy is? *How might you explain it to your mother or friend? What are the important aspects?*

So what is it you think that you need to learn?

What aspirations do you have for your career? *Where do you see yourself working?*

Remind participants of the concept of the Kawa metaphor

Using the metaphor would you be able to identify your journey to date?

How were your first few weeks?

Have there been any key events since you started the course? Any particular lectures, placements session, things you have read?

What things do you think are going to help you on your journey? (

Driftwood)The group, relationships, personal assets?

What things are going to be a hindrance on your journey? (Boulders).

Responsibilities, emotions, work

Schedule 2 Clarifying the context.

Just to recap we talked about the Kawa metaphor. This is what you developed

Let's look back over year one

What could you add to this journey now? Any twists and turns moments of indecision, thinking of giving up?

Is there anything you want to alter?

Can you explain what you have drawn?

What is your river bed like? Remember this is the context, is it smooth/ flat/ rocky? Why?

Are there any rocks in your river? How big are they? Where are they?

How does your river flow? Fast? Slow?

What driftwood has been helpful? Is there a lot? Is it close together?

Do you feel any clearer about what O.T is? Do you feel that you feel you belong to the OT profession? In what way?

Schedule 3 -6

As above with the addition of

How do you feel about being an O.T.? Do you think you are one? Do you describe yourself as one,

What does it mean to you? Do the concepts resonate with you as a person? Your ethos?

What aspirations do you have for your career? Where do you see yourself working?

How useful do you find the Kawa model for aiding your reflections? Does it help you gain insights? Make sense, annoy you?

Appendix Two

Joanne Stead
Senior Lecturer Occupational Therapy

Dear Student,

Research Project: Becoming an occupational therapist in the 21st century.

I am interested in the journey which student occupational therapists undertake from enrolment on an undergraduate occupational therapy education programme to graduating as an occupational therapist. I want to explore how student professional identities develop over time, and consider the effects that different educational experiences and activities may have on their development. This piece of research will help me to understand the experience of studying on this course from a student's perspective and may inform future course developments.

To do this I would like to invite you to participate in a series of in-depth narrative interviews (two in each academic year) over the next XXXX . These will comprise of an individual discussion with myself concerning your experiences on your journey in becoming an occupational therapist so far. The interviews will last for a maximum of 60 minutes. The interviews will be recorded by an MP3 player. The recordings and data will be kept in a locked drawer until they are transcribed into a Microsoft word document. Subsequently the recordings will be permanently erased. The anonymity of all participants will be protected by using pseudonyms. You will be informed when the transcription is complete and will be given opportunity to comment on it should you wish.

Your participation in this study is voluntary .You do not have to have to participate in all the interviews. You are free to withdraw from the study at any point and ask that any data you have already supplied is destroyed.

The interviews will take place at the University of Huddersfield at a time that is mutually convenient

This research has been reviewed and approved by xxxxxx (Head of Division of Rehabilitation) and xxxxxxx (Senior Lecturer, School of Education).

If you would like to participate in the interviews please would you respond via the telephone number or email address below by XXXXXX

Thank you for your consideration

Yours sincerely,

Joanne Stead
Senior Lecturer Occupational Therapy
Contact details

Appendix Three

Becoming an Occupational Therapist in the 21st century

Joanne Stead

Interview consent form

I have been fully informed of the nature and aims of this research and consent to taking part in it.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the interviews and focus group at any time without giving any reason, and a right to withdraw my data if I wish.

I give my permission/do not give my permission for my interview/focus group to be digitally recorded.

I give permission to be quoted (by use of pseudonym).

I understand that the digital recording will kept secure at the University of Huddersfield.

I understand that only the researcher and transcriber will have access to the recording.

I understand that the recording will be destroyed once it has been transcribed.

I understand that my identity will be protected by the use of pseudonym in the research report and that no information that could lead to my being identified will be included in any report or publication resulting from this research.

Name of participant

Signature

Date

Name of researcher

Signature

Date

Two copies of this consent form should be completed: One copy to be retained by the participant and one copy to be retained by the researcher

Appendix Four

Headed Paper

Becoming an occupational therapist in the 21st century

Ground Rules for the Focus Group

Please can only one person speak at once, give each other air time.

Please listen actively and respect others when they are giving their opinions.

Please participate fully and enrich the process with your own opinions. Please do not be afraid of respectfully challenging others but please remember that people's opinions and experiences may be different from yours. There are no right or wrong answers or opinions here.

You do not have to respond to anything you do not wish to.

Please remember to speak from your own experience and avoid generalising.

Please remember that there is to be no discussion of any points raised outside of the planned focus group session.

Please turn off all mobile phones.

At the back of the room there are cards giving details of how to access student services should anything we discuss today bring up any painful issues for you.

Please also remember that there is a personal tutor system for you to use.

Please remember that you are free to leave if you wish to

Focus group one

Thank people for coming reminder of ground rules

Warm up

Why did you choose to train as an O.T? What do you think influenced this (in pairs feedback)

Brief intro to Kawa model from facilitator. Metaphor of a river from source to mouth.

Where are you on that journey to becoming an O.T? A long way to go or just beginning?

Is the same for other people? Are you at different points?

What has this journey been like to date? Difficult? Straightforward

What has helped you get so far? Friends, assessments placements?

Introduce concept of boulders and drift wood?

What has been difficult for you/hindered you. Have you had to deal with any boulders Similarities and differences?

Have there been key events on this journey? Specific lectures, activities, placements, things outside Uni?

Have there been key people on this journey? Friends, Uni friends, PPE

What, do you think are the defining characteristics of an O.T? *Are there any?*
Can you spot one? Do you feel you reflect these?
Do you feel you belong to the O.T profession?
Anything anyone wants to add to close?

Thank people for time and remind them of subsequent focus groups.

Focus group 2

Thank people for coming reminder of ground rules

Introduction:

Reminder of summary points of last group discussion

Anything you would want to alter or disagree with?

Warm up

Time line where are you now on that Journey (use the room ask people to position themselves and explain why).

Have your boulders changed? *What were they? Self-confidence, life balance?*
What about your driftwood? *What are you good at? What keeps you going*

Concept of flow and interrelationships of boulders, driftwood and events.

Any comments/reflections?

Have there been key events on this journey? *Specific lectures, activities, placements, things outside Uni?*

Have there been key people on this journey? *Friends, Uni friends, PPE*

How do you feel about being an O.T? *What does O.T mean to you?*

Anything anyone wants to add to close?

Thank people for time and remind them of subsequent focus groups.

Focus group 3

Thank people for coming reminder of ground rules

Introduction:

Reminder of summary points of last group discussion

Anything you would want to alter or disagree with?

Warm up

In twos what would you alter do differently if you were to make this journey again?

Feedback to the group

What has changed now that you are at the end of your journey? *Have your boulders changed? What about your driftwood? Is there more of them less, changed position?*

Do you feel like a real O.T? *Why? Will it ever make sense?*

Have there been key events/ critical events on this journey? *Specific lectures, activities, placements, things outside Uni?*

Have there been key people on this journey? *Friends, Uni friends, PPE*

How do you think other people's attitude towards O.T has affected your professional identity? *Has it made you more passionate?*

What aspirations do you have? *First jobs? Subsequent job.*

How has taking part in the focus groups been? *Useful? Time consuming*

Has the Kawa model been helpful to this reflection? *Does it help you gain insights? Make sense, annoy you?*

Anything anyone wants to add to close?

Thank people for time and remind them they can read the transcript if they wish and can also comment on the analysis.

Appendix Five Emergent Themes Interview 1

Making Sense	2. Transitions, Coping with Change,
Sub- theme Making sense of feelings	Sub- theme The big step
Being overwhelmed	Anticipatory anxiety/ fear of unknown
Knowledge promotes empathy	Issues around parental separation
Self-belief	Separation from home ongoing issue
Developing insight.	Impact on relationships with friends
Self-knowledge	Peer support /Solidarity x2
Managing difficult situations/Self-doubt x2	Lack of wider public knowledge of OT
Increasing self-belief /Success encourages success	Values caring responsibility towards others
Sub- theme Making sense of What matters	Finding ones feet understanding expectations
Wants to help / work with people X2	Emerging blossoming spread wings /Butterfly unfurling
Wants to use creative skills	Sub- theme Feeling squeezed
Valuing individuality	Difficulty managing prioritiesx2
Enabling others X2	Busy- ness
Need to be needed x2	Lack of money x2
Family @home	Sub- theme Beginnings of emerging sense of new identity
In flat	Difficulty articulating concepts of OT (due to lack of professional language X4)
Friends @ home	External reinforcement X5
@uni	Significance of practice based learning
Sub- theme Making sense of how she came to be here ?	Practice Educator as role model.
Predetermined factors	Separate from not belonging to OT community an Outsider
Questioning self	Placement demand.
So many different places to go with it	
Sense of consistency; intuition	
Parental influence	

Appendix Six Emergent Themes Interview 2:1

Emergent themes from interview 2:1		
Moving on	Second Doubt	Beginning to think like an OT
Being in-between	Impact of anxiety	Everything's sort of coming together
Separation (easier now).	Self doubt X3	Seeing progress understanding and enjoying the course
Significance of social/living space x2	Lack of agency x 4 reliance on external feedback for emotional stability	Development of effective study skills
	Anticipatory anxiety x3	Increasing sense of self determination x7
	Frustration x2	Understanding the realities of practice x2
	Tiring	OT student identity (in contrast to other students)
	Overwhelming , one hurdle after another	Emerging articulation of concepts of OT x3
	Anxiously motivated	Emerging identity as an OT (autonomous success experience)
	Tension between forward movement and self doubt.x4 (inner turmoil)	Making a difference to people's
	Managing anxiety is work in progress	Passionate about OT
	Critical parent –super ego x3 (I need to try to do better)	Frustrated by lack of public
	Sense of shame silly	Values volunteering.
	Anxious relationships	it's amazing what, like I said, what little things can, can do for people
	Need to be needed Dependencyx2	Seeing congruence between personal values and philosophy of OT
	Feelings of inferiority X2	
	Concerned about how her behaviour impacts on others.	

Appendix Seven Emergent Themes Interview 2:2

Appendix 8 Emergent Themes from interview 3:1		
The big abyss	A dip in the journey	Being a student/Becoming an OT
Future proofing	Stressed at the moment	All the other stuff overshadows it
Finding your own path	Lots of rocks	It's a really important thing (Dementia care).
Feel the fear and do it - anxiously motivated	Lack of regular routine	She must believe I can do it
I've got my independence now	My room depresses me	
	Stepping up to the mark	
	What if they think I'm rubbish at it	
	Yeah, I always do that, that's me	

Appendix Eight Emergent Themes Interview 3:2

Appendix 8 Emergent Themes from interview 3:1		
The big abyss	A dip in the journey	Being a student/Becoming an OT
Future proofing	Stressed at the moment	All the other stuff overshadows it
Finding your own path	Lots of rocks	It's a really important thing (Dementia care).
Feel the fear and do it - anxiously motivated	Lack of regular routine	She must believe I can do it
I've got my independence now	My room depresses me	
	Stepping up to the mark	
	What if they think I'm rubbish at it	
	Yeah, I always do that, that's me	

Appendix Nine Emergent Themes Interview 3:2

Appendix 9 Emergent Themes from interview 3:2		
The big abyss	Thinking and feeling like an OT	Taking stock of the journey.
Thinking about the future	I don't need to know everything	Getting it right
Planning the next step	Its just so hard to explain to people	Fear of failure
Managing more life changes	Confidence to be an OT.	Peer support
Uncertainty.	Separateness of academic and practice learning	Impact of volunteering and part time working
I've gotta lot of opportunities		Difficult Transitions
		Making sense of the journey
		Difficult journey
		Rite of passage driving test.
		Ready to be grown up.

Appendix Ten Emergent Themes Focus Group 1

Appendix 10 Emergent Themes from focus group 1				
Exploring motivations	Overwhelming first year	My river is flowing	it's really good when you're out on placement	Feeling like an OT -
Got a bug for it (conviction) X3	Concerns about the self	Making sense in second year x2	Promotes professional identity x2	Awareness of the wider professional community
Meaningful –Im doing something with my life now.	Self doubt	practice helps it make sense	Impact of broader members of the team on student learning	Ambivalence to that belonging.
Evaluating life situation	Fear of being found out- No one else saying anything	Age	Impact of what other students say about placement.	Frustration at lack of public knowledge of OT
Passionate about OT	Oh my god I'm the oldest,	Supportive peer group. x3	Relationship with educators	Limitations of current practice
Fulfilment I'm doing something with my life now X4	Fear of the unknown	Facilities and quality of teaching/ learning	Students as change agents	Future aspirations hope
	Bombardment	External validation – promotes confidence	Separation of academia and practice	Long term planning
	Transition shock first few weeks so intimidating	Impact of assessments		I feel really proud to say that I'm a student OT–
	Managing own expectations			
	Wanting to run before being able to walk.			
	External pressures			
	External demands/ commitments			
	Time management			

Appendix Eleven Emergent Themes Focus Group Two

Emergent themes from focus group 2		
Changing sense of self	Placement is where it is all gonna click	Managing the Ebbs and flows X2
Being an OT x2	Reality of practice.	Journeying forwards
Self-doubt v self-belief x4	Contributing to the team	Accepting the turbulence
Fulfilling expectations	Under the microscope x3	Looking back –seeing progress
external validation x2	Working beyond comfort zone.	
Managing failure.	Walking the tight rope	
Structure promotes belonging x3	Doing OT leads to being an OTx2	
Learning to do it your own way	Autonomous practice promotes identityx2	
High expectations.	Theory practice gap	
Embodying OT philosophy x2		
Altruistic values continue to develop		
I've changed a lot (add in)		
Learning to act professionally (add in		

