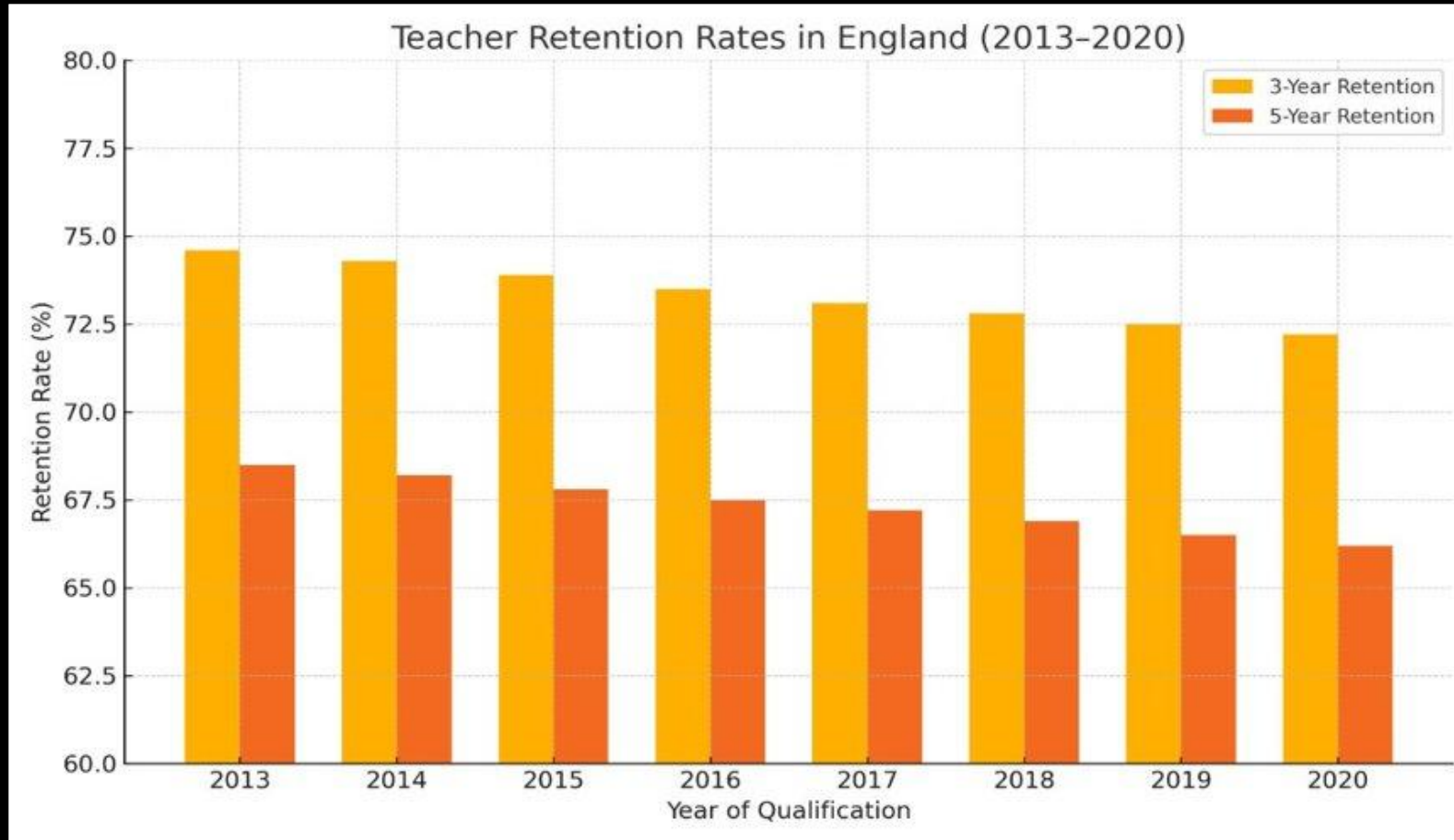


# Negotiating positionality: beginning, becoming, belonging?

Claire Hadfield

Plymouth Marjon University

# What am I researching, why and how?



# Research questions

1. What prior expectations of the teaching role do trainee teachers have?
2. How does teacher identity evolve during the training year and in the subsequent 3 years?
3. How do ECTs experience the ECF, and to what extent do these experiences impact retention?
4. Beyond the ECF, what other factors affect their professional identity and retention?

# What am I researching, why and how?

- Data collection – 4 years Sept. 2020-July 2024
  - PGCE year plus first 3 years of teaching
  - February 2026- 'where are they now?' year 5 update
  - 6 consistent participants
- 
- Data analysis reflexive thematic analysis  
Braun & Clarke

Positionality: how/when do personal interest, ethos and values overlap with our position as a researcher, and why does it matter?

- Imposter syndrome – finding my way in a new context
- Power differential participants + PGCE – ethical considerations and mitigations
- Pen portraits and pushback from the data – seeking participant feedback as a final triangulation
- Finding my way as a researcher – RTA and my personal axiology

# Pracademic: a problematic term?

This portmanteau term, in regular use since the late 1980s, refined by Posner in a 2009 article describes the status of a professional who is or has been actively engaged in both practical work and academic research.

While some may find the term usefully captures their transition, the term reinforces unhelpful and elitist distinctions between those who progress into academia via non-linear routes and 'traditional academics'.

The practical v academic binary is not one I find accurate or personally apt; my expertise- such as it is- is drawn from and continually informed by an ongoing, fluid, iterative and continually reflective process of teaching, reflecting, researching and refining rather than a linear transition from practitioner to academic.

# ‘In-betweener’: a better fit?

Researchers often find themselves in a dynamic space where they straddle two worlds, or communities of practice.

One way of conceptualising this 'space between' positionality is the term ‘in-betweener’ to describe a researcher who occupies a unique position—simultaneously inside and outside the phenomena they are studying.

- How it applies to me as an ‘experienced ECR’



# Shifting sands: adapting 'on the fly'

- Data collection methods - tech, time delays, capacity
- Data analysis methods - RTA as an iterative process
- Policy context – ECF to ITTECF
- Shapeshifting

# Holding your nerve and making sense of it

- Beginning
- Becoming
- Belonging?



Questions?

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