Appendix Twelve Emergent Themes from Focus group 3

Emergent themes from focus group 3			
The journey	Finding the driftwood	Doing It: The Final Placements	I am an OT
The beginnings	Finding the driftwood	Impact of placement learning	I'm a bit precious about it
Fear of the unknown.	Developing supportive peer group x2	Value of role emerging placements	Explaining OT - I still struggle
Trail blazer	We've really 'elped each this year haven't we		Professional course. Its that respect x2
Making the decision to stop earning	Gender issues		Personal and professional values fit.
Growing up quickly			Feeling like OTs maybe ?
The stuff in between			The course changes you x2
Not all plain sailing x3			
Circular process			
Different rocks			
Just seemed never, never ending.			
Changing perceptions: I thought...I knew what it was but I didn't x2			
Back to where we started			
Back to where we started.			
Planning for the next step x2			

Appendix Thirteen Master table of all themes from interviews

Master table of all themes from interviews				
<i>Interview 1</i>	<i>Interview 2:1</i>	<i>Interview 2:2</i>	<i>Interview 3:1</i>	<i>Interview 3:2</i>
Making Sense	Moving on	Anxiously motivated	The big abyss	The big abyss
Sub Theme Making sense of feelings	Being in-between	Working out of comfort zone pushing myself	Future proofing	Thinking about the future
Being overwhelmed	Separation (easier now).	Self-doubt	Finding your own path	Planning the next step
Self-knowledge	Significance of social/living space x2	Determination	Feel the fear and do it - anxiously motivated	Managing more life changes
Self-belief	Second Doubt	Looking for external validation	I've got my independence now	Uncertainty.
Developing insight.	Sub Theme Impact of anxiety	Increasing confidence	A dip in the journey	I've gotta lot of opportunities
Managing difficult situations/Self-doubt x2	Self-doubt X3	I enjoy going on placement	Stressed at the moment	Thinking and feeling like an OT
Increasing self-belief /Success encourages success	Lack of agency x 4 reliance on external feedback for emotional stability	Fitting in x2	Lots of rocks	I don't need to know everything
Knowledge promotes empathy	Anticipatory anxiety x3	Pleasing educators	Lack of regular routine	It's just so hard to explain to people
Sub theme Making sense of what matters	Frustration x2	Placement learning: value and significance of x4	My room depresses me	Confidence to be an OT.
Wants to help / work with people X2	Tiring	Autonomy on placement	Stepping up to the mark	Separateness of academic and practice learning
Wants to use creative skills	Overwhelming , one hurdle after another	. Relationships with practice educator and others on placement	What if they think I'm rubbish at it	Taking stock of the journey
Valuing individuality	Sub Theme Anxiously	Ways of being as a	Yeah, I always do that, that's	Getting it right

	motivated	professional	me	
Enabling others X2	Tension between forward movement and self doubt.x4 (inner turmoil)	Clients as teachers x2		Fear of failure
Need to be needed x2	Managing anxiety is work in progress	Into the big wide world	Being a student/Becoming an OT	Peer support
Friends @ home / @Uni	Critical parent –super ego x3 (I need to try to do better)	Life flow - natural progression	All the other stuff overshadows it	Impact of volunteering and part time working
Family life @home/@ Uni	Sense of shame silly	Anticipating the future - change noted from interview 2	It's a really important thing (Dementia care).it	Difficult Transitions
Sub theme Making sense of how she came to be here	Sub Theme Anxious relationships	Change isn't a bad thing	She must believe I can do it	Making sense of the journey
Sense of consistency intuition	Need to be needed Dependencyx2	Increasing self agency x2		Rite of passage driving test.
Predetermined factors	Feelings of inferiority X2	Tracking and managing progress		Ready to be grown up.
Questioning self	Concerned about how her behaviour impacts on others.	Grown up		
So many different places to go with it.	Peer group important of solidarity 14	I feel like I think more like an OT now		
Parental influence	Beginning to think like an OT	I like the idea of being an OT		
Transitions, Coping with Change	Sub Theme; Everything's sort of coming together	Able to articulate concepts of OT		
The big step	Seeing progress understanding and enjoying the course	Frustration at reality of practice		

Anticipatory anxiety/ fear of unknown	Development of effective study skills	Using personal experience to understand client's perspectives		
Issues around parental separation	Increasing sense of self determination x7	Ways of being as a professional		
Separation from home ongoing issue	Understanding the realities of practice x2	Values of OT integral to persona		
Impact on relationships with friends	Sub Theme; OT student identity (in contrast to other students)			
Peer support /Solidarity x2	Emerging articulation of concepts of OT x3			
Lack of wider public knowledge of OT	Emerging identity as an OT (autonomous success experience)			
Values caring responsibility towards others	Making a difference to people's lives, the little thingsx2			
Finding ones feet understanding expectations	Passionate about OT			
Emerging blossoming spread wings /Butterfly unfurling	Frustrated by lack of public knowledge			
Feeling squeezed	it's amazing what, like I said, what little things can, can do for people Seeing congruence between personal values and philosophy of OT 12			
Difficulty managing prioritiesx2	Values volunteering.			
Busy- ness				

Lack of money x2				
Beginnings of emerging sense of new identity				
Difficulty articulating concepts of OT (due to lack of professional language X4				
External reinforcement X5				
Significance of practice based learning				
Practice Educator as role model				
Separate from not belonging to OT community an Outsider				
Placement demand.				

Appendix Fourteen Super-ordinate themes interviews

First interview	Second interview	Third interview	Fourth interview	Fifth interview
Making Sense	Moving on	Anxiously motivated	The big abyss	The big abyss
Transitions, Coping with Change	Second doubt	I enjoy going on placement	Dip in the journey	Thinking and feeling like an OT
	Beginning to think like an OT	Into the big wide world	Being a student/ Becoming an OT	Taking stock of the journey
		I feel like I think more like an OT now		

Super-ordinate themes focus groups

Focus group 1	Focus group 2	Focus group 3
Exploring motivations	Placement is where it is all gonna click	The Journey
Overwhelming first year	Managing the Ebbs and Flows	Finding the Driftwood
My river is flowing	Changing sense of self	Doing It: The Final Placements
Significance of practice learning- Feeling like an OT		I am an OT.

Over-Arching Themes
Establishing Occupational Coherence
Achieving Occupational Adaptation
Developing a new Identity

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

Emergent themes	Original transcript	Exploratory comments
<p>Questioning self</p> <p>Self knowledge</p> <p>So many different places to go with it</p>	<p>L: Erm, I don't know, it's really, it's a bit weird actually 'cos I don't know whether you know but I didn't originally choose to do occupational therapy I wanted to do teaching... ...and I applied to all the local universities... for teaching and I got some erm, reject, rejections for teaching and I'd started to think, and I got one from here as well, rejection for teaching, and this was one of my favourite unis and I started to think do I really want to do teaching...and before I had gone to XXXXXXX and looked at the occupational therapy course there... but I didn't know much about it and my mum was like the one that was telling me about...it and then I started to look into it and ...just thought, yeah I don't really wanna do teaching, I want, I wanna do this , it looks, 'cos I've alway, I thought nursing might interest me but.....I'm a bit squeamish. [Laughs], I'm not into the blood and the guts and things... ...like that...so I thought I could do, work in like a hospital setting if I wanted to ...and it was helping people which I've ...always wanted to do anyway ...and also there's so many different places you can go with it, like teaching, I get a teaching degree, sat in a classroom teaching children that's basically</p>	<p>Line 54-87</p> <p>Confusion, lack of active choice bewilderment, lack of information. Confession I don't know if you know revealing self acknowledgement that not first choice</p> <p>Parental influence</p> <p>Decision ? what is this based on Why? Emphatic first time sounded definite owing decision Predetermination</p> <p>Always wanted to do. Factors that were attractive Work in a hospital not medical Helping people So many aspects to it</p>
<p>Issues around parental separation</p> <p>Travelling journey</p>	<p>L: It's really confusing because my mum just rung, rung up, when I said I don't wanna do teaching anymore, we sort of thought well it's a bit too late for this year we'll probably do some work experience and then apply again next year..... I know it was quite a, a shock and we did ring up and say is this right? I went, I did a day in xxxxx, just to make sure, my mum says ...you'd better make sure before you go down this road and , yeah I really enjoyed it. And when I came and did the interview here it was the best I've, interview I'd ever done...like, so, all the others I felt like I'd tried but this one I felt like I was still trying but I felt like I knew what I was saying and I felt confident about</p>	<p>Lines 102-160</p> <p>Why use of we . Alternates between we and I . Past and present tense</p> <p>journey going down this road sense of discovery/ exploration Enjoyment reinforced decision checking out</p> <p>Conviction confident</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

Developing insight , Making sense of how she came to be here	what I was saying and writing down, like on the, when we had to write that reflection so yeah.... was quite an interes, different story.	Why use the word story ? not real In the past not quite believing it
Separate from not belonging to OT community Outsider Unable to articulate concepts of OT due to lack of professional language Sense of consistency ;intuition Predetermined factors Values wants to help / work with people	L: erm, just like when I went to the hospital and like did my day there that like really interested me... ...and erm, yeah, the way those OTs were and... J: What, what aspects was it that you saw there? Erm, I spent a morning in rheumatology but it was just like outpatients coming in and having like a chat and then the afternoon I was with like some day-patients who just came in and like elderly patients who just came in and did exercises on like mes, playing with locks and playing with that, you know that theraputty that you roll around in your hands and squish things like that just so they could get the movement back in their hands again and get used to doing things like that . J:Hmm, and that, is that, you've thought oh I can see myself in this kind of role? L:Yeah J: but you said you also like the idea that you could work in other places as well as just hospitals. Yeah. Well, I like, I, I always knew that I didn't wanna do a desk job and just, obviously all, they've all got their boring part, every jobs got the boring parts to it but I always knew I didn't wanna be in a desk , where I got up in the morning and came and did like more or less the same thing all the time. I always knew that I wanted to work with like people because like everybody's different, so, things like that. And, yeah, and just thought, yeah I can, if I decide I want to change and go somewhere else there's so many different places I could go and work and so many different people I can go and work with, and I can also still want to go with like, work with children if I want ...	Line 170-212 "Those" separate in awe of Lack of understanding / seeing the surface Lack of knowledge language playing with Lack of language to explain what she has seen Clear knows what doesn't want. "Always knew" some ideas have not changed over time Repetition adds emphasis Repetition always wanted to work with people variety

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

Wants to use creative skills	<p><i>And what about your art? Do you use any of your art do you think?</i></p> <p>L: Erm, not yet but I'm hoping that we will do. So I'm hoping that, yeah, we can, we will use art later on creating stuff and things like that</p>	<p>line273-280 Hoping to develop creativity in the course. Why does she feel she's not been creative already?</p>
Motivation/ value wants to help	<p>erm, and also the thing that got me wanting to do special needs teaching, working with people with special needs was erm, in year 10 at my school erm, there's a school called XXXXX in XXXX and a coup, well about ten kids came up from there and we did a dance workshop with them...</p>	<p>Line 295-298. Previous school experience influenced initial career decisions</p>
Enabling others	<p>Yeah, they were all really nice all really sweet kids. J: okay. What was it particularly you enjoyed about that do you think? L: Just because, probably they wouldn't get the chance to perform like that very often and just the fact that they got to like be the centre of attention</p>	<p>Lines 310-319. Fulfilment worthwhile give enjoyment to others</p>
<p>Lack of language limits thinking and ideas</p> <p>Lack of wider publics knowledge of OT</p>	<p>J:I'm interested in is how it makes sense to you, where you are right now in your training as an OT, how you understand OT, okay Let's say how you might explain it to your mother or, or to a friend. [Sighs]. Erm, I'd say, trying to rehabilitate people to get back to what you used to do erm, using different methods and skills. I, I don't know, it, I think it's almost, really a hard one to ... sometimes I just say to my friends it's like physio but not, it's different even though it's not like physio but to them it's easier to say because you say to 'em occupational therapy and some of 'em think I'm gonna be like a careers guidance or things like... because everybody thinks occupational means job... and it doesn't, so when I say to people occupational therapy but my friends usually look at me as if to think oh you're gonna be like a careers worker or something like that [laughs]... and I have to go no, it's not like that.I mean I only heard of it when my mum like suggested it to</p>	<p>Line 328-345</p> <p>Its really hard , it like physio.</p> <p>Parental influence</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

Parental influence	me and then I, when I started to look more into it...	
Valuing individuality Enabling others Significance of practice based learning External reinforcement Knowledge promotes empathy	<p>Hmm. Okay, so what do you think the important aspects of OT are then?</p> <p>L: Treating everyone as an individual [oh] looking after that client and their needs...erm, and tryna help them but not, obviously not forcing 'em to do something if they don't want to do it.....obviously you can't make them do it. Erm, yeah and giving people choice .</p> <p>J: Okay. So what is it then to become this, this OT? What is it that you think you need to learn?</p> <p>L: Erm, I think you need pra, lots of practise, like working with different people and different areas just so you can, 'cos it's alright you can learn it on paper but it's always gonna be different when you go out into the real world and try and sort, try and deal with things like that, so I think the, more experience you have of it the better... it can also gain more confidence for you .</p> <p>J: Uh huh. So in different places and the different planning groups and things yeah?</p> <p>L: Yeah. Obviously you need to know your guidelines and your ethics and things like that... ..erm, and you need to know about your different medical conditions...'cos obviously they're better, well it makes you look more professional if you know, if they say oh we've got this and then you're sat there thinking, I don't really know what that is.... obviously you can't know everything so... cos you have to go back and say I'll just look that up for you and...I'll get back to you but the basic ones it's best to know them and then you can be more supportive obviously if you know sort of what they're going through then, so.</p>	<p>Line 350-379. Values difference and individuality</p> <p>Ditto individuality</p> <p>Needs lots of opportunity university not the real world Why passive voice? Lack of control/power not active player</p> <p>Why look professional? what about feeling professional</p> <p>Lack of understanding of clinical reasoning and how this impacts on practice</p>
Self belief hopes of competence in future	Erm, I don't know, with me doing law, the forensic side of me does fascinate me.....but I don't think I'd be going straight, I,	<p>Lack of Confidence</p> <p>Sees self as needing to develop confidence but</p>

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	there, obviously wouldn't be going straight into that I don't think, I think I'd need practise in other areas first 'cos I think you've gotta be a certain type of person to be able to deal with it, like issues like that, but I think in the future I, I would be able to do it obviously, I just think I need to build up more confidence in other areas ...	able to do so.
Feeling squeezed	<p><i>Drawing the Kawa model after prompting ... Probably better off drawing.</i></p> <p>I'm having a thick river bed. cos I've got a lotta things in the environment.</p> <p>L: [Writing]. Now would my job be an environment or would it, it'd probably be a rock, no?</p> <p>J: Your part-time job. Well it could be an asset to you, it could be any I guess, where would you like to put it?</p> <p>L: Erm, ... I'll put it in here and then I'll put some reference to it as a rock. And probably an asset as well. Erm [drawing/writing]. I always do them the wrong size.</p> <p>J: And take creative licence then.</p> <p>L: That's just grown a bit.</p> <p>J: Time's a huge issue is it? and they're all bumping against each other.</p> <p>L: Erm, [drawing/writing]. Erm, [thinking/drawing/writing]. Erm, ... so I wanna put free erm, like sort of 'cos there's like other people on the course who've got like children and husband's... and... houses and bills and things like that where I've not really got that.</p> <p>J: Okay. So you feel that's a positive thing for you.... So a kind of lack of er, family responsibilities, well not family responsibilities 'cos you do have family responsibilities don't you but erm...</p> <p>L: Lack of, it says but lack of responsibilities.</p> <p>J: I know what you mean [laughs], erm, you've got different</p>	<p>Line 509-565</p> <p>Lots of things happening in the environment to influence her becoming an OT</p> <p>Looks for lots of approval and reassurance as completing drawing.</p> <p>Lack of familial caring responsibilities, demands on time.</p> <p>Time is a huge issue</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

	<p>responsibilities haven't you.</p> <p>L: Yeah. I have got different.</p> <p>J: Yeah, perhaps it's that level of responsibilities or something is it, or ... But you're feeling that because you haven't got the pressure of childcare and mortgages and things that's positive for you, is that right?</p> <p>L: ...maybe it might make me do, be a bit more ... better with my work, you know like if I knew or I can't do my work now 'cos I've got to make tea for people and I've got to go to work so I've got to get it done now... sort of thing. Erm...</p> <p>J: Well that's, I guess that's about driftwood isn't it 'cos it can be an asset and a liability can't it [laughs]. There's both sides to it isn't there.</p> <p>L: [Drawing/writing]. Can you put your qualities down what you think are good for this course?</p> <p>J: Absolutely.</p> <p>L: [Drawing/writing]. There.</p> <p>J: Okay. Are you happy with that?</p> <p>Okay, great. Can we, can we talk about them now, is that...</p>	
External reinforcement / feedback	<p>.....well also it gave me like a lot of confidence because I came to the interview and I thought I'd tried my best and me and my mum both had the attitude you can be really proud but you're not gonna get it because you've not been focused on OT you haven't ...like for ever you've just, it's just something that's come into your head and... there's a lot of people applying for it and it's competitive so you're probably not gonna get it, and then when I ended up getting an interview, er, when I ended up getting a place I thought I must've been good... ..I must've been good at it or else they wouldn't've given me a place ...so, and it gave me some like confidence for that .</p>	<p>Line574-586</p> <p>Confidence comes from external sources</p> <p>Talking about self in third person.</p> <p>Not expecting to get a place offered</p> <p>Again passive voice reinforces reliance on external reinforcement rather than internal</p>
Transitions	<p>J: Great..... How were the first few weeks for you?</p>	<p>Line594-614 Stressfull</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

<p>Coping with Change Leaving New beginnings</p>	<p>L: Er, stressful. Erm ... J: Hmm. What sort of things were stressful for you? L: It was a big change ...I really enjoyed college. Rr, a lot... and I didn't want to leave college so coming to uni was a big step and it was always going to be the thought of, I was excited about coming but it was ...always gonna be the , oh I've got to go to uni and it's took me away from college sort of thing..., it's like a lotta different group a people to like who I was with at college...erm, I had a lotta friends, 'cos in my like group of friends there was only me and three other girls and the rest of 'em were boys so to come to a class that's mainly girls it's ... it's well, different.</p>	<p>Reluctance to leave the familiar. A big step</p> <p>Expectation of it being difficult. Repetition of always going to be difficult. Taking me away from my friends</p> <p>Change from friends who were mainly boys at college to mainly girls at Uni</p>
<p>Transitions impact on relationships Developing new identity separate from family</p>	<p>J: leaving people behind was it and moving forward and making... ...new friends and things like that? L: But it was interesting as well , like, the, the things I was learning. So, it had some plus points and some... J: Yeah, some difficult ones. Did you feel homesick or... L: No. J: ...do, do you live, you live in don't you? L: Yeah I live...in Snow Island. I, I like it at, here. It's, I've go, I have my own space so I can go and sit in it and be quiet . Whereas at home there's me and my mum and my sister and, as you can imagine, three girls argue quite a bit so we, I liked, like coming and having my own space and yeah it was good.</p>	<p>Lines 617-638</p> <p>Interesting sense of discovery</p> <p>Starting to develop separateness but not there yet</p> <p>Present tense coming Still coming not separated from home yet</p>
<p>Reliance on external feedback again !"</p>	<p>J: So you've got on here your first assessments. That was a... L: It was like, there was tests...?, I'm like, all tests and assignments I get really worried about 'em ... I liked how, the fact that I've, on my first like test I got a really good mark so that gave me some more confidence .So, yeah. J: And then your first placement that was obviously a big, big thing for you as well. L: Yeah that stressed me out [laughs], well, but...</p>	<p>Lines 641-667</p> <p>Worried why? Reliance on external feedback</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

<p>Placement demand. Anticipatory anxiety:fear of unknown</p>	<p>J: Did it? Hmm. What, what do you think stressed you out about that? L: Just, I get worried about everything that's new [laughs]. Trying, thinking about going on the bus and then I didn't end up going on the bus anyway erm, just all different things, meeting new people just, everything. The, but yeah, I en, I enjoyed it. It was good . J: So it was kind of almost the similar sorts of feelings that you had before you came was it, the, that sort of expectations, meeting new people, not sure what was gonna be expected of you, all those, that kind of anticipatory type stuff that you were worried about</p>	<p>Fear of unknown. Anticipatory anxiety</p> <p>Definite , clear it was good</p>
<p>Lack of language limits thinking and ideas Self doubt</p>	<p>they, er, it took me a while to get my head around that and I spent lots o' time looking at my computer saying I know what I want to say but I can't say it because I need a reference for it ...</p>	<p>Line678-681 Understanding assignments Lack of language. Lack of confidence</p>
<p>Busy- ness Time management issues Separation from home ongoing issue</p>	<p>it's the whole juggling everything, getting ... everything done and things... like that that's most difficult at the moment I think . J: Okay. So in terms of this life flow it feels like you're being squeezed at the moment then does it? L: Yeah. J: And what do you think it is that's squeezing you then? L: I don't know, it, it's... J: Is it some of these things here? L: Yeah, sort, yeah. 'Cos like basically, I've got limited time... ..I've al, got to fit my driving lessons in as well.....erm, there's distractions, these distractions... J: And these are all distractions are they... L: ...'cos obviously my job, I've got to travel back on Sunday night and Saturday morning and then travel back on Saturday, I, I go home Saturday morning, go to my job, come back Saturday afternoon....then stay and go home Sunday eve nn, ning and then come back Sun, er, Monday night...</p>	<p>Line 737-760 Juggling getting overwhelmed</p> <p>Time management</p> <p>establishing separateness from home moving backwards and forwards</p>
<p>Need to be needed</p>	<p>...so it's like, I've got to fit, see my boyfriend in, the flat,</p>	<p>Line 772-809.</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

<p>Finance issues Lack of money</p> <p>Busyiness</p> <p>difficulty priorities</p>	<p>everybody at the flat, I've gotta see them and also erm, there's a girl, who I live with, it's four boys and one girl.....and she's from Essex so it's not easy for her to go home... ..so sometimes I feel bad leaving her because ... she's on her own sort of thing so there's that, then there's my college friends who I've got to see...</p> <p>J: That you want to keep up and see with, yeah...</p> <p>L: Yeah...like my best friend still lives in Barnsley at home erm, so that's obviously just loads of different things like I've, they've got their birthdays soon I've been trynna make 'em a card 'cos it's cheaper 'cos I've got no money and ge, make 'em a present and they're getting dressed up so I've got to make my outfit and it's just all little things like that which seems like you, there's always something, little thing that's...</p> <p>J: Something else demanding on, this is why this has started off small and has got bigger and bigger and bigger is it?</p> <p>L: Yeah. It's 'co ...everything's demanding on your timeAnd then when you don't do it, and do your work, you get anxious, well I get anxious about it and think oh, and then that just works, gets me worked up and then I end up not doing it again and then, yeah, it's just...mind boggling ...</p> <p>J: ...yeah. And then you get anxious about it and, yeah. Okay. It is difficult isn't it, fitting everything in.</p>	<p>Split loyalties responsibility wanting to look after every one</p> <p>No money First time finance has been mentioned</p> <p>Things demanding on time and get bigger and bigger little issues which take up lots of energy</p> <p>Being pulled in lots of direction. Demands external pressure</p> <p>Panic . Need for direction , no way out. spiralling out of control anxiety provoking</p>
<p>External feedback Encouragement</p>	<p>Erm, ... well when I got my erm, results for my two assignments I did over Christmas they, that was good 'cos I got like a good mark in them ...and I, that made me feel, 'cos when I di, I did Janice's formative assessment, assignment thing and I got forty and I was like worried about that and then to go from forty to sixty-five I was happy that I'd sort of got the hang of...things like that...</p> <p>I'm sort of one of those people that if something good happens and I get a positive thing then I'm all happy about it and then...I'm like oh let's carry on and let's do this...and then...if I get something bad then it puts me down for a bit, sort of.</p>	<p>Line 816-824 Encouraged by success. Pleased with progress</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

	<p>J: Okay. So how do you pick yourself up then?</p> <p>L: [Sighs]. Just have to think [sighs] let's just, you know, let's just do better next time. Just carry on with it...</p> <p>...there's nothing you can do about it. And that's sort of the good thing about ... the, the assignments. You can't get worked up over it and I got 45, I can't do that again. If I do it again I get forty.</p>	Positive self talk
<p>Finding ones feet understanding expectations</p> <p>Recognition that language needs to develop</p> <p>Finance</p>	<p>J: Okay, well we started looking at some of the things here that were, you felt were a bit of a hindrance for you erm, and you think, you thought that time was a hindrance and sort of demands of family and job and boyfriend and different friends and fitting everything in that was that was a hindrance and you've got some other rocks here as well.</p> <p>L: Yeah. ...my academic writing I need get that a bit better 'cos it's not really academic writing...because of the thing, being erm, we're doing the presentation at the moment and in the gap yesterday erm, XXXX went home 'cos she wasn't well but erm, me and XXXX went to do it and XXXX had like done some writing up on it and looking at the slides she's used quite big words in it and it, sort of, I needed time to read over it so maybe my vocabulary and things like that...</p> <p>J: Okay. Anything else? Any other hindrances do you think?</p> <p>L; Erm, money to buy books and things like that. Also the, money (sighs) can be a stress in other things erm, like speaking out, like the, like doing the presentation, that worries me, like reading it out sort of thing. I think that's always been a, I've always been a quiet person... so reading out...</p> <p>J: ...you've, you've always known about...</p> <p>J: ...yeah. Do you think that's getting better?</p> <p>L: [Sighs]. Yeah, it, it, it will do, it's gonna tek a, er, I think it'll tek a while.</p> <p>J: Okay. So that's something you're gonna turn into a, a</p>	<p>Lines 862-883</p> <p>Getting the hang of university requirements.</p> <p>Need to develop language.</p> <p>Lines 885- 935 Money is a big stressor. Finance mentioned for a second time</p> <p>Worried about speaking in front of others</p>

Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

<p>Educator as role model.</p> <p>External feedback</p> <p>Emerging blossoming spread wings Butterfly unfurling</p>	<p>driftwood eventually is it?.</p> <p>L: I mean, I, I think maybe you feel a bit positive 'cos on my first placement I got some feedback and she said erm, maybe talk to more of the other members of staff more.....and things like that and she says I know like how you are, like you're, like quiet and erm, she says I used to be ov, really quiet, I used to be quieter than you, I wouldn't like do anything...and speak to anyone sort of thing and like thinking about it, she was so loud and just when she ...went onto the ward and she was just talking to everybody and...making jokes and things like that, she was just like well a really loud person and to think that she's gone from that, that like gives me like hope that that one day I'm gonna be like able to...</p> <p>J: So that was a really sensitive comment wasn't it, that your educator made that she recognised that that was perhaps where you were at and she'd been there once herself.</p> <p>L: Yeah, she were just trynna, I think she was trynna push me on a bit 'cos like people say like I was quiet once the, sort of ...just like to push you on a bit to make you like a bit louder. . But I have, I think I've, from college and coming to college and university from school I think I've like developed a lot more since then, so .</p> <p>J: Good. Okay. And then you've got lots of these positive, you've got lots of things that you think are going to help you on your course.</p> <p>L: Yeah. Well I've got, like these are like things that I think I could, to be like when you're on, like wanting to be an OT. Erm, I've got like lots of opportunities cos like I'm still young and like... I've got 'cos I've not got different ties so I could qualify and go wherever I wanted to go and do whatever I wanted ...</p> <p>J: Hmm. It's quite exciting</p>	<p>Feels can improve this and do something about it. It will take time. Sense of hope</p> <p>Optimist seeing development</p> <p>Feeling of development increasing confidence over time. Stage by stage</p> <p>Freedom sense of adventure</p>
<p>Peer support</p>	<p>I've got like a good support group... ..I mean I've got a good</p>	<p>Lines 953-1021</p>

<p>Peer support Solidarity</p>	<p>group of friends around me that, like are looking out for me and even though like it...</p> <p>J: So is that at university or is that at home or both or...</p> <p>L: In the flat, well... Yeah, erm, in the flat they're all really good, erm, and also a lot of the boys are, it's not like I'm in a flat with all first years who are all partying all the time because... ...the, I'm living with two third years, one second year and one first, and two first years. And erm, so like the second year and the two third years will, specially the two third years, spend a lot of time in their room doing their work, so it's not like I'm in my room doing my work and they're knocking on the door saying 'come one we're gonna...do whatever' sort of thing. Erm, yeah, XXXX and like at university I mean some people get us mixed up and it's quite funny really but she's got quite the same personality as me...and I find that she seems to be ... like unconfident about the same sorta things and she doesn't like speaking out in front of the class so it's like good to have like another person there... and like not think that I'm the only, like person like that .</p> <p>J: Hmm, so peer group's a big, big thing, it's a big, important getting a bit of mutual support and...</p> <p>L: Yeah. And like her and XXXX are like really good to talk to and like if... I need, like say oh when's this due in or have you started doing this and things like that and then my friends at home also...they do help, my friends at home, erm, I feel, one of my, my best friend erm, she's not gone to uni this year, she's coming here next year which'll make it a lot better erm, so she's on her own. I think she's sorta got used to the fact now that I've got lotsa work to do and I can't be, I'm not neglecting 'em and I'm not just ...ignoring 'em but I think at like first, 'cos she used to talk to my other best friend who's gone to Chester, they ... used to think oh Lizzies 's not, Lizzie's like not really talking to us anymore sort of.....thing, even though it's just 'cos I like, didn't spend all my time on the computer sorta thing...</p>	<p>Feeling supported by friends</p> <p>Feeling of solidarity we are all in this together Importance of peer group and mutual support</p> <p>Impact on friends at home</p> <p>Not just the student who experiences change impacts upon significant others</p>
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Appendix 15 Lizzie yr1 1 worked example of Analysis

Values caring responsibility towards others	<p>...so, but I think she's got used to it now and she's gonna be living next-door to me next year so I've, she's gonna come on first year and find out how many assignments and things she's... deadlines she's got to do and...she'll not be, she'll 'ave like loadsa stuff to do and then she'll realise how hard it is and I'll be able to see her and it'll just be a lot easier when she's like over here...</p> <p>J: So that'll be some, is that going to be something that's gonna help you then is it?</p> <p>L: yeah because I've not got that time worrying that she's on her own at home like bored all day ...</p> <p>sorta thing. She's got something to do and she'll 'ave like new friends and we're hoping that she gets a nice flat and we get a nice flat and so</p>	<p>All in it together understanding form friends. This is an important concept mentioned twice</p> <p>Worrying about others.</p> <p>Importance of accommodation and flat mates impact</p>
<p>Managing difficult situations</p> <p>Self doubt</p> <p>Increasing self-belief</p>	<p>Yeah. Great. Okay. Anything else you want to talk about. Anything else that you think's been significant or sticks out as a, you know, a, an event for you do you think since you started this journey, coming down to here.</p> <p>L: Erm, don't rea, know really, just like the new people that I'm meeting and things like that. Erm, there was an incident at a placement, erm, am I allowed to talk about...my placement...</p> <p>J: ...yeah, yeah.</p> <p>L: ...yeah, erm, where I met this client who'd had a brain injury which 'ad made them be er, behaviour inappropriate... with what they were saying ...erm, like talking about sex and... things like that and certain like co, insulting people and things like that...and I really thought I benefitted from that because I felt like it'd always been, like you always, I don't know whether everybody does, but one of you always think oh what if you get a difficult patient, you get a patient that does this or a patient that does that and it's always like the things that you don't really want to happen and that's what happened to me on my second...placement and like all I did basically was just like sorta ignore the inappropriate comments or try and get on with what I</p>	<p>Lines 1026-1084</p> <p>New relationships</p> <p>Linguistic comment lack of appropriate language limits ideas</p> <p>Why third person? She is worried about dealing with difficult people</p>

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Success encourages success	<p>was supposed to be doing and nothing bad happened...nothing like that, it just, just, yeah it just went awaysorta thing: So, yeah.</p> <p>J: ...you get support on that from your educator or...</p> <p>L: Yeah well we talked about it afterwards. My educator erm, was on holiday the week I was working with another erm, member of staff and that member of staff had never met somebody who'd been that disinhibited beforeerm, and then I talked with it wi' my educator later and said like it, to me it was like a good experience and it's a weird thing to say on something like that but I mean I did feel sorry for like the client's partner 'cos obviously they had to deal with all this...inappropriateness...and things like that but it was just, yeah, I've, and like got it out of the way with and dealt it and... things like that.</p> <p>J: So that kind of boosted your confidence that you felt that you could deal with the unexpected</p> <p>L: Yeah, it were really good</p>	<p>Dealt with another hurdle .I've done it .</p> <p>Achievement increasing self-belief</p>
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Blue participant's view

Red linguistic comments

Black my interpretation

Green conceptual comments

Focus group 1 Oct 10 yr1

3 participants: did not draw the Kawa model Oct of second year

Once for objects of concern and then to add detail

Blue participant's view

Red linguistic comments

Black my interpretation

Green conceptual comments

Orange group dynamics

Explore the role played by facilitators, keeping track of questions, permissions, encouragements, redirections, etc. (What is their perspective, stance, position?)

Facilitator Initiates use of metaphor keeps it going others use it intermittently

b. Explore the function of statements made by respondents. (What is their perspective, stance?).

Affirming each other's opinion . Seeking support. Building a collaborative story. Privileged excited pleased to be pursuing this profession

What experiences are being shared?

How they came to be on the course, affirming their decisions then move onto more areas of vulnerability exploring difficulties in first year

Making sense of relationships with educator's, stories from placement. Why they became OTs . Experiences of coping with assignments

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b. What are **individuals** doing by sharing their experiences?

Zuni more dominate seeks reassurance but then appears more confident tasks about how she manages her placements, her 7 yr plan. Feels to belong to profession of to (one who doesn't complete).

Much consensus one asks for reassurance and confirmation of understanding." we all kind...feel when we've been chatting don't we?"

All agree how fulfilling OT is. Real passion for it I want to shout out. Some find this is highlighted on placement . Others find placement a big stressor

Much of time given over to discussion of placement and relationships with educator suggesting highly significant aspect of learning.

Positioning themselves in the community of practice feel they want to contribute to education share knowledge with educators. Visioning their future where they will work

c. How are they making those things meaningful to one another? Checking out comparing stories looking for feedback validation comparing and contrasting . Personal disclosure . group prepared to share personal experiences willing to admit vulnerabilities.

d. What are they doing as a group? Supportive of each other collaborative in that largely support each others comments.

Supporting each other in stress of assessments

e. What are the consensus issues? Consensus issues age, impact of assessment, apprehension of practice.

f. Where is there conflict? How is this being managed/resolved. No conflict some differences of opinions but expressed clearly acknowledge differences respectfully.

Emergent themes	Original transcript	Exploratory comments
Long term planning Self doubt	<p>Betsy: I sort of sat there and thought I could do this but that was like twenty years ago nearly... and in the back of my mind it's always been there plus with having to help my son overcome barriers as he's grown up, that's sort of more concreted the fact that I felt as though I could do this profession because I've had to sort of break things down into smaller manageable tasks for him... so I feel as though I've sort of done a lot of it, not meaning that I know everything... ...but I have done this side of.</p> <p>I. So that's something that's been burning away for you for twenty years</p> <p>Betsy: it was actually my friend, she had a really bad accident about three</p>	<p>Previous skills/experiences. Long term.</p> <p>Could do..... self-doubt</p>

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	years ago and nearly died and I suddenly thought that I've never done anything, I've sort of got stuck in a job for sixteen years that I didn't particularly like but it paid well and that was okay so, and I just said to my husband I'm gonna go and do it and he said do it, so, here I am. Lines 34-61	
Evaluating life situation:	Betsy. So I think that was the biting point where it made me think, you know, if I died next year what have I actually done for me. Line 61	Conviction, that's it.
Evaluating life situation:	Ellie: Yeah I had, er, my grandmother had a, quite a severe stroke and erm, before she was, she was in hospital for almost a year and she did eventually get home, get in, thanks to the help of the occupational therapist and the physiotherapist and I remember erm, going to her house before the phsy, the OTs were due to visit with her and saying to people oh we need to do this, we need to move that, we can change this and my mum said oh you know you sound like an OT and I was like oh I could, I could really, I could really see myself doing that but that was, you know, that was the end of it and I.... and I wasn't happy in my job and I remember sitting at my desk at work thinking what, you know, what am I doing, why am I doing this, I'd had a really stressful week, loadsa pressure to get, you know, this, this profit up and, you know, to worry about this customer who was you know, going on and on and on about knitting yarn and I just thought oh you know there's, I just feel that I had more, more to give, more to do and I wanted to do something that was a bit more beneficial to me as well as other people, I found it really, you know, I wanted a more rewarding career, I wanted a career to begin with 'cos I felt, you know, I was a bit, bit stuck and I just thought to myself right what would I really like to do and I thought right, I thought back to that, that time at my gran's house and thought OT, that's, you know, that's it. And I did a bit of research and, you know, I only need to do a small bit to make me realise that, you know, there were loads of options, loads of possibilities and I could be either sat in the same place behind the same desk, you know, three years later or I could've made a huge change Lines 98-109.	Adds to first story agrees with Betsy. Previous skills/experiences More to give. Stuck in a rut uninspiring job.
Conviction , determination	Ellie I handed in my notice before I'd even got accepted because I was so determined to do it, it just felt so right, it, I felt like I knew I was gonna do it even though I hadn't got a place I just thought right that is it. Lines 117-119	It felt so right .
Passionate about the profession.	Ellie Sometimes I sit in lectures and I think oh yes I've, you know, I love this,	Betsy repeats almost word for word Ellie's

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	and it's the best thing I've ever done, I just, you know, the more I do the more I like it so... lines 134-5. Betsy Sometimes I sit in lectures and I'm like, inside I just wanna shout I love this. Line 140	assertion. I love this, congruence with own values.
Meaningful job. External validation Separation of placement and academia.	Zuni. See I feel more like that when we're on placement..... and I'm just a lot more happier in myself because I'm doing something that means something to me in a way, but yeah I come like home from placement I was like oh I love this so much and when like an educator says to yer, you're made to be an OT, or I can see you being an OT for rest o' your life and you've picked the right career choice and everything, you just get a really warm glow inside you don't you...lines 176-81	Line 168 first time Zuni has spoken. Affirming the right decision. Uses same language as previous participants . love this so much. Enjoys placement more Reinforces the enjoyment and meaningfulness but in a different context. Introduces external validation influence of feedback from educator . Seeks affirmation ends statement with a question
	Zuni: I was working in customer satisfaction and, don't get me, it was a nice job but I was sat there and I just felt like, I can't do, I knew I couldn't do this for t'rest of me life, I didn't wanna, basically work for a company making it money for t'rest of me life and I was like just pocket dripping, you know... Ellie Yeah. Zuni ...was like you was saying... Lines 194-200	Third story concurs with the other two: seeks validation from Ellie. Wants more satisfaction, not just about making money
Conviction I just got the bug for it Meaningful. I'm doing something with my life now	Zuni: and I was kind of rattlin' on about what my ideal job would entail, dah-de-dah, and then she was like be an occupational therapist and I was kind, it was kind of like, what's that, d'you know what I mean, and obviously she give a brief description of it, and it kind of just twigged something in my head and I thought, hmm, so I kind of did look, start looking into it but I did spend like pretty much a year of my life researching into it so I thought, you know, in my twenties kind of didn't wanna make a rash decision so erm, yeah I spent a year researching it, went to meet up with a couple of OTs working in different areas of practice like employment rehabilitation, things like that, and I just got the bug for it then really, and then I applied for it and I mean I cut myself, self-short applying for it, I only	Once started has a lot of air time tells her story in detail from decision making process to getting a place and impact on her lifestyle. Situates the decision in the bigger picture. Cautious some degree of risk starting again. Seeks reassurance from others Others validate the experience. Sees herself as older although only in 20s Doing something meaningful with her life Zuni clarifies others feel the same Zunni states partner noticed a difference but

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	<p>applied to Huddersfield as well 'cos obviously you know I've got.....being a bit older I mean, my family, my partner and everything he works here and stuff so and that's the most nerve-wracking time of my life I can remember is waiting for that e-mail to say you've got a place, just waiting for it, and I already had my letter written out ready to give to my employer, I mean.....I didn't, I wasn't as, as crazy as you (Ellie) and handed it in too early but erm, I had it ready [laughs]. But yeah, it was, erm, it was just happiness from there really. I couldn't, like I said, when I started this course my partner just noticed a difference in myself, even like getting up on a morning 'cos I feel like I'm doing something with my life now, kind of generally, we all kind...feel when we've been chatting don't we?</p> <p>Betsy : Yeah. Definitely.</p> <p>Lines 208-238.</p>	<p>does she feel different?</p>
Fulfilment	<p>Ellie: I think, I don't know I just feel more fulfilled... because that's, you know, I, alright I had a, I was on better money than I am now as a student and erm, but that didn't mean anything, I, you know, I was really unhappy and I felt completely unfulfilled and there was, I just felt, I just feel with this course there's a sense of, I feel like I'm experiencing justice, it sounds so stupid...and I even felt that when I'd been at university before, it wasn't, I felt it wasn't about me achieving it was about the course or how, how they looked, what they were getting out of it...and it just feels, you know, it's, it's so rewarding..... so it definitely outweighs anything, anything I've sacrificed. I don't really feel like I have to be honest, a bit of, what's money ?</p> <p>Betsy: but I just feel as though my whole life fulfilment is complete now whereas before I felt that there was always something missing and this has now bridged that gap, you know, so.</p> <p>Lines 285-335</p>	<p>Feeling fulfilled Ellie and Betsy both feel more fulfilled. Zuni says yes but doesn't say anything else (already said it all above)</p>
Fear of the unknown making sense - second year	<p>Zuni: I think over summer I was quite scared of being a second year over summer.....'cos I didn't know what the expectations of me were, in first year you kind of get away with being a first year, that's your excuse do you know what I mean but...</p> <p>...now we've been on practice, now we've done lectures, we, I felt like I should , are they expecting me to, to be an OT now, d'you know what I mean, and I</p>	<p>Higher expectations in the second year. Fear of what is expected. Unclear expectations Zuni Seeks validation from others Making sense and fitting together Halfway there</p>

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	kind of didn't know.....where I were in summer but ...since we've started this year I do feel like yeah I am halfway there 'cos last year's making more sense to me now, it's all coming together, it's all linking together, I'm understanding lectures just a lot more easier, you know, like the terminology and things like that and I do feel like I'm kind of, I am halfway there [laughs]. Lines 347-360	.
Overwhelming - first year making sense - second year	Betsy: I felt as though, sort of when I first started the course I felt as though there were these great big boulders stuck in the middle and obviously that was because of lack of knowledge and.....everything that was being... ..sort of thrown at us, you know.....erm, and to be perfectly honest I couldn't really see where some of what we did last year fit into the whole scheme of things, but obviously to build a wall you've got to make a firm ground, you know, foundation type thing.....and now I see where all of that comes into play like you've just said, I, I sort of understand where that all fits in into the bigger plan...lines 366- 387	No use of the kawa metaphor until I pushed it how is your river flowing Besty describes initial feelings of being overwhelmed and in year 2 making sense of things seeing the bigger picture , Thrown at us sounds chaotic
Wanting to run before being able to walk. My river is flowing freer. making sense - second year.	Betsy: I didn't wanna do that bit I wanted to do what we're doing now, if you know what I mean... I wanted to jump probably from first year to second year...because I felt as though, because I've already done things with my son before I probably didn't need to know that but I know that I did need to know that because that's giving me the grounding now to be able to move on into second year...Erm, so I think I was just a little bit impatient..., I can see and fully justify now everything that we learned last year is what you need to learn and it, it's just a case of taking one stage at a time and you've got to go through these ...specific stages.....to actually get to where you want to be haven't you.....you can't jump from, you know, your first ladder and up to your sixth.....type thing. Erm, but no, I can see the sense in it all now...some of it was hard going, you know, sort of getting your head round things but now, like you've just said when people are talking in lectures and they're saying oh refer back to when you were in first year, well I can refer back and I understand where it all fits together, you know, so, so yeah I feel as though mine's flowing a lot more freer now... Lines 395-426	Betsy didn't see the first year as relevant. Making sense of it in the second year . Contradiction from positive beginnings
Ambivalence of practice learning	Betsy: I mean I think the boulders are coming along when it comes to sort of	Besty sees placement as difficult.

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<p>Role of external validation First year overwhelming Bombardment</p>	<p>placement times soon... Ellie: Yeah. Betsy: ...erm, and even sort of last year when I felt as though things were going nice and steady then along came the second placement and I was like, oh my god, you know, what are we gonna have to do and, and, and, but like you've just said, it's really good when you're out on placement and even your educator comes in or somebody actually says you're gonna be a fab OT because they just know what you're thinking and even if you're sort of sat saying well, well I, I think I'd do this but I don't really know why and, and then you discuss it with your educator and they actually pull out of you what you're trying to say and what you're trying to think of, erm, and that's really good 'cos they give you that confidence 'cos you know that you can do it and that you will make a good OT, you know, so. Zuni: I think there was nothing specific in first year, it was like, 'cos we were sat in a classroom and everything was new and we, it kind of we were like you're having all these theories thrown at you and all these models thrown at you and you look at a model on a piece of paper and you think, what? do you know what I mean, where does this fit in, but once you get to your last placement in first year, then it starts to make sense because you're.....out on placement and your educator uses these theories that, and models you saw on a piece of paper in context. I think it's hard in the class when you've never been on a placement and never been in that situation to understand how it works in real life.....I think that were my main problem really. Ellie: Yeah. Lines 454-477</p>	<p>Values external validation from educators. Zuni sees placement as the place where the academic work starts to make sense. Difficulty making sense of academic learning when no practical experience to relate it to. Use of thrown again sense of being bombarded repetition of word thrown initially used by Betsy, now used by Zuni.</p>
<p>Fear of being found out- No one else saying anything Transition shock first few weeks so intimidating</p>	<p>Ellie: I think my biggest problem at the beginning of the first year was just fear.....fear that, you know, that I knew absolutely nothing...compared to everybody else, you know, we'd sit in a lecture and you know, a few words would be dropped in that I thought, oh god, you know, I'd, I've got no idea and I'd make list of the words that I don't even know, and I don't think I'd, you know, particularly missed out anywhere in education before, you know, I thought I was quite, you know, literate and had a wide vocabulary when</p>	<p>Moves away from kawa metaphor. Fear of being found out; fear of not keeping up. Fear of the unknown Not understanding words and terminology been mentioned twice by different people. Becoming aware of gaps in knowledge creates a crisis in confidence.</p>

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	<p>actually it turns out I haven't at all and it just made me doubt every single bit of, you know, knowledge I had to date but then everybody else was in the same boat but nobody was saying that and when I.....looked up the words oh you know they weren't, they weren't really awful but I think it was just the initial fear and the first few weeks is so intimidating.....and I don't, I think that's just pressure I put on myself though, I don't think it's the environment particularly or the, you know, the academic staff or even, you know, other students, it's just the pressure you put on yourself...and I know I was desperate, desperate to get started that I remember fresher's week lasted an eternity because I was just waiting for the first lecture and I went to the first lecture and I thought oh, you know, this is, this is way over my head and erm... I: What was your first lecture?</p> <p>Ellie: Can't even remember. Just that first week of lectures, oh it was A and P... Betsy: A and, yeah it would have been, Tuesday morning, anatomy and physiology</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah, but I think we had the first one with XXXXX, so it would've been alright.</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah we had XXXX.</p> <p>Ellie: I don't know, yeah, but I don't know, it was just, I think a lot of people had done, you know, sort of Health and Social...Care subjects... ..and I hadn't and I thought I've got a real deficit in my knowledge.....erm, but it turned out that I was, you know, it...was okay...and [laughs], nothing really awful was gonna happen to me if I didn't know the odd word...but I think it was just...I think it was just fear and apprehension...and the same with placement.</p> <p>Lines 480-527</p>	<p>Repetition of desperate to add emphasis. First few weeks difficult.</p>
<p>Age.</p> <p>Significance of practice learning- Impact of what other students say about placement.</p> <p>Relationship with educators</p>	<p>Ellie: Now we're not...yeah, we're not a little first year that you can say oh I don't know I'm just a first year or, I don't even think I had to say that I think they just made the assumption that I was a first year and I didn't necessarily know. Erm, but, I mean, every placement I've had has been really positive and, you know, even getting good feedback, I'm still apprehensive about placement this year, 'cos you don't know what you're gonna get...and I think maybe, I do think it would help if we found out sooner, I don't know. I know</p>	<p>Apprehensive about placement despite positive experiences.</p> <p>Heard of less positive experiences from others</p> <p>Relationship with educator a concern</p> <p>Age mentioned as an impacting factor on relationships with educators.</p>

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	<p>logistically they can't but I think everyone's now thinking oh what're we gonna get, what're we gonna get and it's so far off...but, you know...</p> <p>Zuni: I think as well 'cos you've heard people having really bad placements, you know, and they have bad experiences or bad educators whatever, and all mine have been really good so far and I think that's, my fear is I've had three really good ones am I due a horrible one.</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah, you've been spoiled.</p> <p>Betsy: Mine's the same.</p> <p>Zuni:...d'you know what I mean and, and don't want that because my second year it's so important.... it's, you know what I mean, I'm... I'm moving on it's more and more important to get these experiences out of placement and my fear is what if my placement won't provide me it, the experiences I need...to further myself and I think being a bit older, taking charge, I don't know if it is being older or doing a degree before but I'm taking charge of my own learning more, I notice I do that some, with educators, I, when they do say to me what do you wanna get out of this placement I have a list, I wanna get this, this, this.....this, this...and I tell 'em straight away what I want, I don't sit back and wait for things happen.....for me, but that is the most nerve wracking thing is getting an educator who you just can't work with and they won't...give you those opportunities.</p> <p>.Lines 532-578</p>	<p>Wanting to manage own learning worried about not getting opportunities.</p> <p>What is the comment you've been spoiled about? Envious? Has Ellie's experience not been as good.</p>
Age was a worry	<p>Betsy: one of my main concerns was like being the oldest in the group I think, when I first came on that first morn, I know when I came for my interview there was a lady who was a, just a little bit younger than me and so we went and had a coffee after and we're like oh we'll probably see each other in September but she didn't get on the course didn't this other lady and I know the first day sort of coming over I was really apprehensive wondering whether everybody would be eighteen or, you know, whether there'd be anybody my age, anybody older than me or.....you know, and...I sort of walked in the room and I looked round and I thought oh my god I'm the oldest, you know, and, but having said that, nobody's ever made me feel old, if you know what I mean, I speak to everybody in the group and just on an equal par, you, as much as I feel like I mean probably half of the group I could be their mum 'cos</p>	<p>Age was a worry before starting the course.</p> <p>Being the oldest in the group</p> <p>Old enough to be some students' mum.</p>

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	<p>I've got a daughter who's 21, you know, so I'm probably old enough to be most people's mum but nobody's ever made me feel like that and I think that, that really comes down to the sort of people that they've got on the cohort as well, you know obviously they are sort of client-centred and things and that goes back to your OT but then also to being in the classroom as well with each other.... you know which is really good I think.</p> <p>Lines 587-608</p>	
Context of the experience supportive peer group.	<p>Ellie: because the environments always been quite nice and 'cos it's a small... cohort...that's a, a really positive aspect...</p> <p>Betsy: Yeah, I think, yeah.</p> <p>Ellie ...I can't think of any negatives really...</p> <p>Lines 630-619</p>	Small supportive cohort
<p>Context of the experience- External demands/ commitments</p> <p>Total commitment</p> <p>Time management</p>	<p>Betsy: I think just sort of from, fro, from, from my riverbed from my family situations erm, sort of only the first week in we had a very close family death..... and that sort of had an affect on me because it was my mum's husband, he wasn't my dad but he was my mum's husband.....and so I took over this role of my mum would come for tea on a Saturday, she'd come and stay most of the day on a Sunday and have tea on a Sunday and I'd be ringing her every day and, and there's six of us, it fell sort of to us to do and I felt that that was, at the time I thought oh my god I'm never gonna get all this coursework done because I just feel as though I need to give my mum so much of my time and my family were quite, you know, look mum we know if you're going down t'nanna's that's fine, blah-de-blah, whatever or if she's coming up and they were quite accepting of that but I couldn't accept it for myself.....and, because I'd given up a lot to be able to come here and... ...do this and it meant the world to me to do it and I didn't wanna do it half-heartedly and, yeah, like you've said, if I've got a bad result for something then I'll hold my hand up and say well I didn't research it enough or I 'aven't put enough in and that's completely my fault but I didn't want anything else to hazard that, you know, erm, and I felt that that at the time was really something that was gonna have a huge impact on whether I could manage or not, you know, so it was sort of trying to draw the fine line between saying right well, on a Sunday everybody had a lie in in our house sort of till about</p>	<p>Back to metaphor Panic "oh my god I'm never gonna get all this coursework done".</p> <p>Conflicting priorities demands from family.</p> <p>Total commitment it meant the world to me</p> <p>Need to manage time carefully.</p>

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	ten or half ten but I would get up at seven and make sure that I did three hours work before anybody else was up and then I could have the time the rest of the day if my mum came up so it's about organising your time and making sure that you utilise every minute that's available to its full extent, you know...as soon as I saw the Kawa model I thought well my thing's gone a bit like that you know and.....it had this great big hump maybe in the river bed because...it was just such a big impact on, on, you know, the time that I was sort of, I thought I had free but then all of a sudden it was now being taken up by an.....outside source who was a family member but...not within the family. Lines 633-686	
Age –motivating factor. External demands/ commitments	Ellie: I think being a bit older helped definitely because I have done things in the past and I didn't put, you know, a hundred percent in and, you know, at the end I had regrets and I'm not, I'm not prepared to let that happen again so I think that, that's been a huge motivating factor, erm, but then also I mean things that have happened in my personal life, you know, like when XXX was saying that you call that your riverbed but for me it's been like driftwood, like, my parents were both quite ill last year and I took on some of the care of my grandmother but that made me want to do this more because it's kind of.....an escape because while there was stuff going on when I was at uni I was focussed on uni and I was really lucky that I had that erm, that opportunity to focus and it made me erm, look at things a different way and, you know, it made me grateful for the opportunities I did have and my parents were so supportive of me doing it and, you know, when I can turn round and say to them I've got an 'A' they're so, they're so happy for me and they're so proud and I'm proud of myself and, you know, so although the situation was difficult it was kind of a motivating factor for me erm, helped me focus and you know, maintain that momentum erm, and it made me appreciate the opportunity that I had, so, I think, I think that was definitely a piece of driftwood Lines 705-726	Age as a positive thing. Learning from past experiences of learning. External events help focus uni work. Support of parents a motivating factor. Metaphor still going drift wood
External support –family. Previous experience	Zuni: I don't think I could do this without the support of my partner...at home, I think he is a big, like when you're doing an assignment and you get yourself into a bit of a stress-head mode and think.....I can't do this, it's all stupid, I	Support of partners important motivating factor Able to take a step back use previous

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	<p>don't understand anything and I'm thick and dah-dah-dah-dah, I don't think I could do it with him like saying right calm down woman, you know, sort yourself out kind of thing, but, I mean, also that has its downside as well because my partner's also doing a PhD so when he comes home and he's stressed with that and I'm stressed with an assignment and we get at loggerheads over everything, it does you know, kind of put it off, but like from the beginning he's just been so enthusiastic and supportive about everything I, I don't , I don't know it's just nice to come home and have someone there rooting for you.....and rooting for you to do well like he's, you know, said straightaway oh you're gonna end up with a first and dah-dah-dah-dah, just that motivation but I think it's mainly motivation from myself as well this year. I think myself, when I've done badly, say I've done badly on something and I, I beat myself up over it as well so, thinking it's my fault it's gone badly, it's nobody else's fault and why, but, because I'm a bit older and I've done this kind of stuff before I can take a step back and see my reasons why... Lines 728-747</p>	<p>learning experience to reassess feedback. Age mentioned again! Learning from experience</p>
External validation	<p>Ellie: I think the first bit of feedback is really important.....erm, I remember the, a, the A and P exam I was so worried, I was so scared of failing and I, I revised so much and actually thought if I haven't passed this with this much work I've got no chance because I don't know what else I can do...so and then I got an 'A' and I was so re, I wasn't even happy I was just so relieved because that gave me, you know, the confidence to continue. I just wanted that bit of sort of validation that what I was doing was right and it was achievable and I could do it so I think for me that was really important.</p> <p>Betsy: I think I was the same as that actually for that first exam I needed, I needed to make sure that I could pass that because I thought if I can't pass the exam then there's no way I'll be able to.....a, ach, achieve the course really...Lines 766-781</p>	<p>Significance of first piece of feedback as a morale booster. External validation gives confidence Early assessment point useful. I wasn't even happy I was just so relieved.</p>
Coping with failure	<p>Zuni: My thing that sticks out was failing the first practical 'cos like all my assignments got such high grades and, and I think it was, looking back, doing my previous degree I know how to write an assignment I've got that...skill under my belt...but I've never done anything practical-wise...and presentations scare the hell out of me, d'you know what I mean I'm a nervous</p>	<p>Failure a significant upsetting event. Some students find practical assessments difficult. Put under spot light unrealistic. Catastrophising one failure... I'm rubbish at this.</p>

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<p>Context of the experience - Peer group support</p>	<p>wreck with 'em and hence why I talk fast and gibber... but erm, but that practical really knocked me for six and I were really really...upset and...and I remember getting my, getting the thing saying I'd failed it and I remember like just calling someone at home and I just burst into tears 'cos it affected me that badly but I mean looking back on it now it's, I just see it as something I still need to work on and I got annoyed because I know in placement I can do it, I can do it like.....that in placement, it's the scenario, it's the unrealis, it's unrealistic.....and dah-dah-dah-dah-dah and everything everyone said but, but yeah and I think that knocked, that realistics out last year, I were upset I'd got, I didn't realise how upset I'd get myself from failing.....it as well but I think I've got, my expectations for myself are just so high and I think because I'd failed something I just felt like I'm rubbish at this, I can't do this but, but it was the support of the class that kind of got me back feeling positive, 'cos I remember talking, were you, were you there when I, I remember talking to you, I remember talking to you quite straightaway afterwards and you, I remember xxx being quite positive but I think everyone in the class that I spoke to were like look, don't worry, it's the first time, and I think the support of the class is a real big factor in.....doing this, doing this course to be honest, I don't think I could cope without quite a few people in the class... ...just to sit and talk to about issues. I think it's quite a big thing for me. Yeah.....I mean my, you know I mean the people I'm close to in class or whatever came up to me and said look we will practise with you...we will spend time out with you doing it, after lectures in the skills room or at home and we'll just practise with you and just, even if it is maybe not the confidence but trynna get that knowledge to stick in me 'ead 'cos that's what it wa', I knew everything before I walked in the room to do my practical...as soon as I walked in I left it at the door...and even I remember XXXXX saying to me she went you were just a completely different XXXX and I could see it in your eyes you'd lost it and you weren't getting it back.....so I think it was the support of everybody and they were like right we'll spend time with you, we'll go through everything even if it is just trynna drill that knowledge in...and keep it in there until you get it on paper as soon as you get in that room [laughs].....but that's quite a negative thing to stick out but I made a positive</p>	<p>Know that she can do this repeats I can do this emphasis on can Students with high expectations take failure badly. (Appraise strengths weaknesses knew how to write got that skill under my belt see below) Peer group support important Reliance on others couldn't cope without a few people second time this has been said. Encouraging self talk</p>
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	<p>of it in the end...I thought it's first year, it doesn't go towards my final marks, if I'm making any mistakes it's gonna be in my first year.</p> <p>Lines 789-853</p>	
Managing own expectations	<p>Betsy: I think my worst one was the second practical that we did 'cos even though I didn't fail it, I didn't do particularly well and I was so mad with myself it, it was unreal. I went home and, I knew even before I left the room that I just hadn't done well 'cos I just couldn't think, I, you know, XXXX kept sort of plugging away as, a, well, can you think of anything, and I'm like, no, and, and I just kept repeating myself and I know I'd only just come back off holiday so I was a bit...jet-lagged and, but that's no excuse as far as I'm concerned, I took my books away on holiday and I did take them out a coupla times on the sunbeds but I didn't take them out enough and I could have just kicked myself, you know, 'cos I would've thought that the practical side for me was the easier side than the academic side 'cos obviously I've not done an awful lot of writing since leaving school up until sort of the last couple of years and, and I, I just know that practically I'm good with people and I can build rapports really quickly and, you know, things like that and then to just come in and not even be able to stand somebody up properly from a chair, you know, I, I'd, I could've just walked out of the room and said forget it, you know. Having said that, I passed but I'm not happy with the mark that I got.....and to me just to pass isn't good enough.....you know, yeah I'm never gonna be a straight 'A' student erm, but you sort of want to get at least a 'B' or a 'C' which is a good pass grade rather than getting a 'D'.....as far as I'm concerned.</p> <p>Jo: So what, what're you gonna do differently? Have...</p> <p>Betsy: Practise, practise practise, practise, read, read, I'm not going on holiday again before anything.</p> <p>We booked that and I hadn't realised we had that you see.....we came back on the Sunday morning...and it was first thing on the Tuesday.</p> <p>Lines 860-894</p>	<p>Students with high expectations get cross with themselves when getting low marks. Students appraise their strengths eg better at practical work (see above better at academic work got that skill under my belt. Learning from the experience not going on holiday before an assessment.</p>
	<p>Zuni: I think that, 'cos obviously my second pract, the second practical I passed that but at a very low grade, so yet again it were just my confidence, but I felt like when I were doing that it was like an out-of-body experience, I was watching my spell, self just talking rubbish...and ragging people off beds</p>	

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	<p>and things and, I think I just went, turned into a lunatic and I actually could see myself doing it and then as soon as you walk out of the room, it's odd 'cos as soon as you shut that door behind you and walk out the room you're thinking I did that wrong, I did that wrong and you can see...</p> <p>Betsy: Yeah, you can.</p> <p>Zuni: everything you did what was wrong. It's a horrible feeling that.</p> <p>Lines 908 -917</p>	
<p>Significance of practice education</p> <p>Importance of relationships with educators</p> <p>Professional identity emerging promoted by autonomy</p>	<p>I : Why is it different on placement?</p> <p>Zuni: I don't know whether it's 'cos my educator was just so lovely and I just, I don't know, he was so supportive and I'm not saying the lecturers aren't but obviously when it's, you're getting a, a specific grade for it and you've got a guy with a video camera in your face, you've got your lecturer with notes and I know, and like XXXX she was saying to me come on what's that and proper probing me 'cos she wants me to do well but on placement I think it's because ... I can see the person and I can see what's wrong and I can talk to the person, I don't know, it's just, obviously...</p> <p>Ellie: It's more relaxed.</p> <p>Zuni: ...it's a real situation. It is more relaxed and...</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah.</p> <p>Zuni: my educator's leaving t'room and leaving me for ten minutes and, and I always think to myself well if they're leaving me I'm doing everything right, d'you know what I mean and then I start taking groups on my own and my educator popping in only for five minutes and things, so, that was always a confidence booster and then obviously after every thing, little thing that you do with a client, you have that, I had that ten minutes with my educator who, right so what happened, dah-dah-dah-de-dah and every time it was always positive, always positive, so I knew I was on the right track and so I knew just to carry on what I was doing and, but I mean like for my first placement as soon as I spoke to my educator I said right my main aim in this placement is to increase my confidence because that's what's letting me down and that's what we worked on and that's what my educator worked on with me was increasing confidence. He threw me in t'deep end quite a few times but he, I think he knew I'd cope, so he wouldn't've done it if [laughs] I didn't but I think</p>	<p>Positive relationships with practice educator engenders confidence.</p> <p>Small opportunities for autonomy on practice build confidence.</p> <p>Having a good educator important what makes a good educator?</p>

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	that's what it is, it's just confidence. So this second year I feel a lot more confident, 'cos I don't, I'm not worried about placement I'm just worried about having a good educator I'm not worried about going on placement now, I know it'll be fine, it's just the educator that I'm worried about. Lines 924- 959	
External validation promotes confidence	Ellie: Yeah. I think the difference on placement is that you're getting constant validation about what you're doing as well and if you do look like you're gonna make a mistake they jump in and the same in lectures, you know, you're getting constant validation if you say something you've got the tutor saying yes, yes that's right you know. In erm, your practical you're out their on your own, you're getting no validation, you're getting nothing and you're constantly thinking is that right, is that right, is that right and, you know, you feel like, I feel like I'm just adrift and I don't know if I'm going in the right direction.....and I think that's, that's just about confidence isn't it and your ability and erm, but for me that's what it is, just that lack of, lack of reassurance I suppose and validation. Lines 960-979	Significance of feedback/ validation in developing confidence.
Context of the experience-facilities and quality of teaching/ learning	Betsy: I think a positive is probably the lecturers, like yourself, the, the building that we're in, the room that we're in, the lecturers and the lectures themselves 'cos they are very informative there's a lot to learn in the first year, a hell of a lot, well there probably is in all three years, erm, but I just feel as though the passion that you teach us with comes across and that obviously then makes you passionate about what you're learning and ... I, I sort of sit here and I'm thinking, like you might give a case scenario when you've worked wherever 20 years ago and whatever and, and I'll be thinking yeah I could see myself working there because you actually deliver it in a way that you can put yourself in that position and you can just see that, that you, you've all really enjoyed your career paths that you chose however many years ago it would've been erm, and that now you're delivering that passion that you've got to the next OTs that, you know, that, that're gonna sort of shape the way forward really. And I think that's really good. And I think the cohort size as well is absolutely just the right size for anything like this....I just	Positive riverbed facilities, lecturers. cohort size. Enthusiasm, passion, approachability and availability of the lecturers.

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	<p>think the, the tutors they're, they're open, you know, they, you can sort of go and knock on their door at any time and, and that adds to the experience, you know, you don't want to be afraid of going to ask somebody something at any time because obviously you're not going to learn from it are you, you know, so I think it's really good that people are approachable and, and do have time, you know, to sort of spend on a one-on-one basis or, you know, whatever and that you bring that passion with you to every lecture.</p> <p>Lines 985-1035</p>	
<p>Feeling like OTs. I feel really proud to say that I'm a student OT. I want to say I'm an OT Frustration at lack of public knowledge of OT</p>	<p>I: Do you feel like OTs? Betsy: Hmm. Zuni: Hmm. I: ...do you des, I mean how do you describe yourself if you meet someone, do you say I'm an, a student OT or an OT or a... Ellie: I want to say I'm an OT [laughs]. I: Good for you. Betsy: I feel.....really proud, I feel really proud to say that, I'll sort of say I'm studying at Huddersfield University and I won't tell them initially what I'm studying, and then they'll say oh what're you studying and I'm saying I'm going to be an Occupational Therapist and I just Zuni: And then they say...oh I like psychology. All: [Laughs]. Betsy: And then they'll go what's that. All: [Laughs]. Ellie: Yeah they go, yeah what's that? Yeah. Betsy: So I, I think, I feel really proud to say that I'm a student OT. Zuni: Hmm. Lines 1036-1057</p>	<p>Needed further probing Some hesitation. Some hesitance in saying "I'm an OT" I want to doesn't say that she says this. Feeling proud for the profession. Frustration at lack of public knowledge of OT</p>
	<p>I: So what do you think the defining characteristics of an OT is then, is it, is it, is it possible to come up with them do you think. Zuni: It needs passion... Betsy: Erm for the subject... Ellie: Yeah. Zuni: ...because every educator I've, er, my educators, three educators I've</p>	<p>OTs are passionate for the subject. Vague response Not a clearly definable skill set, attitude.</p>

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	<p>had so far have all been so passionate...</p> <p>Betsy: Passionate, yeah.</p> <p>Zuni: ...about OT and...</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah.</p> <p>Zuni: they've all said, and I've said to 'em do you still like being an OT after you know, 'cos I've had a varied ages and one's been an OT for like 15 years and he's gone I still love it, I still...like, and every, through, all three of them have gone I love being an occupational therapist I think I just get that from it, you know. Just being passionate.</p> <p>Lines 1058-1083</p>	
<p>Limitation of current practice</p> <p>Practice theory gap</p>	<p>Ellie: I'm worried that I'm not gonna enjoy being an OT as much as I enjoy being a student OT [laughs].</p> <p>All: [Laughs].</p> <p>Ellie: Because I think some of the, well, two of the placements I've been on I didn't enj, I, they were really nice, the educators were lovely, the clients were lovely, had loadsa opportunities but for me it just wasn't the kind of environment I would want to work in and I am concerned that, you know, I might end up somewhere that I'm not hap, but then I suppose I'll just change, I'll find somewhere that I do like but, you know, you don't know what's gonna happen but erm, also I think erm, something I enjoy about the course is the variety of kinda subjects we cover... and how many people get that in their job realistically, you know, it is, they do kinda get stuck in a certain area, erm, you know, the OTs that I've met it's all basically been equipment and I'm just concerned that I'm just gonna get stuck, stuck down a certain route and, you know, so I think I'm just gonna try and keep my, as many options open as possible and just, you know, erm, try and go for a job that's a bit more has a bit more variety.</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah.</p> <p>Ellie:...erm, 'cos I've, I've not been on any placements where we've had groups or ac, group activitives or anything like that. Erm, all my placements have been quite similar, erm, so I'm just hoping that I get the opportunity to experience something else, erm, before we, before we graduate as well I suppose.</p>	<p>Variety of OT appealing.</p> <p>Concerned about working somewhere meaningful and fulfilling. Concerned about getting pigeon holed into one area.</p> <p>Limited placement experience to date not seen any group activities.</p> <p>Practice theory gap</p>

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	Lines 1094 -1127	
Feeling like an OT – awareness of the wider professional community Ambivalence to that belonging .	<p>JO: Okay. So you all kind of sort of said you all see yourself very much as belonging to the profession, was there a point you think, or how, how do you think that happened, was that from when you decide, made your decision twenty years ago or has that been at a certain point last year or...</p> <p>Ellie: I don't think I had any idea of the type of community there was within the profession until we started, until I started getting the journals and learning about the college of OT and hearing more about it, and now I've got a mental picture of conference or of what people are like and, you know, a bit of networking and it's really nice. I had no idea that that was, that was out there when I started so I think it's just building, you know your awareness of it as a, as like a community.</p> <p>Betsy: Hmm.</p> <p>Ellie: And I don't know if, I don't feel part of it yet.</p> <p>I: You don't?</p> <p>Ellie: No.</p> <p>Betsy: I know it's...</p> <p>Jo: That's, that's interesting...</p> <p>Betsy: I do but I don't...</p> <p>Jo : that's really interesting.</p> <p>Betsy: know why, I couldn't, I couldn't tell you why I do but I do I think. Now whether that's 'cos I'm a student member of the er, British Association or, I'd, I don't know but I [sighs] I don't know I, I do. But I can't explain why.</p> <p>Lines 1128-1156</p>	<p>Awareness of the wider profession develops over time.</p> <p>Don't feel part of the wider profession yet.</p> <p>Some ambivalence labelled as student member of COT. CoP Peripheral; participation</p>
Placement promotes professional identity. Reality of practice	<p>But when you're on placement do you see yourself as an OT or...</p> <p>Betsy: Yes.</p> <p>Ellie Yeah I do on placement...</p> <p>Jo: rather than a, nurse or a healthcare...</p> <p>Betsy: Hmm.</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah.</p> <p>I: professional or a [laughs]...</p> <p>Ellie:Yeah.</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah</p>	<p>Clear professional identity when on placement.</p> <p>OTs not always part of the bigger picture or current.</p> <p>Don't want to be like that want to remain current.</p> <p>Oppression feeling of not being able to go against the flow</p>

Appendix Sixteen: Worked example of analysis from first focus group

	<p>Betsy: Hmm.</p> <p>Ellie: an OT on placement. Yeah. But then I don't see that OTs on placement as being part of that, that bigger picture they're so sort of caught up in their own little environment...</p> <p>I: That's interesting.</p> <p>Ellie: and they don't, I don't think they look at the wider pic, or...</p> <p>I: That's interesting.</p> <p>Ellie: OTs I've met haven't been looking at the wider picture, you know, they don't read erm, journals they, so they haven't heard of the Kawa model erm, you know I find that quite depressing, because that's not, I wouldn't want to be, I wouldn't want to go down that road, so, you know.</p> <p>Betsy: Yeah, you see, I went on one placement and my, my educator when I sort of said they could come and listen to the talk and she was like well what's it on and I said well it's on the models and she didn't really get it, but she's been in the profession for sort of thirty years, so probably when they were being erm, at university or whatever, I don't know whether they would've been taught about models, I presume they will've been, but then the younger OT in the group sort of said oh you do, it, it's all about your frames of reference and you know, you base your models and all the, and, and she sort of did more of an explanation 'cos I felt really shy and timid, I'm just sort of sat there thinking god I daren't say nowt now [laughs], you know, so, erm, and I mean, as it happened she couldn't come but the phsyio came and the other OT came which I thought was quite good 'cos...Lines 1157 -1196</p>	
students as educators/ change agents	<p>Betsy: I think you do get people who don't know about some of the things... that we've learnt...but then it's for us to probably go out and try and educate them a little bit...</p> <p>Ellie:Yeah.</p> <p>Betsy: isn't it as well, you know...to say, well you know, this would be a good model to use with this particular patient or client, whatever you want to call them, so, you know.</p> <p>Jo: So you feel very much part of, as, as an OT you feel that your...</p> <p>Betsy: I do.</p> <p>Jo:...identity's an OT and you, you're...</p>	<p>Student's reciprocal role in educating educators.</p> <p>How can this be done with sensitivity? students need educating how to do this</p> <p>Students feel not got knowledge and experience to be part of pushing boundaries, but are in their own way. Taking new ideas to a wider audience.</p> <p>.</p>

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	<p>Betsy: Hmm.</p> <p>Jo: not, not quite so much outside.</p> <p>Ellie: I feel, I do feel like an OT but I don't feel.....like I'm part of that that, that role emerging research pushing the boundaries group that are working at the college and producing all the journals and you know, I think that's, 'cos that's quite, that's quite an exciting, you know, area, it's quite...an exciting place to be and I don't think I'm there, I haven't, I don't feel I've got the knowledge and all the experience and that's all it's, that's all it is.</p> <p>Jo: Is that somewhere where...you aspire to be then?</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah, I'd like to be in that exciting...place... you know...</p> <p>Jo: ...sounds to me like you...you don't wanna...be giving out bathboards, not that there's anything wrong with giving... out bathboards...</p> <p>Ellie: No...exactly, yeah...</p> <p>Jo ...but you do want to [laughs]...</p> <p>Ellie: but, yeah, the OTs on placement weren't, they weren't acknowledging that, they weren't you know, talking about journals you know, role-emerging or anything. And it was all just st, you know, stuck in the same old thing and...</p> <p>Jo: The here and now.</p> <p>Ellie: ...yeah, and when I finished placement my educator said to me, she said oh erm, I was beginning to feel a bit stuck in a rut and you've really made me look at OT in a different way...</p> <p>.....because I do, you know, chat and, you know, erm, I can't help it it's, but to me it's part of my learning is, you know, discussing things and you know, I will just say on placement because it's down to me at the end of the day to make the most of it...</p> <p>I: Absolutely.</p> <p>Ellie: and I'm not, you know, I will just ask and chat you know, as much as I can and make the most of it so maybe, I don't, I wasn't aware that I was doing that to her, I wasn't aware that I was you know, making her think about things but...</p> <p>Jo: That's great.</p> <p>Betsy: But that's probably what we...</p> <p>Ellie: I just think I'm....</p>	
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	<p>Betsy:go out into placement to do...</p> <p>Jo; Absolutely...</p> <p>Betsy: ...as well in't it to sow those seeds and to get them to think...</p> <p>I: Absolutely.</p> <p>Betsy: so really...</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah.</p> <p>Betsy:you're being an educator yourself aren't you as well as a student.</p> <p>Ellie; Yeah, but she was a really good OT, but I just think the envi, environment she was in maybe it wasn't right for her either...erm, so, but that's the same in any job isn't it, you've got to find the right, your little niche.</p> <p>Lines 1204-1303</p>	
<p>Placement promotes professional identity</p> <p>Impact of broader members of the team on student learning</p> <p>External validation</p>	<p>Zuni: Well I feel like I'm an OT and part of everything but I think that comes from placement yet again like, it was a real multidisciplinary team and once a week we sat a whole day talking about each client 'cos it was a ward, this, well two days 'cos kind, we split into two, talking about, the whole team talking about every part of their care plan basically, and when I had like the top consultant guy, the whole ward asking me for my opinion on the OT side of things, in a room full of people, imagine me, and I don't like talking in class anyway, erm, but for him to ask my opinion and then for everyone in that room to agree with my points and they were such valid points and people to go, oh mate did you notice that, oh no I didn't notice that, right that'll be part of our thing, we'll have a look at that, you know like when I'd noticed things clients are doing and they thought hmm, and I was thinking right that's my first article for the OT journal thinking I aim to get one in by end of third year [Laughs].</p> <p>Lines 1306-1320</p>	<p>Placement promotes professional identity.</p> <p>MDT contributes to professional identity. Remember impact of broader team in role of developing students.</p> <p>Opinions taken seriously on placement validates experiences.</p>
<p>Making sense of placement experience.</p> <p>Practice theory gap</p>	<p>Zuni: My expectations are too high again but, yeah, so, yeah I really do feel like part of the OT community.</p> <p>Betsy: I think we do go out, we do go out and question our educators though don't we 'cos...</p> <p>Zuni: Hmm.</p> <p>Betsy: I know I onc, I went to see a lady this time and she had MS and erm, we sort of got there and she said would you like a drink and I said no thank you</p>	<p>Stories from placement. Making sense of placement experience.</p> <p>Here to there: seen as two exclusive learning environments.</p>

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	<p>and the educator said yes she would, and when we got back into the car I said oh I said, were you observing her when she made that drink, she said no, and I said oh right and she said, why what do you mean. I said well I observed her getting up from her chair, walking over to the kitchen area, getting the glass out of the cupboard, getting the bottle, taking the top off and all, and I'd taken all of that in and she went, d'you know I'd never even thought of that. And that was a massive er, observing, observa, observational opportunity for her because of the sort of condition she had everything she needed to be looking at was done in that, I mean the kitchen thing was probably only to there from the table but we could see how she walked, you could see how she bent over, pick things up, you know, everything and then to walk back with the glass, she didn't spill and, and I, I mentally noted everything that she did you know, and I says didn't you do it as an observational task, she said no I never thought of that [laughs].</p> <p>Zuni: [Laughs].</p> <p>Betsy: So I thought, it just shows you, you see, what we take from here to there...</p> <p>Zuni; Yeah.</p> <p>Ellie: Yeah.</p> <p>Jo: Absolutely, hmm.</p> <p>Betsy: ...and where we can sort of educate them a little bit as really, you know, so</p> <p>Lines 1322-1361</p>	
change agents	<p>Zuni; See I felt like in one o' my, like it was a home, community care home visit one, and I felt like I was noticing things more than me educator and like we sat in the car and me educator she said to me she says I like having students around because when you're doing an assessment or having a chat with a client you can't be looking around everywhere and, and I was noticing things like the state of the kitchen and, you know, things being left on the side and there was a lock randomly and stuff like that, it's, but I mean all my educators, all three of 'em have said that they like having students for the fact that it keeps their knowledge up-to-date like I've said to mine, oh what about this Kawa model or what about this model and she's gone er, what, so we</p>	<p>Students being trail blazers. Energy wanting to move the profession forward. Feel empowered to do so positive response from practice.</p> <p>But then contradict feelings expressed earlier I shut up and daren't say owt.</p> <p>When to speak out and when to shut up?</p>

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	<p>spent time in the car and I taught 'er it basically and then she's gone away and like I remember next day I'd seen her she'd looked it up at home and everything and we started using it and like the Kawa model...</p> <p>I: How fab.</p> <p>Zuni: I used that on a client and no-one on the ward had ever used it before, so but it's just a, I mean, that's what I, it's like, I know that when I'm an OT I want to be an educator, just for the fact, I think it does keep your mind a bit fresh and it keeps you on your toes dunnit really...Lines -1362-1386</p>	
Future aspirations	<p>Betsy: I'd like to.....be an educator.</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah.</p> <p>Betsy: I'd like to be a lecturer me but I'll probably die before I get to that.</p> <p>Lines 1389-1393</p>	Plans for the future: Hope
Future aspirations. You've got those skills for life	<p>I: So you got as, aspirations in terms of where you see yourself and...</p> <p>Betsy; Yeah yeah.</p> <p>I: And it sounds like Ellie's going to work for COT.</p> <p>Ellie: That would be good wouldn't it. I don't know though. Don't think my er, academic skills are that good [laughs].</p> <p>Betsy: I have already thought about what I'll do if I don't get a job though...</p> <p>I: Yeah you mentioned that...</p> <p>Betsy: ...I know that sounds really...probably not, I don't know if it's a downside or an upside but I've sort of thought about where I'll go from here and obviously 'cos I still work at where I used to work before I think I'm gonna approach them first and see whether they'll employ an in-house OT because we're quite a big organisation and obviously I've seen OTs come in with other people trying to get them back into work if they've been off on long-term sick and things and see whether, because I'm already employed it's not actually going to be another wage or salary that they're paying out it will probably just be a little bit added on 'cos I'll want obviously an OT wage, not the salary that I was on before, erm, but if not I mean I'm happy to do something like a PGCE and maybe even go into teaching...and, and try to get into like a special school or something where you can combine what you've learnt on the course or do some erm, volunteer work or something like that I think. But I definitely, I think once you've got the skills you've got those for life haven't you so</p>	<p>Aiming high all see the future as positive. Welcomed by OT community and can contribute to moving it forwards.</p> <p>Planning for the future. Considering potential job opportunities.</p> <p>Appreciation of wider application of OT skills. Skills for life</p>

Appendix Sixteen: Worked example of analysis from first focus group

	<p>whatever...</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah.</p> <p>Betsy: whatever you're in you can always put those into practise, the skills that we're learning on this course</p> <p>Lines 1397-1431</p>	
<p>Age</p> <p>Future aspirations</p>	<p>Zuni: Oh yeah, erm, oh yeah I've got me seven year plan, me, everyone knows about me seven year plan but yeah, I mean I, ultimately at the end of everything I'd love to have my own private business, I think I'd put my business knowledge obviously with my OT but I, I, I think I'm gonna go do like rotation work for the first few years, just for the fact that I know I'm gonna finish this course and not know what area I want to go in because every year I've been in three different areas or placements and every one I've gone I go oh I love this I wanna do this, but I've said that for the next placement and the next placement after that, so I think I'm not gonna corner myself in to a certain, like I said you feel like your educators boxed herself in and she's stuck in a rut...</p> <p>Ellie: Hmm.</p> <p>Zuni: I don't want to do that too early on in my life I don't think. I'm still quite young, I might be old in the class but I am still quite young [laughs] in life and I don't wanna box myself in too early in your life [laughs], you know what I mean, that old biddy.</p> <p>Ellie: I know I am [laughs].</p> <p>Zuni: But yeah. Yeah, have me own business in the next ten years I think. Lines 1456-1473</p>	<p>Enjoyment of all placement areas hard to choose.</p> <p>Keeping options open</p> <p>Mentions age again.</p> <p>What happened to the 7 yr plan didn't complete?</p>
	<p>Ellie: I think as we were quite familiar with it I just had it in my head</p> <p>Betsy: Yeah.</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah.</p> <p>Ellie; and I think sort of drawing it would've just taken too much time when I could've explained it...</p> <p>I: Okay, that's fine. Yeah.</p> <p>Ellie: erm, so, yeah, I think it's quite easy to visualise...if you're familiar with it, and we don't necessarily need a record of it for our benefit so I didn't, that's why I didn't.</p>	<p>Evaluation of Kawa.</p> <p>Useful as a central focus</p> <p>Organises thoughts and ideas</p>

Appendix Sixteen: Worked example of analysis from first focus group

	<p>Betsy: I was just conscious that 'cos you'd recorded obviously you wouldn't record us drawing 'cos I am a very visual person so I probably would've chosen to have drawn it I love anything pictures erm, but I'm conscious that you're recording so...</p> <p>I: So it's that that's putting you off [laughs].</p> <p>Betsy...it's more voice over that you want rather than erm, pictures maybe, so.</p> <p>I: Hmm. But did you find it useful or not in terms of...</p> <p>Betsy: Yeah, yeah I think...</p> <p>I:...your reflection or...</p> <p>Betsy: like you say once, once you've got it into your head you can sort of just go back to it can't you, you know, so</p> <p>Ellie: I think it can help you organise...</p> <p>Betsy...I like the Kawa model.</p> <p>Ellie:...organise your thoughts a bit.</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah, I like the Kawa model. I just think xxxx, xxxxxx visual and I'm not I'm more of a list, bullet point person so I know all the areas of the Kawa model, I have like the headings of what the rocks are and I have my lists underneath basically so I wouldn't choose to draw it I don't, really anyway...</p> <p>I: Right, yeah, you'd just be sort, sort of thinking about it in your head like you were saying XXXX.</p> <p>Zuni: Yeah.</p> <p>Lines 1481-1539</p>	

Appendix Seventeen

THE UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD
School of Human and Health Sciences – School Research Ethics Panel

OUTLINE OF PROPOSAL

Please complete and return via email to:
Kirsty Thomson SREP Administrator: hhs_srep@hud.ac.uk

Name of applicant: Joanne Stead

Title of study: Becoming an occupational therapist in the 21st century: Factors influencing professional identity.

Department: Clinical & Health Sciences

Date sent: 16th Sept 09

Issue	Please provide sufficient detail for SREP to assess strategies used to address ethical issues in the research proposal
Researcher(s) details	<p>Joanne Stead (DipCOT, M.Sc) Senior Lecturer Occupational Therapy University of Huddersfield Queensgate, Huddersfield HD1 3DH Tel: 01484 473769 j.stead@hud.ac.uk 20 years experience as a practitioner 5years in education Submission for Ph D.</p>
Supervisor details	<p>1st Supervisor Dr. Ros Ollin, BA (Hons) Cert. Ed. Cert TESOL M.Ed PhD. School of Education University of Huddersfield Queensgate, Huddersfield HD1 3DH Tel: 01484 478262 Email: r.e.ollin@hud.ac.uk</p> <p>2nd Supervisor DR. Linda Finlay, BA (Hons) Psych. Dip COT. PhD. Academic Consultant. 29 Blenheim Terr. Scarborough Y012 7HD Linda@lindafinlay.co.uk</p>
Aim / objectives	<p>Aim: To analyse the journey that the student occupational therapist (O.T) undertakes from enrolment on an undergraduate occupational therapy education programme, to achieving eligibility to apply for registration as an occupational therapist with the Health Professions Council. (The focus will be on the traditional O.T student, that is, those under 20 years of age commencing within one year of leaving higher education)</p> <p>Objectives: 1. To understand how student professional identity develops over time. 2. To explore the influence that different educational experiences have on the student's sense of professional identity at various sages of their journey. 3. To contribute to original knowledge by critically evaluating the use of the Kawa metaphor as a data collection tool in occupational therapy education research.</p>
Brief overview of research methodology	<p>Using a narrative/ life history approach a longitudinal analysis will be undertaken exploring the journey that occupational therapy students make throughout their undergraduate education as they develop their professional identity.</p> <p>All the college/school leavers who were under 20 years of age when they began their occupational therapy education at the University of Huddersfield will be invited to participate in the research.</p> <p>The participants will be invited to participate in six (two each year) in-depth narrative interviews focusing on the development of their professional identity. The participants will be</p>

	<p>invited to use the Kawa model as an aide to reflecting on their journey. (The Kawa model is a conceptual occupational therapy model developed in a Japanese context which is currently used as a method of exploring the person's life circumstances using graphic and verbal communication)</p> <p>Additionally three focus groups will take place each year. The whole cohort will be invited to participate. There will be a maximum of 8 focus group participants. Should there be more volunteers than this, participants will be randomly selected. This group data will be used to highlight areas of both dissonance as well as resonance. It will also be useful in reflecting the cultural lens of the researcher and offer different ways of interpreting the data. To further interrogate the cultural lens of the researcher and expose issues of power relationships as an insider researcher the researcher will keep a reflexive journal. Data will be analysed using an interpretative phenomenological framework.</p> <p>The full data collection group will be a longitudinal study over three years. However students currently in years two and three will also be invited to participate as pilot groups recognising that a full three year longitudinal analysis will not be completed for these cohorts. However the data gained can be used to inform the research of emerging themes as well as acting as comparative data to further highlight dissonance and resonance, and as a risk management strategy should there be limited numbers of participants.</p>
Permissions for study	Permission from Sara Eastburn, Divisional Head of Rehabilitation has been sought and approved
Access to participants	It is proposed that all Occupational Therapy students who are registered as current students at the University of Huddersfield will be contacted by myself, the researcher via email. The nature and purpose of research will be outlined. All students will be invited to participate in the focus group. Additionally those students who meet the inclusion criteria for the in-depth interviews will also be invited to participate in these. Emphasis will be placed on opting in rather than opting out as I am an insider researcher, being course leader. Given the long term nature of longitudinal studies the right to withdraw at any time will be highlighted. The participant information letter (appendix I) covering issues around confidentiality, time commitment data protection etc, consent form (appendix II) and proposed time and date of the focus group will be sent with the email as attachments
Confidentiality	<p>At the start of the focus group, and in-depth interviews ground rules will be identified which will emphasise the need to maintain confidentiality by all parties, (appendix IV). Participants will be asked to sign a consent form which also refers to principles of anonymity,(appendix 3).</p> <p>Access to the data will be limited to the researcher and transcribers. Upon completion of transcription all recordings will be permanently erased.</p> <p>Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the participants.</p> <p>All data will be stored in a locked cupboard or password protected computer.</p> <p>Ground rules will be established and re-established at the commencement of each in-depth interview and focus group.</p>
Anonymity	<p>The in- depth interviews and focus groups will be digitally recorded. This information will be transcribed as soon as possible into a Microsoft word document by the researcher and / or transcribers. The digital recording will then be permanently erased. Pseudonyms will be used and only the researcher will be aware of the participant's identity. There will be no identifying markers on the transcriptions. The transactions will be stored on password protected computer at the University of Huddersfield.</p> <p>Any graphic material produced will be anonymised and will not be reproduced without the participant's explicit consent.</p>
Psychological support for participants	<p>Ground rules will be established at the beginning and revisited at the start of every in-depth interview/ focus group. It is not anticipated that research would cause any psychological distress, occupational therapy students need to continually engage in reflection as part of their ongoing continual professional development as an integral part of the occupational therapy course. However the researcher will need to remain aware of the possibility that some sensitive issues could be raised. At all times the needs of the participant's will be placed above the research aims and if necessary an interview will be redirected or terminated.</p> <p>In order to ensure safety in the focus groups an independent person will be invited to participate. This person will be a colleague and able to support a student should they become distressed and need to leave the focus group. They will be able to provide immediate reassurance and direct the student to the university student support services including personal tutor, and counselling services. All contact details of university support services will be available at both the focus groups and in-depth interviews.</p>
Researcher safety / support (attach complete University Risk Analysis and Management form)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear ground rules (appendix IV) – - Participant information sheet and consent form (appendix I) given out and completed well in advance -interview schedule - focus group schedule

	<p>- Research supervision sessions planned in advance both regularly pre and post data collection and ad hoc access to be negotiated if necessary.</p> <p>Use of an independent person in the focus group for both participant and researcher safety</p>
Identify any potential conflicts of interest	<p>There is a potential for a conflict of interest occurring as the researcher is the course leader for all cohorts under study, and is actively involved in the teaching and assessment of the students. The students may acquiesce and reassurance will be given that all data remains confidential and in the context of the research. The importance of mutual participation and collaboration will be emphasised throughout, and the principles of relational research observed. It would be naïve to assume that the student voice will be represented without contamination from the cultural lens of the researcher as course leader. Rigorous reflexivity will be employed; a reflexive journal will be maintained. Regular supervision will be organised as soon as possible after each part of the data collection supervision and will be used to help the researcher identify biased assumptions and blind spots. Participant feedback will be sought, not only with the intention of validating the findings but as a way of furthering collaboration with the participants and acknowledging that what has emerged is one interpretation in a specific context. Additionally the researcher is also a therapist and needs to be reflexively aware of this throughout the research process.</p> <p>Should reportable incidents be identified through the narratives the need to take further action would be discussed with the participants initially.</p>
Please supply copies of all relevant supporting documentation electronically. If this is not available electronically, please provide explanation and supply hard copy	
Information sheet	Appendix I – Information sheet to students
Consent form	Appendix II – Consent sheet for students
Letters	Appendix III – Permissions from Sara Eastburn
Questionnaire	N/A
Interview schedule	Appendix IV – Focus Group Schedule & Ground rules
Dissemination of results	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Department website 2. School/ University teaching and learning conference 3. Professional conferences 4. Inform curriculum development / course committee 5. Journal publications
Other issues	N/A
Where application is to be made to NHS Research Ethics Committee	N/A
All documentation has been read by supervisor (where applicable)	I can confirm that this proposal has been read by my supervisor. See appendix V

All documentation must be submitted to the SREP administrator. All proposals will be reviewed by two members of SREP. If it is considered necessary to discuss the proposal with the full SREP, the applicant (and their supervisor if the applicant is a student) will be invited to attend the next SREP meeting.

If you have any queries relating to the completion of this form or any other queries relating to SREP's consideration of this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact either of the co-chairs of SREP: Professor Eric Blyth e.d.blyth@hud.ac.uk; ☎ [47] 2457 or Professor Nigel King n.king@hud.ac.uk; ☎ [47] 2812

Appendix Eighteen

Data Collection permissions

To whom it may concern

Re: Jo Stead

As Jo Stead's supervisor on the doctoral programme, I can confirm that I have read the ethics forms she has completed for submission to the ethics committee. In my view, Jo has given careful consideration to any ethical concerns that could arise in relation to her proposed research and am in support of her submission.

Yours sincerely

Ros Ollin

*Dr Ros Ollin
School of Education and Professional Development
University of Huddersfield*

Appendix Nineteen
Data Collection permissions

Our ref: SA/MLC

To whom it may concern

Re: Jo Stead

Jo is a member of staff within the Division of Rehabilitation at the University of Huddersfield. Assuming that Jo has successfully gained appropriate ethical approval, as the Head of Division with responsibility for occupational therapy provision, I am happy for her to access occupational therapy students now and in the future in order that she may progress with and complete her PhD research.

I wish Jo the very best with her studies.

Yours sincerely

Sara Eastburn
Head of Division of Rehabilitation
School of Human & Health Sciences
Tel: +44(0)1484 472911 (Direct)
Fax: +44(0)1484 472380
E.Mail: s.eastburn@hud.ac.uk

Appendix Twenty THE UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD: RISK ANALYSIS & MANAGEMENT

ACTIVITY: Focus Group/ Interview: Becoming an occupational therapist in the 21 st century: Factors influencing professional identity			Name: Joanne Stead	
LOCATION: University of Huddersfield			Date: 17 th Sept.	Review Date:
Hazard(s) Identified	Details of Risk(s)	People at Risk	Risk management measures	Other comments
Focus group/ Interview to take place on university site	Minimal potential for distress/ psychological harm	Students (participants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sheet and Consent form completed prior to data collection • Access to university support services made clear, e.g personal tutor and counseling services • Additional independent member participating in focus group who can be available to give individual support should this be needed. • Clear ground rules established at the beginning of both the interview and focus groups • Supervision meeting with supervisor before and after interview and focus group for debrief 	There are no anticipated major risks associated with this study as it is designed to encourage students to reflect on their educational experiences as they develop their professional identity.
	Lack participants leading to	Researcher Participants		

Participants withdrawing from longitudinal study	lack of credibility of the research	and researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current second and third years also included in sampling strategy to act as a risk management strategy to ensure sufficient numbers should some participant withdraw. Data collected will also act as pilot for future years, identify potential issues and to provide a comparative data set. 	
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